Coding for Veterans offers tech sector training

By [Lookout](#) on Nov 19, 2021

Pat Shaw, Academic Director for Coding for Veterans, travelled across Canada to educate military members on Coding for Veterans. Photo by Patricia Leboeuf, Petawawa Post

There are unique opportunities for life after the uniform for veterans and members considering leaving the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

Coding for Veterans (C4V) channels the distinctive skillset military members acquire during their military careers into well-paid and highly in-demand jobs in the cybersecurity and software development fields.

"The beauty of this is that veterans bring a range of skills and capabilities and a mindset that is directed towards security, so all we have to do is bring them up to speed on the technology," says Pat Shaw, Academic Director for Coding for Veterans.

CAF personnel tend to have a protective mentality and integrity, with the bonus of already possessing security clearance, he noted. This makes them highly desired by employers who are looking for qualified staff.

"I personally know people who have been 14 months in the queue trying to get a security clearance as a civilian, and by then, the employer will have already hired somebody from our program rather than wait."

The need for qualified staff in the fields of cybersecurity and software development is growing every day. When the program was first formed, statistics showed there would be a need for an additional 127,000 jobs in the field. In just the last year that number has grown to 147,000 direct jobs. "But just last month, the University of Ottawa has correlated the skills being taught in this program to open jobs in Canada and that came up to 242,000 jobs today. We are actually losing ground by not being able to get people through the training and into the workforce fast enough."

With hundreds of thousands of positions to be filled in Canada, people are nearly guaranteed a job once they graduate. Many even find themselves employed before they've gotten their diploma.

"I prefer to call our students 'candidates' because technically, from our industry perspective, they are job-ready and the reality is that employers view them to be. Every week we get calls saying 'Can we meet candidates because we have X number of openings?'"

The program is 100 per cent online, created with input from industry partners and the University of Ottawa. The Department of National Defence reviews the curriculum, and professors come from accredited universities across the nation.

Candidates can complete the program in 12 to 24 months.

"We acknowledge that veterans might have other draws than school in their lives, so we have some great flexibility to enable that."

The program has also opened up to CAF spouses and family members.

"The Ontario government Ministry of Labour has provided some funding for full scholarships for a small number of them."

Former interpreters from Afghanistan who have settled in Canada are also invited to apply to the program if they qualify. For more information, to apply, or to complete the assessment to the program, visit www.codingforveterans.com.

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