

Wednesday, February 15th, 2023



The Vermont National Guard entered into its first agreement through the Partnered Recruiting Initiative for Military and Employers (PRIME) program with Blodgett Ovens in Essex.

The PRIME program seeks to share information in order to enhance recruiting and retention efforts between the military and civilian employers.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Gregory Knight, the Vermont National Guard adjutant general, and Ms. Erica Havers, president of Blodgett Ovens, highlighted the event by officially signing the agreement.



The PRIME program, like the Army PaYS program, was created to localize the popular active-duty Army program and make it an Army and Air Force program. The program seeks to build strong connections between military and civilian employers that will improve communication, increase access to resources and enhance recruiting and retention efforts for both employers.

Blodgett Ovens became the first employer to sign a PRIME agreement with the Vermont National Guard.

“The Blodgett Oven Company has a rich history dating back to 1848 when the company was founded here in Vermont,” said Ms. Havers. “Our founder, Gardner Blodgett, was commissioned in the Civil War by Abraham Lincoln and served the Union Army as a quartermaster. Our very roots are in the military, and we are so honored to join in this agreement with the Vermont National Guard.”

An important aspect of the PRIME program is communicating job opportunities. Blodgett sharing information on the Vermont Guard, and the Vermont Guard sharing opportunities at Blodgett. Many employers are not fully aware of the valuable skills that service members develop during their time in the military, such as leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving, and a relationship through PRIME will allow both sides to share best practices and hopefully help each recruit some potential employees.

“The PRIME program is another benefit for serving in the Vermont Guard,” said U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Casey Bell, the senior enlisted advisor for the Vermont Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion. “When we have new recruits enlisting in the Vermont National Guard who are 17 or 18 years-old, we can talk about the job opportunities through our business relationships in the PRIME program.”

The Vermont National Guard is planning a job fair for April at Camp Johnson.

The partnership between the Vermont National Guard and Blodgett Ovens through the PRIME program is an excellent example of the type of collaboration that can benefit both military and civilian employers. By sharing best practices and resources, the two organizations are better equipped to recruit and retain top talent. With continued support from programs like PRIME, we can expect to see more successful partnerships like this in the future.