



# TRANSFORMING VETERANS into Franchise Owners

By Candra Jackson and  
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Veterans sacrifice their lives, precious time with loved ones, and sometimes their dreams to serve this country. There are programs across the country dedicated to helping veterans and their spouses select which franchise to own, in addition to training on how to successfully run and operate a business. Many franchise systems and suppliers offer veteran discounts, creating financial

incentives to own a franchise. Providing access to programs dedicated to transitioning honorable veterans and military spouses back to civilian life through franchise ownership is an impactful way to utilize the skills veterans acquire while serving the nation.

According to the International Franchise Association, veterans make up 14% of the overall franchising network. After completing service, veterans apply the same skills used in service to lead, delegate orders, and meet goals to their role as franchise owners, thus making veterans ideal candidates to

own and manage a franchise.

In support of veterans in their franchising endeavors, the attorneys at Shelton Law & Associates offer discounts to veterans interested in franchising and assists franchisors with developing veteran-run franchise systems.

Several programs and resources are available to veterans, but one program in particular puts their money where their mouth is. The Veteran Franchise Initiative offered through Veteran 2 Employment (V2E) helps veterans own franchise businesses at no cost.

V2E aims to integrate military personnel with base transition programs. A first of its kind, the Veteran Franchise Initiative bridges the gap between military personnel who do not have available funds to purchase a franchise with investors passionate about helping veterans start a franchise business.

Joel Stewart, CEO of the Veteran Franchise Initiative, shares how his program impacts lives of transitioning veterans and their families.

## What is the Veteran Franchise Initiative?

The Veteran Franchise Initiative is a certified apprenticeship program that helps veterans purchase 51% or more controlling interest



## *Creating access to franchise ownership through veteran assistance programs.*

in a franchise as the designated manager. The program is more than just a catalyst to entrepreneurship; it also requires veterans to complete an extensive two- or three-year management apprenticeship with a partnered franchise. After veterans complete the apprenticeship, a portion of the profits earned during the program is redistributed into a grant fund used to purchase the franchise's majority ownership stake at no cost to the veteran.

### **What are the franchise selection and pairing processes for interested veterans?**

First, interested veterans go through a vetting period to qualify for the program. Once qualified, applicants undergo a franchise navigator assessment to better understand their skills and areas of opportunity. After the assessment is complete, applicants receive an individualized consultation to identify their background, goals, and interest to assist program administrators in pairing applicants with the right franchise. Applicants are then paired with a partnered franchise that is aligned with their career goals and passions.

The Veteran Franchise Initiative has established several relationships with franchisors that are willing to participate in the program. This approach allows franchisees to focus on opening new locations, not new franchises. The program offers a diverse selection of franchises across several industries like sandwiches, senior care, axe throwing, government contracting, bio-hazard removal, and automotive—with many of these partnerships ready for business.



### **So, what is the big takeaway of the Veteran Franchise Initiative?**

Joel made it clear that “helping veterans own a franchise makes perfect sense because veterans thrive in an environment where they are expected to use their skills and strategies to manage business operations and daily processes successfully.” Franchisors need people who can do all of that efficiently.

### **How do veteran franchise programs impact lives of veterans?**

Statistics show veterans are much happier owning their own businesses than working in the service sector. In a study reported by Military.com, veterans are five times more dissatisfied with their work and experience

dissatisfaction with their job at an accelerating rate of 11%. Creating an avenue to franchise ownership could reduce the proportion of unhappy and dissatisfied veterans, increasing their quality of life on several fronts. Pun intended. When done correctly, franchise ownership results in generational wealth and access to resources.

Veteran franchise programs offered across the United States gives veterans the tools to successfully transition to franchise owners while also helping them earn a satisfying and rewarding career. ▀

**Candra Jackson** is a third-year law student at the McGeorge School of Law and current extern at Shelton Law & Associates. She is proud to be part of the Shelton Law & Associates Franchise Team. As part of the team, she works alongside attorneys who offer guidance and support to franchisors and franchisees as they achieve their franchise goals.

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SLA additionally works with entrepreneurs buying franchises by assisting with business creation, industry evaluations, franchise disclosure document review, fairness factors, opinion letters, and negotiations.

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To locate the franchise directory available to veterans, visit [www.vetfran.org](http://www.vetfran.org)