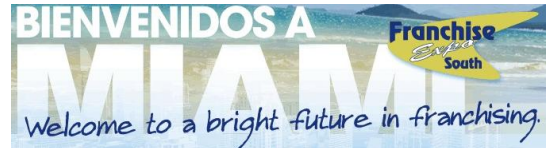




Franchising
Building local businesses,
one opportunity at a time.



VETERANS INVITED TO MIAMI EXPO TO EXPLORE FRANCHISE OPPORTUNITIES

Franchise Ownership Seen as Key Strategy in Veterans Transition Efforts

WASHINGTON, Dec. 29, 2011— With unemployment rates for veterans climbing as high as 30 percent, the International Franchise Association (IFA) announced it is inviting U.S. veterans and military spouses to explore franchise career opportunities **free of charge** at the IFA's FRANCHISE EXPO SOUTH, the premier franchise expo serving the Southeastern US, where hundreds of proven franchise companies will exhibit and meet prospective franchise business owners and team members.

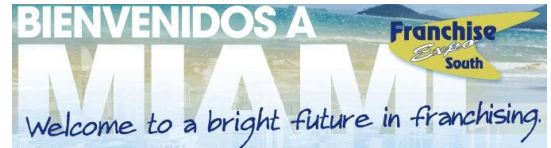
The invitation to veterans and military spouses is part of the IFA's **Operation Enduring Opportunity** campaign to offer veterans career paths and small business ownership opportunities in their transition into civilian life. As tens of thousands of service men and women return to the U.S. from deployment in Iraq, Afghanistan and Southwest Asia, the franchise industry has committed to hiring as team members and recruiting as franchise owners 75,000 veterans and 5,000 wounded warriors by 2014. The campaign, announced by First Lady Michelle Obama as part of the White House Joining Forces Initiative, represents the largest industry veteran hiring commitment to date.

Franchise brands in dozens of business categories including The UPS Store, Sign-a-rama, Jani-King, Schlotskys, Guidant Financial and PitaPit are among the exhibitors at the Expo. In support of Operation Enduring Opportunity, The UPS Store® [announced](#) an increased financial incentive for up to 10 qualified U.S. military veterans to open their own locations – valued at approximately \$300,000. Over 150 U.S. veterans have become franchise owners of The UPS Store® since IFA's VetFran program was established in 1991.

In support of the franchise industry campaign, [Guidant Financial](#) is offering a 10% discount on services to all U.S. veterans, as well as sponsoring one veteran each month in 2012 to use Guidant's services free of charge. The company has committed to helping fund 500 U.S. veterans to become franchise small business owners by 2014.

“We often speak about the sacred trust we have with our service men and women, and one way we honor that trust is ensuring they have every possible opportunity for success,” said IFA President & CEO Steve Caldeira. “As tens of thousands of service men and women return from deployment, expanded opportunities are needed to ensure veterans and their families are able to transition into the

civilian economy. With its rapid training opportunities, proven systems, and need for operational excellence, franchising provides an ideal structure to enable returning veterans to become leaders of and productive participants in the U.S. economy.”



Veterans have a track record of success in franchising. According to a recent study based on U.S. Census data, there are more than 66,000 veteran-owned franchise establishments in the United States, providing jobs directly for 815,000 Americans. Over 2,100 veterans have become franchise business owners through the IFA's VetFran program, originally established in 1991, and subsequently re-vamped after 9/11. Responding now to veteran unemployment rates of 11.7 percent (up to 30 percent for veterans under 25 years old), IFA's Operation Enduring Opportunity is offering returning veterans career paths in franchising including employment and ownership on a broader scale.

For more information about the Franchise Expo South, [click here](#). Veterans and military spouses should use **VETGP** as their registration code.

For more information about IFA's VetFran strategic initiative, [click here](#), or call Beth Solomon, IFA Vice President, Strategic Initiatives & Industry Relations, at (202) 662-0789.

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About the International Franchise Association

The International Franchise Association is the world's oldest and largest organization representing franchising worldwide. Celebrating over 50 years of excellence, education and advocacy, IFA works through its government relations and public policy, media relations and educational programs to protect, enhance and promote franchising. Through its media awareness campaign highlighting the theme, Franchising: Building Local Businesses, One Opportunity at a Time, IFA promotes the economic impact of the more than 825,000 franchise establishments, which support nearly 18 million jobs and \$2.1 trillion of economic output for the U.S. economy. IFA members include franchise companies in over 300 different business format categories, individual franchisees and companies that support the industry in marketing, law and business development.