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By Christopher Burnett | Staff Writer

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## Workshop focuses on spouse employment

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About 20 military spouses attended the Employment Readiness Workshop Sept. 21 at Fort Leavenworth's Resiliency Center.

LaMorris Wiggins and DeAundra McKinnis of the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center gave a workshop explaining the Priority Placement Program, a mandatory automated initiative used to match eligible employees with vacant positions throughout the Department of Defense.

Wiggins said the Priority Placement Program enables the Department of Defense to maintain a stable workforce and ensure placement of well-qualified job candidates. She said the program does not guarantee employment.

"The program is designed to assist spouses who have moved with their active-duty spouse in seeking Federal Service employment," Wiggins said. "Spouses are highly encouraged to apply for all categories of federal positions, to include non-appropriated fund job openings."

Wiggins said interested spouses can register at prior duty stations or wait until they arrive at Fort Leavenworth. She said registering in person at CPAC allows the staff to assist in detail.

"Civilian Personnel Advisory Center reviews your resumé," Wiggins said. "This determines which positions you qualify for, what grade level and which codes are applicable."

Wiggins said registration on post enables the Fort Leavenworth CPAC to match candidate resumé with vacant positions. She said an automated program is used to pair resumé with potential vacant positions within the local commuting area.

"All qualified spouses must provide documentation during registration," Wiggins said. "This includes your military sponsor's reassignment orders."

Additional documentation includes a current narrative resumé, proof of citizenship, marriage certificate, transcripts and any applicable licenses or certifications, Wiggins said. She said documentation of current or previous federal employment appointments and prior federal civilian employees must bring their most up-to-date performance appraisal.

"Public notice is required when a vacancy is available. Job categories are permanent, term, temporary, supervisory and rotating shifts," Wiggins said. "We post announcements using the USAJobs.gov portal."

A human resource specialist at the CPAC contacts registered applicants who match a vacant position. The process is automated using USA Staffing, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's hiring software, and spouses rated among the best-qualified candidates are referred.

Employment Readiness Program Manager Deborah Stone said the Army Community Service Employment Readiness Program offers employment assistance, classes and workshops.

The Employment Resource Center has computers with internet access, access to a printer, fax machine and copier among other resources.

"The program offers weekly job listings to military family members living on Fort Leavenworth and in the surrounding community," Stone said. "In addition to resumé preparation and help to navigate the federal job application process, we assist with soft skills like interviewing and business etiquette."

The Employment Readiness Program is in the Resiliency Center at 600 Thomas Ave. It is open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday. Call 684-2800 for more information.

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