

Volunteer Mentors Share Success Stories

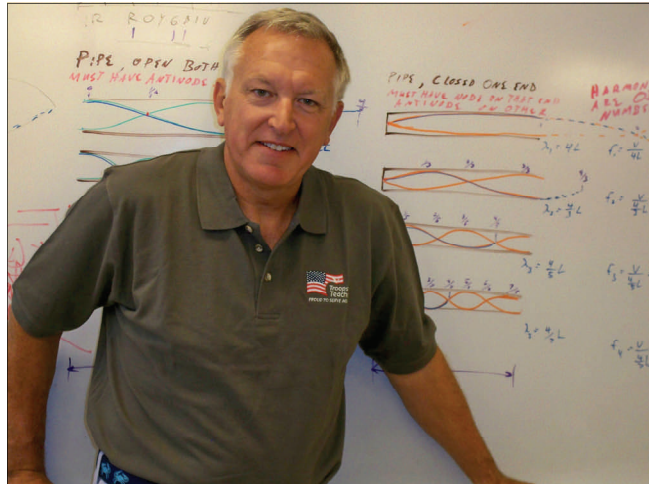
Transitioning out of the military into a successful civilian career can be one of the most challenging transformations, on both a personal and professional level, that a veteran will make in his or her life.

Determining your desired career path, finding the best fit for your knowledge and experience, meeting additional education requirements, networking, and securing employment are all important steps in any successful transition, to include entering the education field as a teacher.

Fortunately, the New England Troops to Teachers program has recruited over 60 volunteer mentors. All are veterans who have made a successful transition to teaching and currently work as teachers or administrators in public schools and public charter schools throughout New England. They have all offered to lend a hand to fellow veterans interested in launching second careers as teachers.

Recently, we asked them to share their success stories and the response was excellent.

This newsletter is dedicated to their stories in the hope that what they have accomplished will inspire other veterans to consider a second career in the classroom.



Jay Lipp is a retired U.S. Navy commander with 23 years of service who taught physics at Stratford High School in Stratford, Connecticut for the last seven years. Jay currently serves as the Science Department Chairman at Norwalk High School in Norwalk Connecticut. He teaches physics courses as part of the University of Connecticut's Early College Experience (ECE) program which gives his students the opportunity to earn 8 college credits at their high school.



"I am so happy to be working with high school students," said Jay. "I truly enjoy going to work every day. I have found that my military experiences make my teaching much more real-world and therefore, my students learn more."

Jay used the Troops to Teachers stipend program to pursue his teacher certification through Connecticut's Alternative Route to Teacher Certification (ARC) program. He later qualified for TTT bonus funding as a result of teaching at a high-need school.

"I wholeheartedly endorse the Troops to Teachers program and encourage others to consider teaching after the military," said Jay. "My family and I enjoy my being home, the excellent hours, the fixed schedule, the weekends and holidays free and then, of course, the entire summer off."

More Success Stories on pages 2 - 4



PARTICIPANT LIFECYCLE

Determine Eligibility

Register

Bachelors Degree

Teacher Certification

Job Search

Get Hired

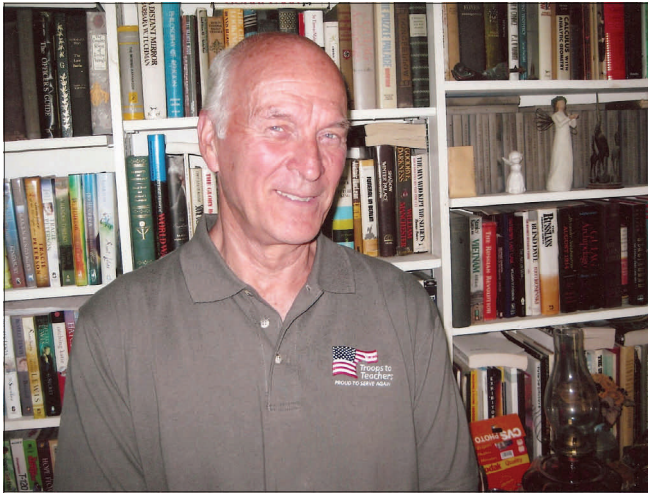
Be a Mentor

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Volunteer Mentor Success Stories



Mike Gransky retired as a lieutenant colonel after 28 years of combined active duty and reserve service. Soon thereafter, the novelty of retirement wore off and Mike began working as a house framer. It wasn't until Mike saw an advertisement for science teachers that he got involved with the Troops to Teachers program. He contacted the Connecticut State Department of Education to research the various ways to get certified as a science teacher and after two years of night courses he completed the certification process and a job offer soon followed.

Mike is currently employed

by the Arch Bridge School in Bethlehem, Connecticut where he teaches physics, chemistry, pre-calculus and calculus.

Now, after 10 years of teaching, Mike says, "This is the most stimulating and gratifying job I've ever had! Helping young people set goals for themselves and realize their potential is reward in itself. I also never hesitate to encourage the students to consider careers in the military."



Louise Paradis, a colonel in the New Hampshire Air National Guard, teaches full-time at Dover High School and Regional Career Technical Center in Dover, New Hampshire.

Louise began her military career in 1985 as a second lieutenant and computer programmer in the U.S. Air Force. She spent most of her career in the information technology field, to include commanding a communications unit. She is currently the Director of Logistics for the Joint Forces Headquarters of the New Hampshire National Guard.

She learned about Troops to Teachers while serving in the National Guard and registered with the program to gain insight into the process of transitioning from the military to a career in education.

She now teaches computer programming courses and Microsoft Applications for grade levels 9-12 and enjoys sharing her experiences and knowledge gained throughout her career with her students.

"The military has provided me with a very solid foundation to be a person of



high integrity with outstanding organizational skills," said Louise. "I certainly wouldn't be the person, or teacher, I am today without having had the opportunity to serve and learn many valuable lessons."

Louise was the 2009 Troops to Teachers "Teacher of the Year" for the State of New Hampshire and also received the Dover High School "Golden Apple Award" in 2007.



HOW TO REQUEST A MENTOR



1. Qualify for Troops to Teachers
2. Complete the Registration Process
3. Contact us at nett@maine.edu

The New England Troops to Teachers program has over 60 volunteer mentors who stand ready to assist you with your transition to a career in public education. Please take advantage of this valuable resource. Veterans helping veterans lies at the core of the TTT program!

After retiring as a senior chief petty officer with over twenty-one years of service with the Coast Guard, Dan Schaeffer became a licensed master electrician in Maine. As the economy was changing the housing market, Dan learned that a local career technical center was searching for applicants to teach high school students in the electrical field. His military experience and the associate's degree he had earned while in the Service set him apart from the other applicants.

Dan was hired and sent to a two-week teaching "boot camp" for technical educators. The program included a review of the basics of classroom organization, the development of lesson plans, and instruction on the behavioral characteristics of high school students.

"Dealing with younger members of the military in many facets of their careers and personal lives had prepared me to deal with high school students on a daily basis," says Dan.

Currently, Dan teaches electrical trades and law enforcement at Waldo County Technical Center. Teaching at this high-need school let Dan take advantage of the Troops to Teachers bonus.



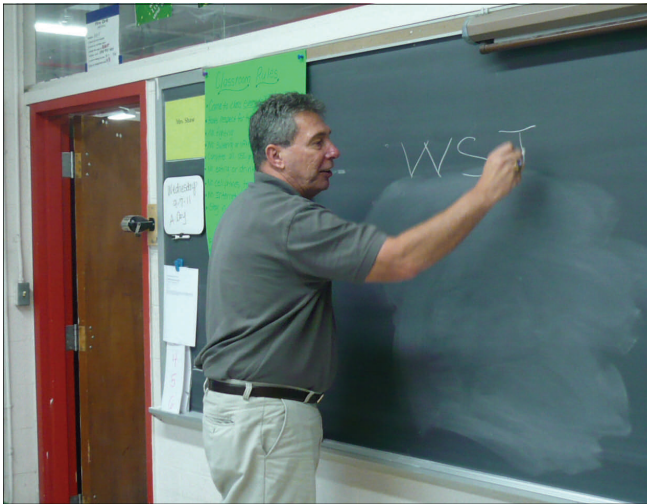
Tim Irish is a retired U.S. Army major, who currently teaches mathematics and computer skills at Case Junior High in Swansea, Massachusetts. Tim credits his getting a position at Case Junior High for this school year to good timing and the assistance of the New England Troops to Teachers office. Tim had previously passed the Massachusetts Tests for Educational Licensure and acquired a preliminary teaching license for the Commonwealth several years earlier, but the preliminary license wasn't opening any doors to a classroom.

Fortunately for Tim, the New England Troops to Teachers office was able to refer him to an accelerated post-baccalaureate teacher preparation program called "TEACH! SouthCoast", which is run by the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. The program consisted of successfully completing six

graduate level educator courses and student teaching in the New Bedford, Massachusetts school system. Upon completion of his program in June of 2011, Tim's license was upgraded to an initial license in Middle School mathematics.

When asked for a comment, Tim had the following to say, "I credit getting my position at Case Junior High School to participating in the Troops to Teachers and TEACH! SouthCoast programs and to daily lessons learned from my mentor at Normandin Middle School in New Bedford, Massachusetts."





Ronald L. De Palma, a retired sergeant first class with 28 years of service in the U.S. Army and Rhode Island Army National Guard, returned from a deployment to find his position had been eliminated by a reduction in force.

"I needed to make a career change," said Ronald. "I had always believed I would like to become a teacher and I wanted to use the experiences gained through my military and government service to help others. I was determined to become a special education teacher."

With the administrative, counseling and financial assistance provided by the Troops to Teachers program, Ronald was able

to complete a Masters-level special education teaching program at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. He recently secured his first long-term teaching assignment as a special education teacher in Cranston, Rhode Island.

"Thanks to the TTT program, I am now starting my new career with no outstanding student loans and an M.A.T. title following my name," said Ronald. "Thanks TTT!"



Join Our Team
Volunteer Mentors Wanted
 Contact Us Today!

*Counseling, Mentorship, Referral Services and up to \$10,000 in Financial Assistance.
 Serving Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island*

Margaret Gultekin, a sergeant with over 21 years of service in the U.S. Army Reserves and Army National Guard, is a special education teacher at Springfield High School in Springfield, Vermont.



The special education field provides Margaret with the ability to teach a variety of academic courses to students with diverse learning needs. The subjects she teaches include: Pre-Vocational Skills I, II and III, Civics, Driver's Education, Science, Healthy Issues for Teen and Study Skills.

She first heard about the Troops to Teachers program in 1999, when she began pursuing a teaching career. As Margaret enters her 12th year in the classroom, she reflects on her many teaching experiences.

"One of the things I enjoy about my job is when my students acknowledge me in the community after graduation and thank me for teaching them what they know," said Margaret. "Teaching also allows me to use my life experiences as teaching moments."

Margaret's school is categorized as high-need, which enabled her to qualify for a \$10,000 bonus from the Troops to Teachers program. In return, she has agreed to continue working at her school for the next three years.

