

Retired lieutenant-colonel Tim Greenwood, centre, does a great job describing @Coding for Veterans' programs to Warrant Officer

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Retired lieutenant-colonel Tim Greenwood, centre, does a great job describing @[Coding for Veterans](#)' programs to Warrant Officer (retired) Danny Simard, right. Greenwood is a student in the online career training program, which executive director Jeff Musson brought to the Valley September 29.

Simard is just who Coding for Veterans is looking for: he's a 30-year [Canadian Armed Forces](#) veteran, an avionics systems technician on the CP140 Aurora, with a few years at General Dynamics on his resume.

"I'm not bored – there's a lot of work to do around the house, but this is up my alley, there are limited jobs around here and this could open another career for a retired person," Simard said, "I saw this and thought, 'I've got to stop!'"

What he saw was Musson's side-of-the-road decal van and pop up tent on Central Avenue in Greenwood. Musson left Ottawa on an East Coast "caravan," bringing an

online career training option to Maritime military communities and the DEFSEC Atlantic Conference.

"There are 147,000 IT jobs projected to fill across Canada, and the pandemic has pulled the economy 15 years into the future of online work," Musson says, describing his own business' challenging search a few years ago for computer-savvy employees.

"I made a list of the ideal people: leaders, technically skilled, team members, a can-do attitude – and realized all of that can be found in military personnel. Is it possible to find people leaving the military with these skills and aptitudes? We did some focus groups with veterans and, yes, you can – but they all said, 'You've got to come to us: we're done moving!'"

Going further, Musson worked with the University of Ottawa to create the Coding for Veterans eight-month software development and cyber security program: all military veteran classes, online, self-paced with regular check-ins, Veterans Affairs Canada and Manulife tuition approved, with included job-ready training and certifications. That was three years ago.

"This is filling the technical world's needs, and helping the men and women who serve and have served Canada retrain and find solid employment. We're seeing people hired to work from home: that's the tech world – anywhere you have internet, you can work. It's a win-win."

Greenwood left 14 Wing Greenwood in 2010 from the navigator trade, worked overseas and in the private sector, but is now retired in Harbourville and working his way through Coding for Veterans' online program.

"I did a tour at 14 Software Engineering Squadron here years ago, I ran some NATO exercises, taught some leadership skills in the oil and gas industry. Now, I only want part-time work to keep me busy. I saw Coding for Veterans in a SCAN seminar, and I'd always been interested.

"Computers – you either love them or you don't, but there are tonnes of different roles for what I'm learning now, in banking security operations, maintaining networks, firewall coding, programming, cyber training...."

Musson says there are currently 170 students on Coding for Veterans' program, and it's been amazing, "in terms of growth, to see how the program has skyrocketed."

