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## **Rhode Island’s Veterans Internship Program**

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***SENEAIA assists veterans to explore meaningful career paths through internships with Rhode Island companies***

MIDDLETOWN, RI—The Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance (SENEAIA) has received a Real Jobs RI grant through the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (RIDLT) to help veterans explore and find career opportunities through meaningful civilian internships. By working together with the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs, SENEAIA will help ensure that veterans have an opportunity to explore employment opportunities in Rhode Island and find fulfilling careers after they have served our country in the military.

“Our veterans have been trained to have the unique competencies to be value-added team members,” said Ms. Molly Donohue Magee, Executive Director of SENEAIA. “We know the companies and institutions in our state welcome our veterans for their experience and skills that will strengthen their businesses.”

Over the next five years, an estimated one million service members will transition back into civilian communities across the U.S. Rhode Island currently has almost 68,000 veterans living in

the state, half of these veterans are younger than 64 years. Over 7,000 men and women leaving the military are post-9/11 Gulf War era. Veterans report that finding a job can be a significant challenge in transitioning into civilian life; explaining how their military skills translate to the civilian workforce is not always easy.

“We are excited to partner with SENEDIA to help veterans find meaningful internships and explore careers in the defense industry,” said Director Yarn, the state’s first Director of Veterans Affairs. “Our veterans are assets to our community and our region’s employers, and I applaud SENEDIA for its focus and determination to open pathways for our nation’s most skilled, talented, and service-minded individuals.”

Veteran experiences train them for problem solving, leadership, team work, and time management, all skills valued by the civilian workforce. They develop traits welcomed as a future employee including a strong sense of respect, ethics, reliability, conscientiousness and attention to detail. Rhode Island businesses appreciate military service, yet some do not fully understand how this experience translates to their interests as civilian employers. Veterans looking to understand the civilian working environment and the needs of a business, need to be able to effectively translate their talents, interests, skills and experiences into a dialogue, a resume and interviews that connect with employment opportunities.

SENEDIA will work with the RI Office of Veterans Affairs, veterans seeking employment, state academic institutions, and other state resources/companies to connect veterans to civilian career opportunities. SENEDIA will help our veterans to leverage their unique set of skills, experiences and leadership abilities developed and honed during their years in the military. Through internships, resume and interviewing support, a technical workshop, and working with hiring companies, SENEDIA is committed to ensuring that veterans who wish to find gainful employment in the RI civilian world have the opportunity to do so.

This year SENEDIA will provide internships for un- and underemployed veterans for multiple career tracks including: Engineering and Science, Technology, Professional Services, Business Services, Logistic Services, Manufacturing, Administrative Services and the Trades. Each internship involves 80 hours of service at a hiring company for which the veteran is paid a \$1500 stipend.

“Our veterans have served selflessly for our country, and now are looking to transition into the civilian world. SENEDIA can help,” said Ms. Lee Silvestre, the SENEDIA Veterans Internship Program Manager. “It is our privilege to help those veterans looking for meaningful employment to explore career options through internships with our Rhode Island companies who can benefit from their training and experiences.”

SENEDIA is Southeastern New England’s catalyst for thought leadership and innovation in undersea technology, cybersecurity and defense technologies. The organization is focused on providing its members and the region with the latest information about opportunities in the defense and homeland security sectors and facilitates workforce development efforts. SENEDIA has over 100 members from the region.

For more information on SENEDIA, visit [www.Senedia.org](http://www.Senedia.org) .