

VETERAN

SA

New Year, Fresh Starts, Bold Journeys Welcoming 2025

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Start 2025 with Purpose and Gratitude

Dr. Coronado

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Meet Matt Thompson: Veteran and Entrepreneur

Matt Thompson served in the Navy from 1994 to 2017 as a Naval Flight Officer. Throughout all his years of service Matt is most proud of the times in which flew missions in Afghanistan, where he worked on counter-IED operations. One Christmas, he celebrated with his teammates in a tent, creating lasting friendships which happens to be one of his most fondest memories. After leaving the military, Matt earned an MBA and started a men's grooming business called Hammer and Nails.



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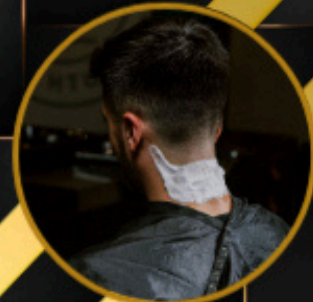
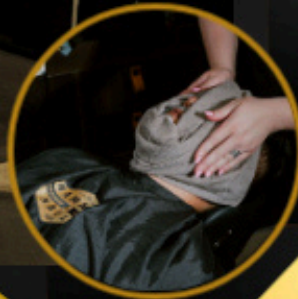


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Supporting Veterans and Families In the New Year

Start 2025 with Purpose and Gratitude

A new year is a chance to reflect on past achievements, overcome challenges, and set meaningful goals. For veterans and their families, it's also a time to focus on building stronger connections and finding ways to thrive. Together, we can create a supportive and uplifting community.

Reflection and Goal-Setting

Reflecting on the past helps identify strengths and areas for growth, fostering resilience. Veterans can start the year with purpose by setting attainable goals—whether pursuing education, finding a new career, or improving health. Families can work together to create shared goals, strengthen bonds and build a path forward.

Ways to Support the Veteran Community

- **Workshops:** Grace After Fire hosts goal-setting and wellness workshops for veterans (based in Houston). graceafterfire.org
- **Job Training:** Goodwill San Antonio offers free skills training for veterans. goodwillsa.org
- **Volunteer:** Spend time at South Texas Veterans Health Care System facilities to support local veterans. southtexas.va.gov

Resources for Veterans

- **Texas Veterans Network:** texvet.org
- **SAMMinistries:** samm.org
- **Veterans Crisis Line:** 1-800-273-8255, Press 1

Article Written By Dr. Coronado



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Lackland/ Ft Sam/ Randolph Outdoor Adventure Center

Are you looking to try new outdoor activities for yourself or with your family?

Being a military member or veteran comes with amazing perks, including access to the Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA) Outdoor Recreation Center. JBSA offers activities and programs that reduce stress, boost mood, and foster social connections.

Explore these exciting options:

- **Nature Trails and Hiking:** Clear your mind in peaceful surroundings.
- **Water Sports:** Relax with kayaking, paddleboarding, or fishing.
- **Camping Trips:** Enjoy therapeutic overnight stays in nature.
- **Team Sports or Group Activities:** Build camaraderie with group outings.
- **Fitness Programs:** Stay active with outdoor yoga, cycling, or boot camps.
- **Family and Community Events:** Enjoy picnics, barbecues, and seasonal celebrations.

Key JBSA Outdoor Recreation Facilities:

- **Lackland Outdoor Adventure Center (San Antonio, TX)**

Offers equipment rentals (boats, RVs, camping gear, chairs, tables) and features a FamCamp RV Park with full hook-ups, laundry, and restrooms with showers. Free annual Super Combo licenses are available for active-duty military and disabled veterans (50%+ disability).

- **Fort Sam Houston Outdoor Recreation (San Antonio, TX)**

Provides equipment rentals and manages a FamCamp RV Park with 74 full hook-up sites, bathhouses, laundry, and picnic tables. Salado Park offers picnic areas, playgrounds, and restrooms.

- **Randolph Outdoor Recreation (Universal City, TX)**

Offers rental equipment, RV storage, and issues Texas fishing and hunting licenses. Free annual Super Combo licenses are available for eligible active-duty military and disabled veterans.

- **Camp Bullis Outdoor Recreation Center (San Antonio, TX)**

Features gun and archery ranges, RV storage, and License to Carry classes. The gun range operates Friday through Sunday, while the archery range is open Thursday through Monday. Events like 3D archery shoots are also hosted.

These facilities provide tailored recreational opportunities for the military community in the San Antonio area.

Discover more:

For upcoming events and additional details, visit the JBSA Today website:

<https://jbsatoday.com/outdoor-recreation/>.



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Skillbridge - Job Transition: Employment, Education or Entrepreneurship:

Last month, we discussed embracing change as you transition from military life. This can feel daunting. The military often dictates what it believes you're good at, what you'll do, and for how long—until separation or retirement. Now, as you transition out, the choice is yours, which can feel overwhelming.

One key step is finding a mentor in your desired industry. Military life provided structure, financial support, and job security, often under the guidance of a supervisor, NCO, officer, or civilian mentor who helped with promotions, assignments, or life decisions. Sound familiar?

Perhaps you served in food services, security forces, or infantry but now want a career in IT, sales, business development, hotel management, or even starting a small business. If you're unsure how to begin, here are some tips:

- Use LinkedIn: Search for your desired industry and its professionals. Identify three companies you'd like to work for and connect with their employees.
- Identify your passions: Find like-minded individuals in your desired field.
- Research your industry or school: Determine how you can add value and make an impact.
- Leverage your network: Reach out to friends, family, or community members to share ideas and gather advice.
- Understand your personality: Whether introverted or extroverted, learn how to use your strengths effectively.

These steps can shift your mindset and help you navigate the transition to civilian life. While the journey isn't easy, it starts with engaging, reflecting, and locking in on what's next. Finding a mentor is a vital first step toward your new chapter.

Article By Quincy D. Harper - Transition Specialist



TRANSITION LIFE: WHAT'S YOUR EDUCATION STRATEGY?

San Antonio, Texas, also known as "Military City, USA," is home to a significant number of veterans and active-duty military personnel, making it a prime location for transitioning service members seeking educational opportunities. Whether pursuing a college degree, technical certification, or vocational training, the city offers various institutions tailored to veterans' needs. Here are some top schools for veterans:

1. **University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA)** UTSA offers strong military support services, including a dedicated Military and Veteran Services Center, Yellow Ribbon Program participation, and a Student Veterans Association for networking.

2. **Texas A&M University-San Antonio** - Known for its veteran-friendly policies, it features Patriots' Casa, affordable tuition, and flexible online courses.

3. **St. Philip's College** - A nationally recognized community college with a Veterans Outreach and Transition Center, career counseling, and vocational programs.

4. **Hallmark University** - Focuses on career-oriented education with accelerated programs in aviation, business, and cybersecurity, and local employer partnerships for job placement.

5. **San Antonio College (SAC)** - Offers a Victory Center for veteran services, flexible schedules, and various certificate and degree programs.

6. **Goodwill San Antonio Career Services** - Provides trade certifications in high-demand fields like IT, logistics, and healthcare, with job placement services.

Tips for Veterans:

- **Maximize your benefits like the Post-9/11 GI Bill.**
- **Visit campus resources for support.**
- **Align your education with career goals.**
- **Network with fellow veterans through student organizations.**

San Antonio's military heritage and veteran-friendly institutions make it a prime place for transitioning service members to further their education and careers.



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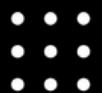
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January Social Vet Life & events!

Rosario's Rooftop Lounge for "Cozy Up Sundays"

722 S. St. Mary's Street, San Antonio, Texas 78205:

From 2 PM to 9 PM, enjoy drink specials like Bloody Marys, Mimosas, fine wines, and bubbly, all with stunning rooftop views. Escape the week's hustle and unwind in style.

Monster Jam: January 25 & 26 at the Alamodome. Contact Ticketmaster for tickets.

Boot and Bourbon Event: January 31st, VFW 76, 7 PM to 12 AM. Live music, bourbon tasting, raffles, and steak dinner. RSVP at C22TX@Combat22tx.com.

San Antonio Coalition for Veterans and Families BBQ Plate Sale: January 25th at 11 AM, 3302 SE Military Drive.

MLK Day Veterans Coffee Social: January 20th, Fred Brock American Legion Post No. 828, 3415 Martin Luther King Dr., SA, TX. Time: 7:30 – 9:30 AM.

Western Heritage Weekend Kickoff: January 31st, 5 PM, Market Square, Downtown San Antonio.

Food Pantry Pick Up: January 30th, 1 PM, 8102 Midcrown Dr., Windcrest, TX 78239.

Winter Wonderland: Valor San Antonio Community Event: January 25th, 2 to 4 PM, 4300 Centerview, SA, TX 78228.

Snow machine, cookie decorating, nachos, hot cocoa bar, scavenger hunt, and more.

Gabriel Iglesias @ Laugh Out Loud Comedy Club: January 16 & 17. Call LOL for ticket info.

Fourth Friday at The Rock at LA Cantera: January 24th, 6:30 PM, 1 Spurs Way, SA, TX.

5k Beer Run: Ranger Creek Brewing, Texas Brewery Running Series, SAT January 18th, 11 AM, 4834 Whirlwind Dr., SA, TX.

Spurs vs Pacers Watch Party: January 25th, 9:30 AM, The Rock at La Cantera, 1 Spurs Way, SA, TX.

Coffee Festival: February 8th, Civic Park at Hemisfair, 8 AM to 3 PM.

Vaquero Cook Off: February 1st, 12 PM, San Antonio Downtown Market Square.

First Friday Pub Run Mardi Gras: February 7th, 7 PM, Southtown Bar.

San Antonio Rodeo: February 3 to 15th, Frost Bank Center: Music, rodeo, fairgrounds, and carnival.

Wild West Wildlife Festival: January 25th, 10 AM, 210 W Market St, San Antonio, TX.

San Antonio Rodeo BBQ Cookoff: January 23rd–26th, Frost Bank Center.

Combat 22 Free Health and Nutrition Smoothie Class: January 23rd, 7 PM to 8 PM (Veterans, Military, and Dependents), VFW 76. RSVP at C22TX@combat22TX.com. Space limited.



TWO CULTURES
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ONE LIFESTYLE



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Resources for Veterans In San Antonio

Here's a curated list of the 20 best resources for Veterans in San Antonio that offer support in food assistance, financial aid, housing, substance treatment, and mental health. This list is tailored to ensure a comprehensive guide for Veterans seeking help.

San Antonio Food Bank

<https://safoodbank.org/>

VetStrong

<https://vetstrong.org/>

American GI Forum - National Veterans Outreach Program (NVOP)

<https://agif-nvop.org/>

Haven for Hope

<https://www.havenforhope.org/>

Financial Services

Operation Homefront

<https://operationhomefront.org/>

Veterans Assistance Fund (Bexar County)

<https://www.bexar.org/>

Texas Veterans Commission

<https://tvc.texas.gov/>

Good Samaritan Veterans Outreach & Transition Center

<https://www.alamo.edu/spc/gsvotc>

Housing Assistance

SAMMinistries

<https://samm.org/>

HUD-VASH Program (through VA)

Veterans Housing Resource Center (NVOP)

American GI Forum Residential Center for Homeless Veterans

Substance Treatment

Laurel Ridge Treatment Center

<https://laurelridgeetc.com/>

San Antonio Recovery Center

Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (VA South Texas)

Alpha Home

**Strength in unity,
hope in recovery,
healing starts with
us.**

Battle-Tested Laughs: Military Humor

New Year, Same Drill: A Military Resolution

As the New Year approached, the military unit was gearing up for another year of drills, missions, and good-natured banter. Sergeant Thompson, a veteran of many New Year's Eves, stood at the front of the briefing room, preparing his troops for the upcoming festivities.

"Alright, listen up," he began, his voice serious but with a twinkle of mischief. "We're about to enter a brand new year, and I want to remind you of a few things. First, New Year's resolutions—don't bother. We're in the military, we don't have time for resolutions. If you want to get fit, I've got plenty of push-ups for you. If you want to 'find yourself,' I'll point you straight to the supply room and tell you to look for the missing gear from last year."

The troops chuckled, knowing full well that Sergeant Thompson's humor was as sharp as his training.

"But, here's the real resolution," he said, pausing for dramatic effect. "This year, we're going to take one step forward every day. Whether it's a step towards improvement, a step towards finishing that paperwork, or a step to get to the chow hall before it closes. And if all else fails, we'll just take one more step away from the 1st Sergeant when we hear 'inspection!'"

Happy New Year, soldiers!



PT New Year's Resolutions

Sergeant: "What's your New Year's resolution, Private?"

Private: "To run faster than my alarm clock, Sergeant!"

Sergeant: "And what if you fail?"

Private: "Then I'll resolve to outrun your yelling!"

Sergeant: "Good plan. You'll need it. PT starts at 0400 tomorrow."

Deployment Countdown Math

Private: "Happy New Year, sir! Only 364 days left in the year!"

Lieutenant: "No, Private. It's 365. Leap year!"

Private: "So I just signed up for an extra day of deployment?"

Lieutenant: "Yes, Private. That's what happens when you fail math in basic training."

Military Budget Fireworks

Private: "Why doesn't the Army celebrate New Year's with fireworks?"

Sergeant: "Because we'd overspend the budget firing actual artillery rounds."

Private: "Well, that'd definitely bring in the New Year with a bang!"

Sergeant: "It'd also bring in the Inspector General. Let's stick to sparklers."

Military Time Confusion

New recruit: "Happy New Year, Sergeant! It's midnight!"

Sergeant: "Recruit, it's 0000 hours."

Recruit: "What's the difference?"

Sergeant: "In the military, we don't just lose sleep; we lose track of civilian time!"

Recruit: "Guess I'll just resolve to figure out 24-hour clocks..."

"Military New Year's Countdown"

In the military, we don't count down from 10 for New Year's—we start at 0300 and call it PT!

JANUARY ENTERTAINMENT



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8PM-MIDNIGHT

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**THURSDAY
JAN 16TH**

**THURSDAY
JAN 23RD**



**FRIDAY
JAN 17TH**

**FRIDAY
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VA JBSA NEWS

Leadership Transition

President-elect Donald Trump has nominated former Georgia congressman Doug Collins to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs. Collins, a Navy veteran and Air Force Reserve chaplain with service in Iraq, will prioritize streamlining regulations and combating corruption within the VA to enhance services for veterans.

Legislative Reforms

In December 2024, Congress passed the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act, which President Biden signed into law on January 3, 2025. This legislation introduces several key changes:

- **Caregiver Support:** Enhances mental health services for veterans' caregivers.
- **Homelessness Programs:** Expands initiatives to reduce veteran homelessness.
- **Community Care:** Improves access to community-based health care.
- **Job Training and Education:** Increases job training and education benefits for veterans.

GI Bill Eligibility Expansion

Following a U.S. Supreme Court decision in April 2024, the VA announced on January 6, 2025, that veterans with multiple periods of military service may be eligible for up to 12 additional months of education benefits under the GI Bill. This could impact over a million veterans.

2025 VA Disability Compensation Rates

Effective December 1, 2024, veterans receiving disability compensation will see a 2.5% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) in their monthly payments. This adjustment aims to offset inflation and maintain the purchasing power of benefits. Veterans with a 10% rating will receive an additional \$4.28 per month, while those with a 100% rating will see an increase of \$93.45 per month.

JBSA NEWS:

TRICARE Region Transition

- **Regional Contractor Change:** Texas has transitioned from the TRICARE East Region to the West Region. TriWest Healthcare Alliance is now the regional contractor, replacing Health Net Federal Services. Beneficiaries should update payment information and verify providers in the new network.

TRICARE Program Enhancements

- **Childbirth and Breastfeeding Support:** The TRICARE demonstration expands to overseas locations. U.S. doulas must meet updated certification requirements. The program ends December 31, 2026, after which TRICARE will decide on permanent coverage.
- **Drive Time Waiver Policy:** TRICARE Prime beneficiaries who relocate more than 30 minutes (but less than 100 miles) from their military treatment facility can remain with their primary care manager. TRICARE will notify affected beneficiaries.

Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) Adjustments

- **Rate Increase:** Effective January 1, 2025, BAH rates have increased by 5.4%. This adjustment reflects housing cost changes across different markets. Service members can calculate their specific BAH rates using the official Department of Defense calculator.

Pay Raise for Service Members

- **Salary Increase:** The Department of Defense's 2025 budget includes a 4.5% pay raise for service members, supporting military personnel and their families.

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. Care."**

Veteran Specials

- ✓ Direct Cremation Starting At \$695
- ✓ Direct Burial Starting At \$1,895
- ✓ Fees payable to a third party may apply Caskets vary in prices, based on material



Thank You for Supporting Our Heroes

At Veteran SA, we are deeply committed to honoring and empowering the brave men and women who have served our nation. Through Combat 22, we bring attention to the challenges veterans face, including the battle against veteran suicide. By sharing powerful stories, providing essential resources, and fostering meaningful community connections, we strive to build a supportive network for veterans in San Antonio.

Join us in our mission to make a lasting impact. Stay informed, get involved, and support local businesses that are dedicated to improving the lives of our veterans. Together, we can combat the struggles they face, celebrate their resilience, and ensure that those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom never fight alone. If you would like to support our cause activate the QR code below to donate anything possible that could help sustain the ability to keep this magazine going. If you have ideas for future articles please email us at C22tx@combat22tx.com

COMBAT 22
LOSING ONE IS NOT AN OPTION

