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ACP Partners With BMS to Help Military Spouses Transition to the Corporate Sector

Bristol Myers Squibb (BMS) seeks to hire those who want to change lives and the company is looking at the opportunity to hire former service members and military spouses.

The organization wanted to increase its visibility as a veteran-friendly employer, so in 2013, BMS partnered with American Corporate Partners (ACP). ACP is the only nationwide veteran mentorship program that offers free, year-long, customized one-on-one career counseling and networking opportunities with seasoned corporate professionals to transitioning service members and active duty military spouses. Mentors from BMS work with ACP to provide guidance to veterans and spouses who are looking to enter the pharmaceutical and transformative care industry. BMS has an active Veterans Community Network (VCN) where the support of fellow service members fosters engagement and creates a sense of community, easing the transition to the civilian sector.

BMS' volunteer mentors work with veterans and military spouses on a variety of topics, including converting their experience into language that corporations can understand to help them search for and gain meaningful employment. They each donate about one hour per month to meet one-on-one with their ACP Protégé.

BMS Mentor Amanda Schaffernoth, a Hematology Consultant and spouse of a Marine, volunteered to be a mentor and works with a fellow military spouse, Tracey Smith, who is also married to a Marine.

"Tracey works in hospitality sales, so in addition to the difficulties of finding employment as a military spouse, COVID put her out of work. She was looking at this moment and thinking about a possible career shift, but wasn't sure what she wanted to do and what was a realistic place to look since she moves every couple of years. I've been able to talk with her and help with resume and career development and I'm here to listen to her ideas and provide any support I can," said Amanda. "I found out about ACP and thought it would be a good opportunity to talk with someone about what I really wanted to do with my career," said Tracey. "I wanted to work with someone who could help me fine tune my resume, improve my time management skills, and give me direction for goal setting. I also needed help with job applications and mastering the interview process. Amanda has been all of that and more. I've been able to talk to her about moving as a military spouse and how to balance my career with the needs of my family."

Tracey found a new job in event planning and sales, but still has her eye on moving up in her career and possibly applying for jobs in a different industry in the future. "Amanda has been a great source of information and has given me perspective on other opportunities. I'm so grateful my ACP mentor was such a great match!" added Tracey.

Amanda is thankful that BMS, a company she has worked for almost seven years, is a thoughtful employer of military spouses and accommodating toward veterans. She was able to stay with the company and make some lateral job changes as she moved around the country for her husband's duty three times. "I've learned a lot in different positions and in different locations with BMS, and I still have room to grow. I'm one of the lucky ones – not every military spouse has an employer that is flexible enough to make these transitions possible. I've also been able to help people who I know are making sacrifices for their families or themselves. My Protégé Tracey is looking for work-life balance as she starts a family, so a lot of the ACP resources have been good reminders for me as well," continued Amanda. "I'm really grateful for the opportunity and I look forward to continuing to mentor others in the future."

BMS is one of more than 100 companies that partner with ACP to provide mentors for veterans and active duty military spouses. To date, more than 21,000 individuals have completed the ACP mentorship program.

For more information on ACP's military spouse mentorship program and the application process, visit <https://www.acp-usa.org/spouseapp>.