

## Coding for Veterans will spread its jobs-boosting message at the Rose Parade

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Coding for Veterans will spread its message with a float in the Jan. 1 Rose Parade. Coding for Veterans offers online training for former service members, who earn an industry certification after as little as six months of study. Photo courtesy of Coding for Veterans

American veterans need retraining for jobs after military service. Employers have good jobs they can't fill.

Jeff Musson knows more than 500 Canadian veterans who are proof of one solution: Training veterans to code.



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Musson, executive director for Canadian company, is taking his message to a worldwide stage when the group sponsors a float in the [135th Rose Parade](#). It will be the only Canadian entry to the New Year's Day celebration.

"We're really excited about this great opportunity to showcase our program, which provides a pathway for veterans to retrain and take all the soft skills they've learned in the military

and civilianize that into careers in software development and cybersecurity,” he said. “We’re taking that tried and tested method and exporting it to the U.S.”

Founded four years ago, Coding for Veterans works with the University of Ottawa to offer completely online training for former service members, who earn an industry certification after as little as six months of study.

The company’s American partner is the University of Southern California, which speaks to the caliber of the curriculum offered by Coding for Veterans, Musson said.

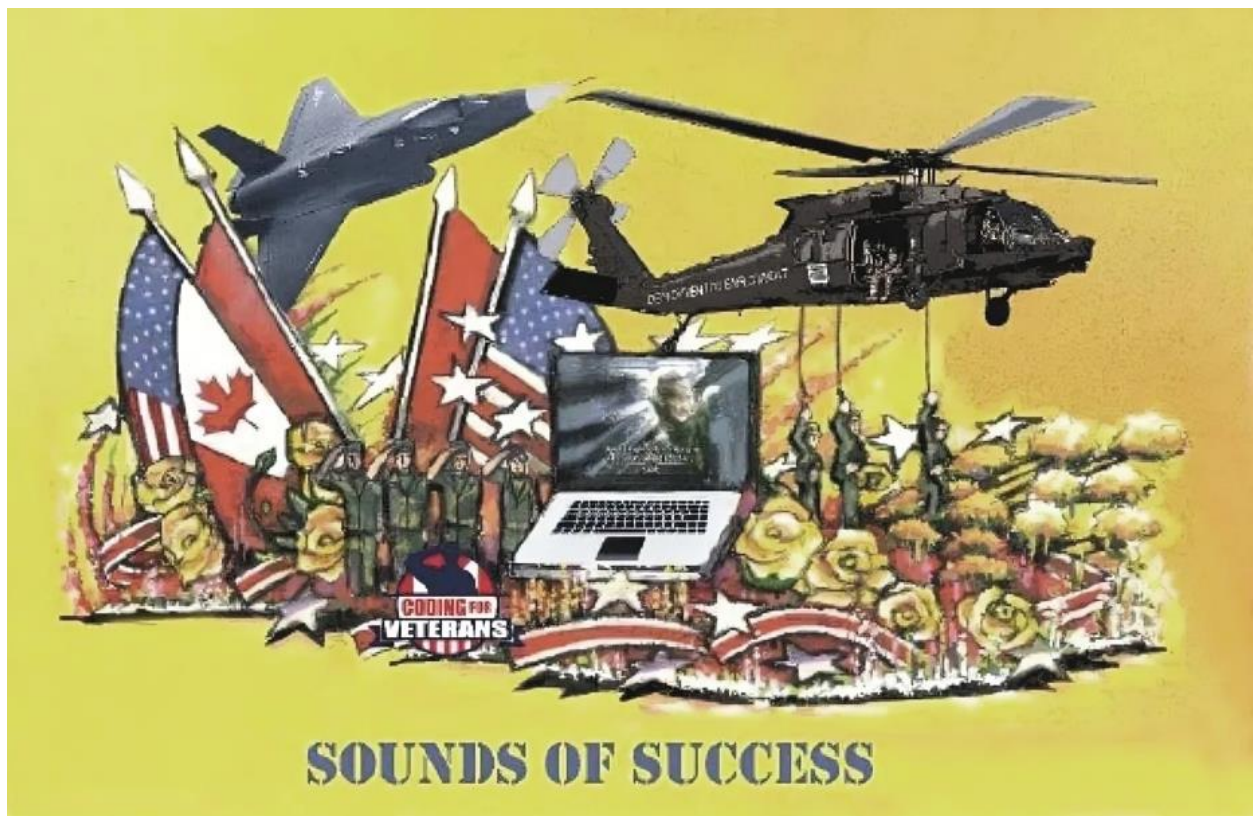
“There is no better way to honor the men and women who have served in the U.S. military than by aiding their career transition through a retraining program that will qualify them for the best positions in cybersecurity and network development across all industries,” said Terry Wolfe, executive director of the USC Marshall School of Business, Office of Executive Education. “This program offers a pathway for individuals to obtain good-paying, high-quality leadership roles in cybersecurity and software development.”

The first American cohort is set to start in the New Year and should include about 12 students. Musson said. Veterans can pay for the course through the GI Bill, and depending on their circumstances, can even retrain while still in the service.

“If the GI Bill allows, since our course is delivered online with instructors, you can be anywhere in the world and be taking the classes through USC and hit the ground running the day after your (military) service ends,” Musson said.

[Driving a Rose float](#) down Colorado Boulevard will go far in getting the word out about the prospect of starting a new career, from deployment to employment.

Alex Aghajanian, president of the Tournament of Roses, said he’s looking forward to cheering on the inspiring float, which will feature oversized representations of a laptop, a fighter jet and a helicopter as well as the American and Canadian flags. U.S. veterans will be on board. U.S. veterans and USC alumni are invited to help decorate the Phoenix Decorating Company float from Dec. 26-31.



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“Their participation symbolizes the growth of a remarkable initiative and the difference they are making in the lives of veterans,” Aghajanian said.

Supporting veterans as they transition from active military status back to their communities was the main point of a new study conducted by the Military and Veterans Programs at USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger played host to a discussion of the study’s findings Nov. 9 at Glendora Community College.

The regional study surveyed 3,188 Southern California veterans about their needs and difficulties transitioning to civilian life. One key finding was that too many veterans are unprepared for that transition. Coding for Veterans hopes to offer them a high-tech prospect.

“The military, from infantry and artillery people on, are trained in attention to detail, leadership, teamwork,” Musson said. “Aren’t those the best attributes of employees in companies? And after their military service, what better way to honor veterans than by helping retrain them for the tech sector.”

*Anissa V. Rivera, columnist, “Mom’s the Word,” Pasadena Star-News, San Gabriel Valley Tribune, Whittier Daily News, Azusa Herald, Glendora Press and West Covina Highlander, San Dimas/La Verne Highlander. Southern California News Group, 181 W. Huntington Drive, Suite 209 Monrovia, CA 91016. 626-497-*

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