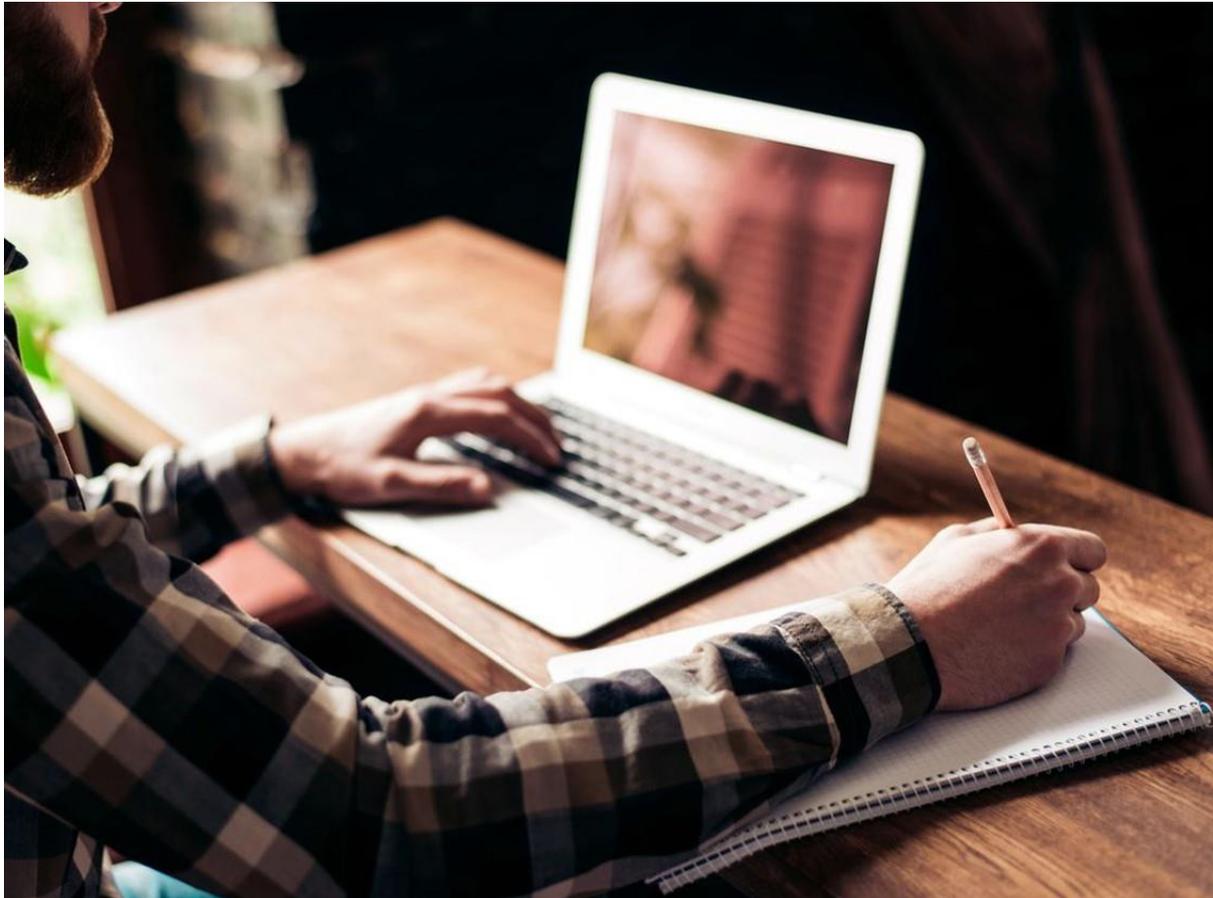


# Coding for Veterans Career Caravan visiting Garrison Petawawa Oct. 20-21

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The Coding for Veterans Career Caravan will be visiting the Canex at Garrison Petawawa Oct. 20-21, looking to meet with individuals interested in a second career in information technology. PHOTO BY DEAGREEZ /Getty Images/iStockphoto

A program to retrain Canada's veterans for tech jobs is expanding to include military spouses and Afghan interpreters.

The Coding for Veterans (C4V) Career Caravan is at the halfway point of its cross-Canada recruitment tour. The C4V Careers Caravan will be travelling throughout Ontario for the next month and it will be set up at the Canex at Garrison Petawawa Oct. 20-21 beginning at 9 a.m. each day.

The mission of C4V is to bring troops from deployment to employment, even in the face of COVID-19. The goal of the C4V program is to harness the skills and experiences of veterans who have served the country by training them for second, well-paying civilian careers as software and cyber-security professionals.

"They served us all with dedication and sacrifice during their military career and now we are providing them an opportunity to help fill the urgent skills shortage in the IT sector,

which is causing a critical drag on the Canadian economy,” says Jeff Musson, executive director of Coding for Veterans. “Veterans feel they can still serve our country but their duty has now moved from the battlefield to cyberspace.”

The program has expanded this year to include military spouses and family members among its students. Most recently, to support the resettlement of those citizens of Afghanistan who served alongside Canadian troops, C4V has opened the program to allow Afghan interpreters who can safely immigrate to Canada, to enrol and retrain for tech sector jobs alongside the CAF members they once served beside overseas.

It’s estimated that nearly 150,000 software and cyber-security positions in this country could go unfilled in the next couple of years. The Coding for Veterans Career Caravan is COVID-19 compliant, meaning veterans will be able to safely receive invaluable career advice in person.

C4V is an intensive eight-month online program offered in partnership with the University of Ottawa that provides graduating military veterans with job-ready training and certification in the areas of software development and cyber security. For those CAF veterans who qualify, the tuition for the program is fully paid for by Veterans Affairs Canada.

“We are providing the military veterans with the tools required for a career in IT,” says C4V academic director Pat Shaw. “We have tech companies and government agencies interested in filling their tech talent pipeline with graduates from our program, while at the same time, our program provides military veterans with a solid career in which to gain stable, long-term employment.”

Every year, approximately 7,000 men and women leave the Canadian Forces. They’re often perceived as only having the skill set for security work or policing. C4V has done extensive research to determine that military personnel are especially suited for software and cyber security work. COVID-19 restrictions have all but halted the usual in-person job fairs people leaving the military depend upon to help them transition into civilian life and find good-paying jobs.

“The pandemic has led to a doubling of enrollment as the demand for IT jobs continues to grow due to the pandemic,” adds Musson. “COVID-19 has pulled the workforce years into the future. Companies are opening jobs to veterans and ready to hire no matter where they live. The program is delivered online and they can continue to work remotely.”

The Coding for Veterans Career Caravan tour will stop in most major military installations and training centres in Canada ahead of Remembrance Day 2021, where it will make its final stop in Ottawa Nov. 10-11.

