

## Networking Communities

San Antonio Texas is called Military City USA for a reason. Not only do we have Joint Base San Antonio, the largest military installation in the world. Not only is it one of the largest post-military communities in the country. San Antonio has one of the most established and functioning support systems for those communities.

Each week I attend the JBSA Transition Alliance. This is a consortium of military, government, nonprofits and employers who gather together to collaborate on ways to assist those transitioning. We feed each other resources and other means of support that further empower success for those moving from the military to the civilian. Employment of spouses and dependents are also topics as included in the group is Military Spouse Professional Network, Esposas Militares and representatives from the ISDs of the bases. A very eclectic collection seeking only to assist. Started five years ago as just a small group, our last meeting of the year had over 50 participants. Even via Zoom, we have had over 80 folks on the call.

Especially to be highlighted are two groups that have grown out of efforts to foster the value of networking. Stephan Porter, COL USA (retired) and active Alamo MOAA member created an offshoot of the JBSA Alliance for the Hill Country area. Located in New Braunfels, MilCountry has created a networking group that provides the professional connections and mutual support for the military community and its supports for those up IH35.

If you've attended a LinkedIn MilCity event, then you know the power of networking. Prior to the pandemic, we would fill to overflowing event venues such as the Lion and Rose at the Rim or the Alamo Beer Company downtown. Folks met new network connections. Attendees supported others in transition through the ups and downs encountered in the process. The December event was virtual. However, the impact was the same. First gathering together as a whole, then breaking out into small groups to effectively chat about the efforts. Kudos to Sam (Samantha) and Ray Domingo as founders of LIMC.

There are so many other "venues" available to those transitioning, be they active duty, veteran, retiree, or spouse. It's up to each of you to find the one that best fits with you. Or you can do as I do and try to connect with multiple. Networking is so vital to your transition strategic plan.

Best of luck for a marvelous 2021.

***Kitty***