



ACP Mentors Give Back to our Nation's Veterans
USAA employee pays it forward after experience with ACP program

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By Staff

USAA has been a proud partner of American Corporate Partners (ACP) for the past eight years—providing our veterans with high-level, private sector mentors to help them excel in their career development. ACP is a nonprofit organization that sponsors mentorships for any veteran who served 180 days or more post 9/11, as well as for many active-duty military spouses. The program thrives on the generosity of our partner companies, who lend their finest employees to year-long, one-on-one mentorships with protégés who are looking for advice on how to jumpstart their careers post-military service.

One such protégé, Mike Briggs, came to ACP in April of 2016 with his retirement from the U.S. Navy in his sights. Mike, an O-5 at the time of his transition, had spent his career as a Surface Warfare Officer, gaining extensive experience in engineering, operations, weapons, recruitment, and personnel management. Upon separating from the military, he needed guidance on where to apply his extensive skill set. Luckily, he came to the right place. A few weeks after he applied to ACP, Mike was paired with a mentor, Bob, who worked at UBS. Throughout their year-long mentoring relationship, Bob provided Mike with impactful feedback every step of the way. This ultimately led him to weigh the pros and cons of two incredible job offers and accept a role at USAA. “My mentor helped me look beyond just the salary offered by each of the companies. After considering the work culture, growth opportunities, and benefits of USAA, I decided that it was the best fit for me.”

Mike started at USAA as an Executive Operational Planning Manager in 2017. At the end of his two-year mark, he was promoted to Director of Strategy and Operations where he currently is responsible for USAA’s Corporate Communications strategy and risk management. In addition to his daily duties on the Corporate Communications team, Mike decided to give back by becoming an ACP mentor. When asked what it meant to be able to come back to the program as a mentor, he explained, “When I saw the call for USAA mentors, I was reminded of my own transition and how much it meant to have someone on the other side to check in with. I had mentors throughout my military career, but it wasn’t until ACP that I had a formal mentorship outside the military. My main goal when I started as an ACP mentor was to pay it back and pay it forward.” Mike has certainly done that and more. As of today, he has mentored three veteran protégés and very recently started working with his fourth. One of his former protégés even got a job at USAA during their mentorship and they are still in touch today.

A mentorship is one of the most valuable relationships someone can have in their lives. Whether you are being mentored or providing the mentoring, there are always going to be lessons to learn and advice to impart. As a seasoned ACP Mentor, Mike wants potential mentors to know that a mentorship can go a long way: “Don’t be afraid to sign up. It doesn’t matter if you’re a veteran or not—you still have something to offer. The transition, no matter how long you’ve been in, is a challenging thing. You go through things you haven’t experienced; for 20 years, I had no need for a résumé and suddenly it became the most important thing to secure a post-service career. Corporate

environments, cultures and processes are all so different from the military. Even just having someone who can discuss the difference in these cultures and expectations is beneficial.”

This Veterans Day, consider giving back to a transitioning veteran by signing up as a mentor. Or, if you’re a post-9/11 veteran, also please [visit our website](#) and consider mentorship to help with your transition.