

Below are some of the resources I used as part of my military transition. There are dozens of groups, organizations, and resources that can and should be leveraged as part of a transition/ retirement plan. I began my transition officially at 18-months out and some resources I did not learn about until I was well into my process. There are so many available, I would encourage those transitioning to ask everyone they know about what helped them during their process. If you come across great resources, share with your network and pass on the wealth!

**MENTORSHIP:** One of the first things I did as part of my retirement process was look for a mentor in the fields I was interested in. American Corporate Partners connects you with a professional in the areas you are pursuing once you get out. I connected with a great mentor who has been an amazing guide along the way.



<https://www.acp-usa.org>

**LIFE INSURANCE:** Speaking with friends who retired about their process, more than a few let me know that life insurance was an area they neglected in their process. By waiting until after their VA disability claims process, their life insurance premiums nearly doubled. I shopped a few options and found the coverage/ cost that best suited my situation. I encourage you to start this as early as you can and definitely before you begin your disability claims process.



<https://www.newyorklife.com>

**FINANCIAL PLANNING:** My financial planning started many years ago and with a real focus on retirement. USAA used to be the only investment/ savings bank. They moved many of their products to Charles Schwab and Victory Capital Management. Both firms offer a wide array of products and for USAA customers they even offer free planning advice. The sooner you start this the sooner you can find the products that fit.



<https://www.schwab.com>

**WARDROBE:** Finding clothes that were affordable, stylish, and could offer a variety of uses is dependent on so many variables. For me, I wanted a wardrobe that could provide versatility (dress-up or dress-down based on event). I also am not able to buy many clothes off the rack, so having a place that could get my size right was key.



<https://www.menswearhouse.com>

**INTERNSHIP:** My transition had several complicating factors, mostly revolving around time and location. Since I was not willing to relocate, my options were slightly limited. I reached out to the transition office and they connected me with a local program run by the Chamber of Commerce that allowed me to tailor my Career SkillBridge program. It has proven to be invaluable to me, so much so that I will likely volunteer with them once I retire to help give others access to this great program.



<https://workexmilitary.org>

**RESUMÉ:** Your local transition assistance office will have resumé building workshops. Depending on your career track you can find groups and organizations that will help you tailor it for the best results. If you know where your next chapter takes you, reach out to industry professionals or recruiters in that field to help you tighten up your resumé. There are plenty of free resources on this but you may find professionals who charge a bit. Your call.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** My family and I moved to our final assignment right as I hit 18-months to retirement. We are not from this area but knew we wanted to retire here. I connected with the local Chamber of Commerce and have been attending 2-3 events per month to learn about the area and connect with as many people as I can here. I have also volunteered to help with events to provide me with more opportunities to plant roots in our community. If you know where you are retiring, I would suggest reaching out to your local Chamber, even if just to see what they might offer.



<https://thurstonchamber.com>

**VA DISABILITY CLAIM SUPPORT:** Navigating the VA Disability system alone is nearly impossible. There are individuals, organizations, and non-profits who will assist you, typically for free. For my claim, I used the Disabled American Veterans as my Veteran Service Organization. They walked me through the entire process, built my claim, helped coordinate appointments, and got my claim to the VA for rating review in about 35 days. They are national so if I ever move I can still leverage them to help.



<https://www.dav.org>

**VETERANS SUPPORT GROUP:** Speaking with veterans who transitioned, one of the things they felt they missed most was the connection with those who served. I asked around for local veterans groups they would get together on occasion. I found a great one that meets monthly to connect and chat about issues or just hang out. It has been tremendously helpful in my transition from active to retirement. I encourage you to find local groups that may be helpful in your transition.



<https://warriorsbreakingbread.org>

**VOLUNTEERING:** Having more free time as a retiree I wanted to stay active and involved. Being in relatively good physical condition and wanting to stay engaged with veterans causes I found 2x organizations to volunteer my time. The first is Habitat for Humanity which has a project a few miles from my home. The second is the Veterans Legislative Coalition which coordinates several veterans groups in the state and advocates at the state legislature for veterans programs and issues. These have been more rewarding than I could have anticipated and I highly recommend volunteering, even just a few hours a month to causes you care about.



<https://www.habitat.org>