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***Vendors***  
**July 2006**

**Guard firms recruit military**

By Sherry Whittemore

ALEXANDRIA, Va.--Military recruitment in security has risen to a new level with two of the industry's most recognized guard companies leading the way.

AlliedBarton and Wackenhut recently announced new recruiting initiatives with advanced training programs. Wackenhut was invited to join the Army's Partnership for Youth Success Program, while AlliedBarton joined forces with OperationHeroForHire.com. Both programs work as placement services for military personnel, each with its own objective.

Joseph Ricci, director of the National Association for Security Companies, said security companies have recruited military personnel for years, a group which now makes up approximately 80 percent of the industry's employees.

"The difference I see now is that higher-end companies like Wackenhut and AlliedBarton have branded it as a marketing tool," he said. "They're smart in tapping that resource."

Through OperationHeroForHire.com, AlliedBarton offers in-house company training once new employees apply online and are hired from a pool of skilled military candidates, said Nina Brody, vice president of talent recruiting and retention. The website identifies AlliedBarton, and many other companies, as an employer who understands the employment needs and desires of veterans. The initiative, an offshoot of CareerBuilder.com, an online job portal, is a transitional resource specifically designed for veterans exiting the field or active personnel looking for work between deployments.

Wackenhut's partnership with PaYS approaches prospective military differently. It looks at the long-term benefits of training and job placement, said Lee Achord, Wackenhut's senior director of recruiting and military services.

Wackenhut will not see its first batch of PaYS employees for at least another three years, Achord said.

PaYS focuses on active Army and Army Reserves who wish to pursue careers in private security. Wackenhut will provide them with industry information as they complete three to six years of duty, Achord said.

Both companies said former and current military personnel make desirable candidates for a host of reasons: They understand chain of command, can be easily trained and follow orders, take pride in wearing uniforms, are team players, and in most cases can handle firearms and some have government clearances.

"The bottom line is someone does a job in Iraq ... for a few months or a year and doesn't have time to search the job market before returning to the states," said AlliedBarton recruiter Jerold Ramos. "Now he can shoot me an e-mail and I can have a job waiting here when he gets home."

Neither company could estimate how many employees the programs will attract because both initiatives are so new.

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