



The Hershey Company Welcomes Returning Veterans to Its Employment Ranks

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Iconic Confectionery Company Continues Longstanding Commitment to U.S. Troops

HERSHEY, Pa. --(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 12, 2012--

As troops arrive home, veterans are facing a higher unemployment rate than the general population. The growing need for veterans to successfully transition back into civilian life has inspired The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY) to launch a Veteran's Business Resource Group (BRG) to expand its longstanding outreach to veterans and veteran organizations.

The new Veteran's BRG will serve to support veterans within the company and those seeking work through a number of initiatives, including:

- Educating employees on the skills and experience that veterans bring and sharing examples of Hershey's support of the military within the company and in the communities where Hershey employees work
- Reaching out to veterans groups to support the company's veteran hiring mission
- Offering support to veterans transitioning to the civilian workforce
- Promoting communication and collaboration among veterans within the company

The Veteran's Business Resource Group will also create formal mentorship programs for newly hired veterans by matching them with other veterans who have successfully transitioned to work at The Hershey Company.

These efforts complement the company's existing Military Talent Program, which was launched in late 2011. The program works to recruit and hire returning veterans to support a growing business. As part of these efforts, the company also plans to hold job fairs and related programs for veterans during the next several years.

"We have great opportunities for returning troops across our U.S. operations," says Terry O'Day, Senior Vice President, Global Operations, The Hershey Company. O'Day is a veteran and graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, and also serves as the executive sponsor of the company's Veteran's BRG. "Veterans are known for their leadership, commitment and technical skills, an ideal combination for our manufacturing network," added O'Day.

Consistent with its historic values and commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility, The Hershey Company has employed hundreds of veterans over the years and many have gone on to become leaders in the company. There are currently more than 500 veterans in Hershey's workforce. In 2011, Hershey increased the number of veterans hired by more than 50 percent compared with 2010.

"Veterans -- with their distinguished backgrounds in highly complex situations, working with high-tech equipment and their ability to manage people and processes -- will bring tremendous value to a range of available positions at Hershey," said Kevin Walling, Senior Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer, The Hershey Company. "Seeking skilled veterans is the right thing to do for those who have served their country and offers a great source of talent for our company."

Hershey's support of the U.S. military dates back to World War I, when Hershey provided milk chocolate bars to American soldiers. During World War II, Hershey developed the "Field Ration D" bar specifically for troops serving overseas. More than 24 million Ration D bars were produced every week by the end of 1945. Hershey also played a small role in the Berlin Airlift of 1948, when 1st Lt. **Gail Halvorsen**, the "Chocolate Flier," dropped Hershey's chocolate bars to children from a C-54 bomber plane.

Today, Hershey continues to support U.S. troops serving both domestically and in overseas conflicts. This includes the company's product donation program, in which the company sends a variety of Hershey products to men and women serving in the military. During the past 10 years, Hershey has sent care packages to the troops consisting of more than 4,500 cases of product, with a value of nearly \$500,000.

Hershey also provides financial support to military organizations such as the United Services Organization (USO) and supports other military-affiliated organizations such as Wounded Warrior, the Yellow Ribbon Fund and other related programs.

Hershey's new Veteran's Business Resource Group joins a number of other groups at the company that allow employees to learn and grow in both the work environment and in the community. Other groups include the African American BRG, the Hispanic BRG, the Women's BRG, the Prism GLBT BRG, the Asian American BRG, and the Network of Young Professionals.

About The Hershey Company

The Hershey Company (NYSE: HSY) is the largest producer of quality chocolate in North America and a global leader in chocolate and sugar confectionery. Headquartered in Hershey, Pa., The Hershey Company has operations throughout the world and approximately 14,000 employees. With revenues of more than \$6 billion, Hershey offers confectionery products under more than 25 brand names, including such iconic brands as Hershey's, Reese's, Hershey's Kisses, Hershey's Bliss, Hershey's Special Dark, Kit Kat, Twizzlers, Jolly Rancher and Ice Breakers. Hershey also offers premium and artisan chocolate products under such brands as Scharffen Berger and Dagoba through the Artisan Confections Company, a wholly owned subsidiary. The company is focused on growing its presence in key international markets such as China and Mexico while continuing to build its competitive advantage in the United States and Canada.

For more than 100 years, The Hershey Company has been a leader in making a positive difference in the communities where its employees live, work and do business. Corporate Social Responsibility is an integral part of the company's global business strategy, which includes goals and priorities focused on fair and ethical business dealings, environmental stewardship, fostering a desirable workplace for employees, and positively impacting society and local communities. Milton Hershey School, established in 1909 by the company's founder and administered by Hershey Trust Company, provides a quality education, housing, and medical care at no cost to children in social and financial need. Students of Milton Hershey School are direct beneficiaries of The Hershey Company's success.

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