

Workforce Retraining at BRAC Closure Bases

Lessons Learned at NAS Brunswick

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Today's Presentation

- About NAS Brunswick, ME
- Rapid Intervention
- Our Strategy
- BRAC Transition Center
 - Working with Base Leaders
 - Tips on staying relevant
- Team successes
- Next steps
- Lessons Learned

NAS Brunswick ...



NAS Brunswick

- Established in March 1943
- 3,200+ acres in Maine's midcoast region
- Was Maine's Second Largest Single-Site Employer
 - 3,000 military personnel
 - 750 Civilian Workers
- Provided over \$187 million to the local economy
 - \$115 million in salaries
 - \$38 million in contracts and material purchases
 - \$34 million in medical purchases

NAS Brunswick

- Military Spouses and Family Members
 - Military Spouses
 - 1650+ military spouses
 - 1100 work on-base or local area
 - 21% fill in-demand, highly skilled positions
 - 1400+ other family members
 - K-12 system
 - College
 - Seasonal work/entry-level positions
 - Estimated that 30-35% of all volunteers in local area come from military families

What Makes This Impact Significant?

Population of local area is only 34,592 people! (2006 LMIS data)

- 17% of population were military, military family members, or civilian workers
- 3.3% of the private sector employment were military spouses
- Local schools will lose 1000+ students (and close to \$1M in federal aid) (2006 community audit)

State of Maine's Commitment

- Governor & Congressional Delegation said "We'll be there"
- Rapid Response Team
 - Started "Needs Survey" collection
 - Established early relationships
- Immediate training dollars
 - \$250K in \$1K increments (FAME)
 - 200 tuition-free vouchers (CC)
- LMIS - Detailed analysis of skills
 - Titles/KSA's aren't the same as civilian counterparts



Establishing Partnerships

Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)



- Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.
- Took “Regional Convener” role seriously
- Prior base closing experience
- Strategy - move fast, early, and think long-term
- Impacts 3 LWIBs

Defense Employment & Transition Steering (DETS) Committee formed

- Reemployment planning & Community Audit
 - Particular emphasis on the workforce and economic impact of the base closure, and
 - Downsizing of other area defense employers

Establishing Need

With Commanding Officer's endorsement ...

- Continued collecting Worker Needs Surveys
 - 300 collected (approx 50% of civilian workforce)
 - Results told a story ...
 - 85% indicated they wanted retraining
 - **86% said they'd be willing to stay if career assistance was available**
 - 13% said they were "jumping ship" no matter what

Aha Moment

The need wasn't getting people jobs right away ...

- Base CO needed to keep the "ship" running
- Clients had great paying jobs!
- Many approaching federal retirement

Our DoD/DoL partnership was not solely a job retraining effort ... it was, and has proven to be, a retention strategy!

Establishing Partnerships

LWIB Service Provider



- Goodwill Industries
- Extensive plant closing & NEG experience
- Recognized immediately this wasn't a regular "WIA" closure
- Closure is "local"

Initial services available through existing OneStop Career Center

- 6 miles away with extended hours
- **Almost zero utilization**

BRAC Transition Center

“Inside” fence vs. “Outside” fence

- A way to understand the closure from Inside-Out
- Better availability for clients

Established in February 2006, 5 months after BRAC announcement and over 5 years before base closure

- Partnership with base Commanding Officer
- Oversight by Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. (regional approach)
- Staffed by experienced service providers

Initial Start-up Cost \$15K

- 8K from existing equipment
- 7K from BRAC Implementation Grant
- Staffing dollars from Rapid Response
- Costs minimized by base support

Opportunities

The Transition Center's mission should eventually support everyone.

Initial mission was supporting primarily impacted civilian workers ... supporting family members, both civilian and military, and retiring military members became a secondary mission.

- We were able to take advantage of our location to assist the larger population

Building Trust

Director position filled by person with ties to base and community

- Must be able to build trust and confidence
 - Base CO, Senior Enlisted Leader & team
 - Union
 - Tenant command
 - Civilian Workers
 - ***LRA – Key to understanding future opportunities***
- Must understand military mission and chain of command
 - Must understand the base is a family
- Must be an advocate for DoD/DoL systems
- Must advocate for DoD/DoL in community
 - Committees, Chamber, Professional Associations

Committees & Professional Associations ...

- Governor's Advisory Council (State)
- Job Retraining and Education Subcommittee (State)
- Local Redevelopment Authority (State, Local)
- Veteran & Service Organizations (State, Regional, Local)
- Defense Employment & Transition Steering Group (LWIB)
- Regional Innovation Grant Committee (LWIB)
- Tenant Command (Base)
- BRAC Integrated Progress Team (Base)
- Business First (Economic Development Office)
- Maine Association of Professional Consultants
- Southern Midcoast Maine Chamber
- Numerous requests to brief, assist, & sit on committees for local non-profits

Our Success ...

A sustained service model at minimal cost with maximum output:

- 14,000+ client-service contacts
 - 100 workshops and seminars (16 providers, 24 instructors)
 - 2,896 visits to the Information Center
 - 13 Expos and Fairs
- \$83,563 dollars leveraged from non-DoL sources
 - \$20,663 incumbent training
 - \$ 7,200 professional seminars
 - \$ 7,000 equipment and supplies
- \$102,075 dollars in training opportunities brought on-site vs. outside the fence

Bringing providers on base ...

Federal Regulations

- Know them!
- Advice: bring them in under the Chamber umbrella ... talk industry, not infomercial!
- Beware “wolves in sheep clothing”

Leverage on-base resources

- Work with Fleet & Family Support Center
 - KSA & Career Decision Making
 - Resume & Interviewing Skills Workshops
- Be flexible for shift/on-call workers

Use as tie-in's to community when possible

- Education
- WIRED regions
- Other local grants/BRAC related implementation grants

Workshops and Seminars ...

Our "Big Hits"

- Finance – beginner to investor (Merrill Lynch and AG Edwards)
- Identity Theft (Center for Financial Education)
- Understanding Your credit Report (CFE)
- Is College for Me? (Women, Work, & Community) Small
- How Do I Start My Own Business (SBA, MAPC, WWC)
- Introduction to Computers (Adult Ed)
- Acuplacer Testing (Adult Ed & SMCC)
- Project Management, Writing Skills, & Workplace Negotiation (Southern Maine Community College)
- Time Management (MAPC)
- Seasoned Worker Seminar (Seasoned Workforce LLC)

Expos & Fairs

Best attended ... effective way to provide mass information without giving hours of lecture. Command encouraged participation.

- Veterans' Fair
- Education Fair
- Health Care Expo
- Information Technology Expo
- Volunteer Expo

Other “big hits”

- FastTrac NewVenture Course – 10 weeks of entrepreneurial training; certified by Kauffman foundation
- College Courses
- Computer Training (leveraged local resources)
- Online Courses
- Certificate/Licensure Training

Results*

- NEG funding became available to civilian workers in Dec 08.
 - Last 10 months
 - 7,800 client contacts
 - 200 civilian workers received in-depth career counseling
 - 150 have had training or are currently in training
 - \$310,000 accrued for training
 - Training areas
 - Health Care, IT, Business, Construction, Degree Programs

*Results not typical, actual results may vary

Challenges to starting early

Challenges

- Must stay relevant long-term
- Outreach needs to be continuous (“grief process” is magnified because it is over years vs. short term)
- Meet needs of clients while balancing base CO’s need to keep operating
- Resolve conflicts with “insiders” who don’t think client needs are there
- Staffing and resource dollars

The silver lining

You'll know your clients inside and out

- Leadership ... their default answer will be "yes"
- Workers ... establish a level of trust

Community Partners

- Want to be involved
- Willing to provide services

Open yourself up for other opportunities

- FL/ME collaboration
- Military Spouse CAA initiative

Next Steps

Continuous SWOT analysis

- Regional Asset Mapping
- Implementing Community audit

Continue to strengthen partnerships

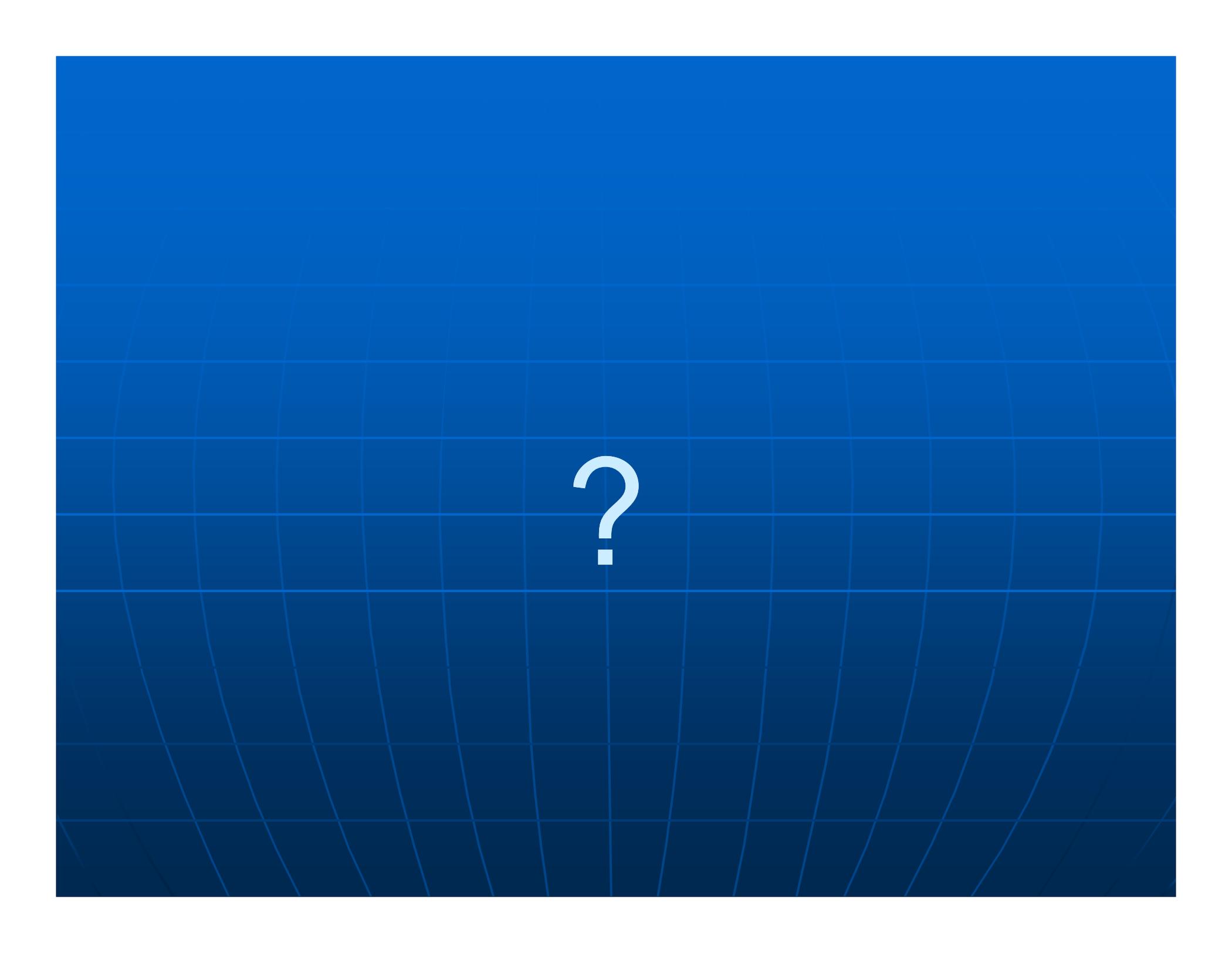
- Naval Air Station Brunswick
- Local Redevelopment Authority & OEA; develop the workforce for 2010 and beyond
- Florida Partnership; maximize quality of life and employment opportunities for military members and their families

Lessons Learned

- Transitioning the Base population is like relocating a small town. It is not a plant closure.
- Start Early ... Get to know and trust each other before you need to!
- Respect the military's culture and work with their differences ... don't try to make the DoD system into the DoL system!
- Stay in touch with base redevelopment process
 - Look for opportunities
 - Direct clients into training for jobs that will be created

Lessons Learned

- Provide services that are needed and wanted, not just “what is available”
- Stay relevant
- Continuously look for opportunities to learn from others
- Leverage partnerships
- **SHARE BEST PRACTICES!**

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