

LOCKLEED NEWS



Captain Katie Lunning, 379th Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron critical care air transport team registered nurse stands in front of a C-17 Globemaster III on Oct. 13 at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. Lunning participated in one of the largest human airlifts in United States history by providing medical care to evacuees or service members while on board a C-17 Globemaster III. U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kylie Barrow | 2021

Minnesotan becomes first Air Guard nurse to receive national honor

The Distinguished Flying Cross Medal is the nation's highest award for aerial achievement. On Saturday, a Minnesota National Guard member will be the first Air Guard flight nurse to receive the honor.

In August 2021, Air Force Major Katie Lunning and her team administered care to 22 patients during a flight. They were critically injured at the Kabul airport by a suicide bomb blast.

She hadn't slept for 50 hours before the flight, but Lunning said her focus was on the injured.

"My team, we all have kids. So we all wanted to be back with our kids. And we talked about that is how all of these people have family too," the Hastings native said. "And so we were going to do everything we could to make sure that they arrived as safely as possible to get back to their families."

All the injured survived the eight-hour flight to Germany.

Lunning said she loves being a nurse and is grateful that her profession has been recognized with the award. She will be the first Air Guard flight nurse to receive the prestigious medal.

"I'm very proud that nursing had the opportunity to receive this award," Lunning said. "The award is pretty rare, obviously, for a nurse to receive it, so [I'm] grateful that they thought about nursing and the impact that nursing can have."

Minnesota National Guard officials said Lunning's "professional competence and aerial skill" was vital to saving lives.

Lunning works as an Intensive Care Unit nurse manager in the Central Iowa VA.

Air Force Gen. Michael Loh, director of the Air National Guard, will travel to Minnesota to present the honor to Lunning. Also in attendance will be her husband Josh, their daughter Addie and her parents.



U.S. Air Force Capt. Katie Lunning, center, 379th Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, critical care air transport team registered nurse, checks equipment on a C-17 Globemaster III in Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 20. Courtesy of Maj. Katie Lunning | 2021



What Can Employers Do To Compete In The Tight Market of 2023

Eliminate artificial barriers in your hiring process that keep talent on the sidelines.

One strategy many companies are implementing involves eliminating degree requirements in job ads, but experts say employers would also be wise to stop looking in the same places for talent.

Embrace the need for speed. Recruiters say one of the biggest mistakes employers are making is moving slowly during the hiring process — dragging out interviews, having periods of little communication with candidates or delaying decisions. Experts say savvy businesses are finding ways to streamline the process, such as communicating by text with candidates, batching all interviews on the same day and removing red tape from the hiring process.

Take a long-term view on pay. With quit rates remaining elevated, experts say businesses need to defend their top performers — especially in light of inflation. That being said, they also need to avoid pushing salaries too high, too fast with a potential slowdown on tap.

Why Veterans Make Excellent Hires

The men and women who serve their country and are successful in their military careers exhibit certain skills and traits. These same attributes are highly desired in the civilian workplace. What is unique about veterans is that you will routinely find these qualities in young men and women. Characteristics not usually found in adults under the age of thirty are quite common in veterans in their early twenties.

The pipeline is robust.

More than 220,000 service members complete their service obligations or retire EVERY YEAR. And, just about all of those transitioning service members will look to the civilian sector for a new job EVERY YEAR. These transitioning service members have anywhere from 3 to more than 20 years of experience.

The talent pool is diverse.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2021 (the most recent year reported) DoD employed just over 1.4 million service men and women in its active component. White 58.1%, Hispanic or Latino 16.8%, Black or African American 14.2%, Asian, 5.4%, Unknown 4.5%, American Indian and Alaska Native 1%

The candidates are technically skilled.

The Department of Defense has over 7,000 Military Occupational Codes representing the different job skills in its workforces. Roughly 81% of them are closely related to or identical to civilian positions. The military has mechanics, electricians, civil engineers, database administrators, satellite operators, physical therapists, human resources generalists, lawyers, warehouse managers, pilots, food service workers and financial specialists, to name just a few categories

