

Troops to Teachers seminar hosted by ACS

Wayne Cook
Public Affairs Staff

A Troops to Teachers/Spouses to Teachers seminar was hosted by Army Community Service at Building 5201 Aug. 20 for persons interested in seeking a profession in education.

The federal Troops to Teachers/Spouses to Teachers program assists eligible military personnel and their spouses with the transition into a second career as kindergarten through 12th grade public school teachers.

"We help ensure that the applicants meet state certification requirements. We also evaluate transcripts to make sure that the credits earned translate to those needed for the certification.

Our goal in the Troops to Teachers/Spouses to Teachers program is to facilitate a smooth and seamless transition into the world of teaching for the military members and their spouses," said Melissa Fantozzi, program coordinator, Troops to Teachers/Spouses to Teachers for New Jersey and Delaware.

Troops to Teachers (TTT) was established in 1994 as a Department of Defense pro-

gram. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal year 2000 transferred the responsibility for program oversight and funding to the U.S. Department of Education but continued operation by the Department of Defense.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 provides for the continuation of the TTT program. Troops to Teachers is managed by the Department Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES).

The goal of the program is to help recruit quality teachers for schools that serve students from low-income families throughout the country.

"Nationally we have helped to place 11,000 veterans in the system since the inception of the program. The retention rate of the former military teachers is just over 75 percent.

Eighty-four percent of those teachers are male. The majority of the teachers, 48 percent, teach at the high school level, with the remainder pretty much evenly split between the elementary and middle school levels," Fantozzi said.

To help recruit a larger number of teachers and to provide an opportunity in the education field for spouses of military members, the Spouses to

Teachers Program was created in October 2007.

To date, the state of New Jersey has had 55 registrations into the program.

"We are not an employment service, rather we give guidance and counseling to those seeking employment in the education field through these programs.

We have found that school systems like to have steady and mature workers in their schools and being in the military helps provide the discipline and dedication to profession that they seek," said Fantozzi.

"I think the two programs are excellent programs for the troops and spouses who want to teach. They provide a smooth and seamless transition into the education world," she said.

Another briefing will be held in the next few months. For more information, interested persons should contact Porfinio Rodriguez-Martell at Army Community Service by calling 609-562-2186 or 609-562-2767.

For more information on Troops to Teachers/Spouses to Teachers Programs, call 850-452-1241 or 800-231-6242, or check on the Internet at <http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes>.