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Contact:

Joe Steele

LIFT

313-309-9132

jsteele@lift.technology

LIFT Launches “Operation Next” To Prepare Future Veterans for Civilian Careers

New model will provide separating military personnel with skills and credentials for the most in-demand jobs in advanced manufacturing

FT. CAMPBELL, Kent. – LIFT - Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow, a Manufacturing USA national innovation institute — in partnership with the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS), Amatrol, and Gene Haas Foundation — today announced the launch of “**Operation Next**” - a new model for equipping separating military personnel with the skills and credentials needed for the most in-demand advanced manufacturing civilian careers in the country.

This new national model provides high level technical training to separating soldiers while they are still on active duty, moving them from deployment to career in the shortest time possible and connecting them to some of the more than half-million open jobs in precision machining and industrial technology.

Operation Next brings market leaders in manufacturing training together in a full-service online learning platform that soldiers can access before leaving the service, accelerating their transition into civilian manufacturing careers. The hybrid training program combines self-directed virtual learning with hands-on lab work and gives soldiers foundational knowledge, practical real-world skills, and national industry credentials with immediate value in the labor market.

“As a public-private partnership with the Department of Defense, Office of Naval Research and many outstanding American companies, our Institute members recognize the importance of U.S. leadership in advanced manufacturing critical to ensuring the strength of our defense industrial base,” said Larry Brown, executive director, LIFT.



“We recognize the strength and the aptitude of the men and women who serve our country and believe there is no better way to honor them than to provide them with a fast-track path to great careers in advanced manufacturing,” said Emily DeRocco, education and workforce development director, LIFT. “It is our intention to push out resumes of credentialed soldiers to manufacturers across the country engaged in Manufacturing USA.”

Operation Next will launch as a pilot program at Fort Campbell—home of the 101st Airborne Division—and transition 101 soldiers to open jobs in machining and industrial technology. Local partners include Workforce Essentials that will manage operations, and Tennessee College of Applied Technology— where soldiers will complete lab work.

“These separating soldiers are exactly the right candidates to benefit from this type of 21st century learning model,” said Paul Perkins, CEO, Amatrol, the virtual learning provider for Operation Next. “The competency-based structure of the learning enables soldiers to get credit for what they already know, focuses on the hands-on technical skills they need, and expedites their transition into careers.”

Upon completion of the program, participants earn national industry credentials from the National Institute for Metalworking Skills for critical functions in CNC (Computer Numerical Control) Machining and Industrial Technology. “With these civilian credentials, soldiers will have a clear path to a long-term career in any sector of manufacturing,” said Montez King, Interim Executive Director, NIMS. Employment in Machining and Industrial Technology Maintenance have grown by over 811,000 workers – or 19 percent – since 2010.

“Participants will not be completing this training in a bubble,” said Marla Rye, President, Workforce Essentials, the regional program manager for Operation Next. “The program connects these separating soldiers to the real-world of work through plant tours, job-shadows offered by partnering employers and other experiences.”

LIFT is announcing Operation Next in conjunction with the Hiring Our Heroes Transition Summit at Fort Campbell, designed to connect employers and industry with talented veterans, service members, and military spouses.

Enrollment for the Operation Next pilot at Fort Campbell will begin in Summer, 2017.

For more information, visit www.opnextjobs.com

ABOUT LIFT

LIFT is a Detroit-based, public-private partnership committed to the development and deployment of advanced lightweight metal manufacturing technologies, and implementing education and training initiatives to better prepare the workforce today and in the future. LIFT is one of the founding institutes of Manufacturing USA, and is funded in part by the Department of Defense with management through the Office of Naval Research. Visit www.lift.technology or follow on Twitter [@NewsFromLIFT](https://twitter.com/NewsFromLIFT) to learn more.



BUILDING 21ST CENTURY MANUFACTURING TALENT

Piloting a New Model to Prepare Today's Military Personnel for Tomorrow's "Operation Next" Advanced Manufacturing Lightweighting Jobs

An Education & Workforce Development Initiative
for LIFT...Lightweight Innovations for Tomorrow



THE PROBLEM

The need for individuals with the knowledge, skills and abilities to fill the projected job growth in advanced manufacturing – particularly in manufacturing that utilizes emerging technologies such as those related to lightweight metals – is well documented. There are projected to be 3.5 million available manufacturing jobs over the next 10 years and more than 2 million of those jobs will likely go unfilled unless something changes that trajectory. This 'gap' represents a daunting challenge to private sector manufacturers in general, but perhaps more critically, it represents a potentially significant threat to our nation's defense industrial base.

The National Problem Explained at a Regional Level

The national skills gap problem can be described locally. Tennessee and Kentucky are two of the top manufacturing states in the nation with employment in lightweight-related advanced manufacturing jobs in 2016 at 418,000 and 280,000 people, respectively.

With employment in lightweighting-related jobs already high, demand for additional workers is also strong. In the 4th Quarter of 2016, more than 7,800 lightweight-related advanced manufacturing jobs were posted by manufacturers in Kentucky, while Tennessee employers posted about 9,000 jobs.



Kentucky

- **280,000 people** employed in lightweight-related advanced manufacturing jobs in 2016.
- **More than 7,800** lightweight-related advanced manufacturing jobs posted in the 4th quarter of 2016.



Tennessee

- **418,000 people** employed in lightweight-related advanced manufacturing jobs in 2016.
- **About 9,000** lightweight-related advanced manufacturing jobs posted in the 4th quarter of 2016.

THE SOLUTION



Separating military men and women can help to answer this challenge.

Service men and women are cited often for the leadership, integrity, work ethic and team work skills obtained through their service. The opportunity to add technical manufacturing skills to their portfolio - though Operation Next - will ensure they are highly sought after candidates for the most in-demand advanced manufacturing jobs and careers.

While there are many programs and initiatives that aim to support veterans after they make the transition from military to civilian careers, this program is different in several ways.

Separating Personnel Are In Transition Status for 6 Months

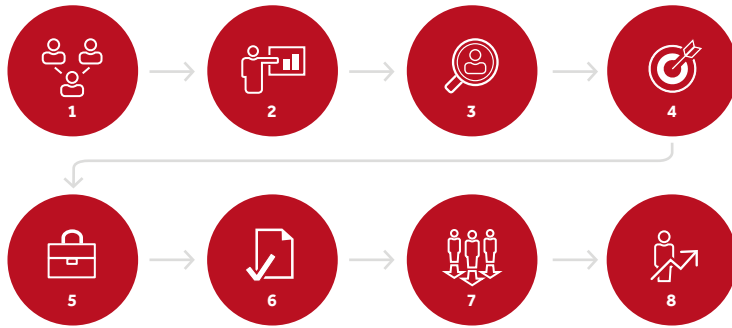


First, because separating personnel are in transition status for up to six months, Operation Next will begin before they even leave their military careers. The individuals will be able to make the most of any off-duty hours during their transition time by gaining critical skills needed in the civilian economy and, most importantly, earning nationally portable, standards-based, industry-recognized credentials in the most in-demand occupations in advanced manufacturing today.

Second, the regional manufacturers will be involved in the program even before training begins. They will meet and get to know the individuals in training. The manufacturers will offer facility tours, job-shadow opportunities and mentorship so when individuals complete their training and transition out of the military, they have the skills and the relationships to walk directly into a civilian career.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The key components of Operation Next are:



1. Enroll in Operation Next Before You Transition
2. Connect to Program Manager and Connect to Virtual Learning Platform
3. Take Self Assessments to Determine Customized Learning Plan
4. Select Job Focus Area

5. Complete Self-Paced Online Learning
6. Complete Applied, Real-World Lab Work
7. Earn Industry Credentials
8. Connect to Employers and In-Demand Jobs

- The opportunity is accessed through a dedicated website to include exciting and engaging materials and videos about the training and advanced manufacturing careers.
- The participants can then conduct a virtual self-assessment to understand their transferable skills. They will also develop a Customized Learning Plan which considers existing skills and competencies so that 'credit' is given for what each individual already knows and can do.
- A major is then chosen: Precision Machining or Industrial Technology Maintenance.
- They sign up for lab experience - the necessary hands-on portion of the learning continuum - from a participating area post-secondary institution.
- The virtual learning portion of the training then begins. This training, including simulated hands-on application, can be done anywhere and during any time the individual has available after their daily duty assignments are complete.
- As milestones are reached in the virtual learning, the individual will be triggered to schedule on-campus college labs, hands-on learning and then, ultimately, performance assessments to earn the credential in their chosen field.

PARTNERS

Fort Campbell, US Army, Tennessee Department of Labor



For more information, please see lift.technology or contact LIFT Education & Workforce Director Emily DeRocco at ederocco@lift.technology.

IMPACT



101 Fort Campbell soldiers will participate in the pilot beginning in 2017. These soldiers will earn NIMS credentials for Precision Machining or Industrial Technology Maintenance. Based on the success of this pilot initiative, the model will be available for replication at military bases across the country.

ALIGNMENT TO LIFT STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



Creating enhancements to engineering curriculum using lightweighting technologies



Attracting students and workers to educational pathways and careers in manufacturing



Linking and leveraging resources and related initiatives on the ground today



Ensuring students gain STEM foundational skills for success in manufacturing careers

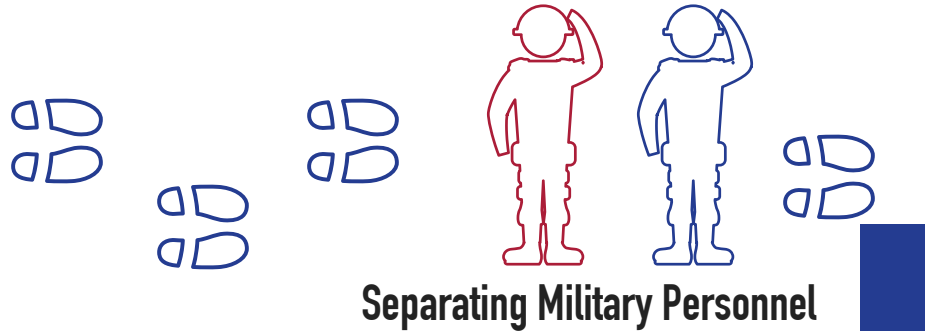




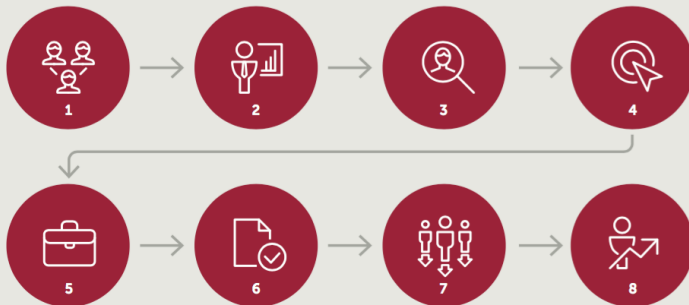
A New Civilian Career Transition Model

Accelerating the Path to Advanced Manufacturing

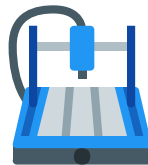
THERE ARE PROJECTED TO BE
3.5 MILLION JOBS
AVAILABLE IN MANUFACTURING OVER THE
NEXT 10 YEARS



HYBRID VIRTUAL LEARNING AND LAB-BASED TRAINING



1. Enroll in Operation Next Before You Transition
2. Connect to Program Manager and Connect to Virtual Learning Platform
3. Take Self Assessments to Determine Customized Learning Plan
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5. Complete Self-Paced Online Learning
6. Complete Applied, Real-World Lab Work
7. Earn Industry Credentials
8. Connect to Employers and In-Demand Jobs



Employability Skills and Military Service

Technical Skills

National Industry Credentials



500,000
Open Jobs



Ensure the Strength of
the U.S. Defense
Industrial Base

In Precision Machining and Industrial Technology



TAKE COMMAND OF YOUR FUTURE.

You're dependable. Disciplined. Loyal. Adaptable.
Driven. And ready for the next challenge: Your career.
Get the advanced manufacturing training you need to
get the job -- and the future -- you want.
OPERATION NEXT is now enrolling.

YOU'VE SERVED YOUR COUNTRY.
NOW SERVE YOUR CAREER.

Find out more at:
WWW.OPNEXTJOBS.COM





GET SOME TRAINING THAT'S ANYTHING BUT BASIC.

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YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU. AGAIN.

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TESTED ON THE FRONT LINE. READY FOR THE PRODUCTION LINE.

In the Army, discipline and personal responsibility are standard issue. Now, a new training program is arming separating soldiers to fill the over 200,000 advanced manufacturing jobs that go unfilled each year.

THEY'VE SERVED THEIR COUNTRY.
THEY'RE READY TO SERVE YOU.

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THE COMMITMENT VETS MADE TO SAVE THE WORLD MIGHT BE JUST WHAT YOU NEED TO COMPETE IN IT.

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EMPLOYEES THAT KNOW HOW TO HIT THE GROUND RUNNING. LITERALLY.

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TRAINED AND READY TO MAKE "MADE IN AMERICA" MEAN SOMETHING.

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