

Making an Impact

NATIONAL GUARD LAUNCHES CAREER MENTORING PROGRAM

By SFC Lloyd J. Bowers

“WHAT DO YOU want to be when you grow up?”

We hear that question often as kids and teens. For young children, the answer comes easily: “Fireman!” “Doctor!” “Ballerina!”

For many high school and college students, however, coming up with an answer is a challenge.

That’s where the Partners in Education career mentor database comes in. The Army National Guard (ARNG) is turning to its members to help students answer that all-important question.

Members of the ARNG hold diverse civilian occupations, so by becoming career mentors in their local community, Soldiers—both current and retired—can make a big impact by sharing their career stories with students across the country.

Part of the nationwide Partners in Education program administered by the National Guard Bureau’s Strength Maintenance Division (NGB-ASM), the career mentor database connects current and retired ARNG members with high school and college students to talk about their civilian careers.

Signing up is fast and simple. ARNG members register using their name, occupation and contact information, including an us.army.mil email address. Educators will be able to search the database by ZIP code and occupation, and connect to ARNG members matching their criteria.

The connection between the educator and mentor will happen behind the scenes, so contact information is not listed on the site. This procedure helps safeguard the privacy of each career mentor. Once registered as mentors, ARNG

members will be contacted by local educators whose students need guidance. Mentors will represent both the ARNG and its diverse civilian occupations at career fairs, in classrooms and individually with interested students.

“The career mentor database is an exciting new way to simultaneously provide a valuable community service and boost the Guard’s visibility as Citizen-Soldiers,” said Scott Farrell, the National Director of Educational Outreach for the Partners in Education program.

In addition to housing the career mentor database, the Partners in Education Web site is a one-stop location for other educator and student resources, including a listing of ARNG programs and presentations.

One of those resources is a new presentation created specifically for the Partners in Education program. Given in high schools by recruiting and retention non-commissioned officers (RRNCOs), this two-part presentation—through the use of dynamic slides, videos, discussion points and handouts—focuses on key decision-making skills, including career planning, applying for a job and budgeting.

Representatives from the Partners in Education program also attend national educator conferences to promote free programs, presentations and resources available to students, teachers, counselors and administrators.

After learning about the career mentor database at the recent Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) conference, Michael L. Benjamin, M.P.H., CAE, Executive Director of FCCLA said, “The Guard is a valued partner of FCCLA. The



MEETING A MENTOR Scott Farrell (right), National Director of Educational Outreach, speaks with SSG Mike Kryzsko, MNARNG, about becoming a career mentor at the EANGUS conference in Savannah, GA.

COURTESY OF PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

“The new career mentor resource is yet another way the Guard is showing its commitment to partnering with the education community and empowering young people to make informed and positive decisions.”

—MICHAEL L. BENJAMIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FCCLA

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With educators across the country eager to begin using this

new resource, the most important thing to remember is that the database can only be as successful as the number of ARNG members who volunteer to become career mentors.

For more information about becoming a career mentor, visit: www.PartnersInEducation.com. **GX**