
U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

Phone: 202-463-5682 | 888-249-NEWS | E-mail: press@uschamber.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 24, 2011

Contact: J.P. Fielder 202-463-5682

Senator Kirk Joins Launch of U.S. Chamber’s 100-City Initiative to Help Veterans Find Jobs

*At Chicago Hiring Fair, More than 110 Local Companies Come with
Available Positions and a Commitment to Hiring Veterans or a Veteran’s
Spouse*

CHICAGO, IL—Illinois Senator Mark Kirk joined the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS) today to launch a year-long, nationwide initiative to help veterans and their spouses find jobs in local communities across the country. The first of 100 veterans hiring fairs took place with the help of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, the Illinois Chamber, and the Employer Support of the National Guard and Reserve.

“With the economy turning around, businesses of all sizes are turning to America’s veterans for their technical expertise, unique leadership experience, and discipline,” said Lt. Col. Kevin Schmiegel (Ret.), vice president of Veterans Employment Initiatives at the U.S. Chamber, and a 20-year Marine veteran. He will lead the Chamber’s “Hiring Our Heroes” events, which bring together a targeted number of veterans and their spouses with businesses from the region, typically at a ratio of 8:1.

Schmiegel launched the initiative with DOL VETS Assistant Secretary Ray Jefferson in Chicago today, bringing together more than 110 local companies and several hundred veterans and their spouses. **The businesses that commit to joining the fairs must also come with available positions and a commitment to hiring veterans or a veteran’s spouse.** There are more than 38,000 unemployed veterans in Illinois with more than 14,000 in the greater Chicago-area alone.

“These hiring fairs are different from typical career fairs, because the only measure of success is jobs for the one million unemployed veterans in America,” Schmiegel said. “Hiring fairs need to do a better job of matching veteran talent with career opportunities, and they must bring together the public and private sectors in a coordinated way in cities and towns, where veterans and their families are returning every day. The U.S. and local chambers of commerce are uniquely positioned to do that.”

“We feel strongly that the key to success is a public-private partnership at the local community level, because the two most important factors for veterans seeking a second career are geographic preference and finding the ‘right fit,’” Schmiegel said. “By seeking the help of American companies, our hope is to create an environment in which thousands of military veterans and their spouses can find meaningful employment in their home states,” Schmiegel said.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

www.uschamber.com

#

www.chamberpost.com



U.S. Chamber of Commerce | 1615 H Street, NW | Washington, DC 20062-2000
www.uschamber.com | www.chamberpost.com