



Mentorship Success Story

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ACP Mentor Katie Cousins



ACP Protege Kate Espinosa

Established in 2008, American Corporate Partners (ACP) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering post-9/11 Veterans and Active-Duty Spouses (Protégés) in navigating their career transitions. Through personalized one-on-one Mentoring, robust networking opportunities, and tailored online career advice, ACP has facilitated successful career paths for those who have served our nation. Currently fostering over 4,900 Mentorships, ACP's impactful initiatives are made possible through strategic collaborations with corporate partners. As of February 2025, over 36,000 Protégés have completed their ACP Mentorship.

From the outside, Kate Espinosa was already a Veteran success story when she signed up to work with an American Corporate Partners (ACP) Mentor. After 12 years as a U.S. Air Force Officer, Espinosa had one Master's degree and was pursuing another, held a senior-level Human Resources certification, and was working as an HR program manager. Like many women Veterans, however, Espinosa was driven to higher goals.

"When I signed up to work with a Mentor, I was looking for guidance in navigating the job market and refining my professional goals," says Espinosa. "I needed support with networking strategies, understanding how to position myself effectively in applications, and identifying opportunities that aligned with my skills and career aspirations."

ACP Mentor Katie Cousins was drawn to Espinosa's ambitious nature. Like Espinosa, Cousins is a former Air Force Officer who went through ACP's mentorship program as a Protégé in 2021.

Now a Global Communications Manager with Nike, Cousins wanted to support her sisters in service by passing along lessons from her own transition.

"I... benefited immensely from having a corporate Mentor who helped me translate my experiences and skill sets into a language that resonated with the corporate world," she says. "Investing my time in coaching and empowering other women veterans is really important to me and is something I'll continue to do whenever I can."

Although she was highly qualified for numerous career paths, Espinosa, like many accomplished women, struggled with imposter syndrome. She wasn't sure of the best approach to help herself stand out as a professional candidate and adapt to new working environments.

Working with Cousins was the confidence-booster she needed. "[Katie] seems to truly understand what I am currently facing," Espinosa said of her

first conversation with Cousins. As the pair worked on defining Espinosa's ideal role, creating a professional development plan, and understanding how to integrate career with family life, Espinosa was emboldened to jump on the opportunities in front of her.

Those opportunities were strengthened as a result of the pair's focus on building a strong civilian network. When Cousins put Espinosa in touch with colleagues and acquaintances, both women were amazed by the result.

"The outpouring of support from the [Veteran] community when someone reaches out is astonishing," says Cousins. "This network not only opened numerous doors for Kate but also initiated conversations that brought her closer to starting her next chapter."

Through one of these connections, Espinosa learned about a job opportunity that aligned exactly with her educational background and her passions. As she moved through the application process, Cousins continued to provide incredible support. "Her personalized advice on interview preparation and self-presentation was invaluable, giving me the confidence to excel during the hiring process," says Espinosa.

Espinosa aced the interview process and is now working as a renewable energy researcher, a role that she describes as a true dream job. "Katie's mentorship and guidance have been exactly what I need as I have navigated the process of applying for jobs," Espinosa enthuses. "I couldn't be happier with her support!"

"Seeing Kate find a company and role that aligns with her skillsets, leadership

experience, personal values, and growth and development goals has been incredibly rewarding," says Cousins. "Being a part of her journey and having the opportunity to give back to women veterans in this way makes me feel truly grateful and proud."

Women's History Month is a time to reflect on the remarkable accomplishments of women service members and Veterans like Cousins and Espinosa, and to consider your own place in history. To start your journey as an ACP Mentor or Protégé, fill out our quick application and an ACP Operations Associate will reach out to get you started!

This Mentorship Success Story was written by Hailey Brindamour, a Senior Operations Associate here at ACP. A Military Spouse herself, Hailey joined us in the summer of 2022 and plays a vital role in ensuring incredible experiences like this are possible for our community.



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