

Fort Leonard Wood Area's Hidden Labor Advantages

Findings from the Prager Company Labor Asset Report, May 2009

"Labor force opportunities are unlimited and simply have not yet been tapped. The caliber of the workforce is beyond comprehension with loads of highly skilled, dedicated, disciplined individuals who give you more than a full day's work for a full day's pay."

Riley Wooten,
Vice President
Nitar, L.L.C.

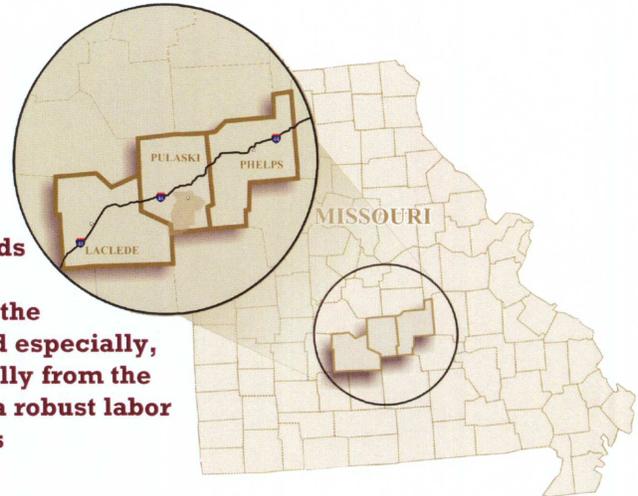
"Absolutely the workforce is available here. People are dependable with high values. And this is a comfortable community. These are but some of the reasons a company should locate here."

Warren Noll, Manager
21st Century
Systems, Inc.

"There are a lot of people with the right experience and ethics I would love to hire. A great many have the talent and high level technical skills for a small tech company as well as those qualified to man the lines of a manufacturer."

Ted Day, President
Mo Sci Corporation

The Fort Leonard Wood area is a treasure trove of trained and trainable individuals with boundless potential. Yet its labor force remains poorly understood. Anchored by the 20,000 military personnel of Fort Leonard Wood and its advanced Engineer, Military Police and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Schools, the area exudes technical ability. Thousands of job seekers, quality academic institutions and the students they produce, and especially, the talent emerging annually from the Fort combine to make for a robust labor base uncommon in today's rural America.



- ➔ The Fort Leonard Wood area labor force is almost 110,000 strong, 54% of whom are in its three I-44 counties – Laclede, Phelps and Pulaski. Roughly 11,000 individuals are currently seeking employment
- ➔ The area houses the Missouri University of Science and Technology, a top U.S. research and engineering school. Fewer than 1% of its 1,000 annual graduates remain upon graduation, a number that would grow appreciably with available technical jobs
- ➔ Technical training schools abound, offering demand-driven curricula in computer, medical, machining and manufacturing, and engineering-related fields
- ➔ An estimated 20% of high school graduates annually leave the Fort Leonard Wood area to find work not available locally
- ➔ Under-employment is rampant. Businesses and workforce experts hazard that upwards of 40% work in jobs not sufficiently leveraging their talents
- ➔ At least 400 seek jobs in computer and engineering fields, such as Operations Engineers, Industrial Engineering Technicians, Computer Specialists and Systems Analysts
- ➔ Thousands of area job seekers are skilled in the manufacturing trades, including those with advanced machining and machine tool acumen
- ➔ Fort Leonard Wood schools annually graduate more than 50,000 highly trained individuals. On average, roughly \$20,000 to \$30,000 is spent on each to fortify them with sought after skills

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"We are able to quickly identify five to ten candidates for any job, including high-tech positions. If there was a company that required 50 IT professionals or engineers, we could fill them all within six months."

Joe Coonrod, President
Express Personnel
Services

"The people who come to Fort Leonard Wood are usually here because they're at the apex of their career. With their management skills, many could run organizations in any industry. The work that a company may ask them to do will not approach what they have already done."

Bill Rostad, President
and CEO Nitar, L.L.C.

"Fort Leonard Wood retirees are driven, challenge-seeking, Type A personalities. They come with strong management and leadership ability in addition to their technical skills. They give you more than what is asked for."

Robert Gunter
Concurrent
Technologies
Corporation

- ➔ Close to 1,000 military retirees live in Pulaski County alone. More than half seek new or better jobs. The term "retiree" is a misnomer as their average age is 51, and most are just beginning their civilian careers
- ➔ About 4,000 spouses of active military reside in the Fort Leonard Wood area, most within Pulaski County. Roughly 60% are interested in full-time employment
- ➔ Military retirees and spouses are highly educated. About 40% of military retirees hold undergraduate degrees and 20% have masters degrees in business and technical fields. About 21% of military spouses hold undergraduate degrees, and 13% hold masters degrees

Profile of a Military Retiree



- **Highly Trained**
- **College Degreed**
- **Technologically Advanced**
- **Job Ready**
- **Communicator**
- **Physically Fit**
- **Full Health Benefits**
- **Affordable**
- **Dependable**
- **Proven Leadership**

- ➔ Albeit trained for military purposes, skills of current Fort Leonard Wood military retirees directly translate to the private sector:
 - ➔ More than 300 are graduates of the Engineer School, most with expertise in Engineering Management, Systems Management and Program Integration
 - ➔ Over 200 are graduates of the Military Police School with skills transferable to Homeland Security, Policing, Investigation and Intelligence
 - ➔ About 100 are graduates of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School, skilled in Environmental Management, Environmental Compliance and Testing, and other rapidly advancing fields
- ➔ Military retirees have leadership, management, quality assurance and communications training often allowing them to rise through the corporate ranks faster than their counterparts
- ➔ The majority have or had Secret or Top Secret military clearance in great demand by today's military contractors
- ➔ Wage rates in the Fort Leonard Wood area provide a 10% to 20% savings over Missouri's more urbanized areas
- ➔ And military retirees and spouses receive full health care and other military benefits. As such, they may not require costly employer-sponsored insurance, often eclipsing 40% of total employee compensation