

Able Forces: Helping dis'Able'd veterans find jobs

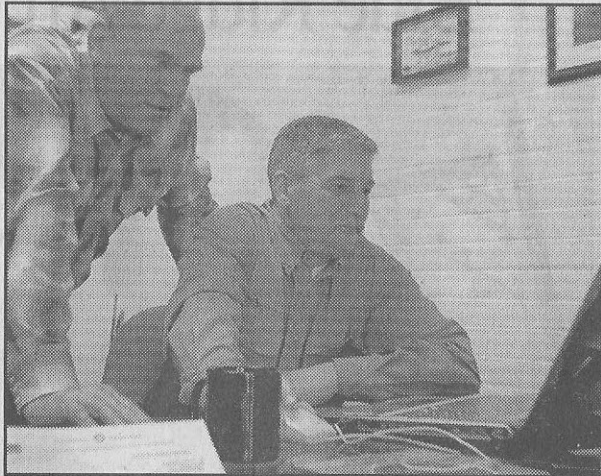
By MEGHAN MOESLEIN
The Warren Sentinel

FRONT ROYAL — Tucked quietly at 115 Chester Street — suite B, for almost a full year — is a non-profit growing in support, and opportunities for Wounded Warriors and disabled veterans, their name: Able Forces.

On Oct. 1, 2009, Executive Director Skip Rogers and Executive Vice President Joe Cunningham opened the doors to Able Forces, a 501(c)3 non-profit and community rehabilitation organization affiliated with the Ability One/NISH program.

“The mission is to provide employment opportunities and community-based employment preparation training to the severely disabled with an emphasis on Wounded Warriors, and former military suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI),” Rogers said. “As veterans ourselves — [myself] Army 1968-70 and Joe Navy 1964-69 — we are committed to providing career-oriented employment and community-based job preparation training for Wounded Warriors and disabled veterans.”

The pair has been working for six years to bring the issue of unemployment among wounded or disabled veterans to light.



ANGELLE BARBAZON / THE SENTINEL

Skip Rogers and Joe Cunningham, founders of Able Forces a non-profit organization dedicated to helping veterans find employment.

“[We] believe we are making tremendous headway with [a] solution that could provide thousands of jobs to our disabled veterans,” said Rogers. “One of great benefits of a company like Able Forces is that our veterans work for us and we contract both with the federal government and private industry to provide service through our disabled veteran workforce.”

The next step Able Forces is working to complete is bringing the help home through working with local businesses “large and small.”

“Able Forces currently has one contract that will provide federal contracting jobs to disabled veterans.

We believe this contact alone could provide up to 50 positions in the Washington DC metro area,” he said.

In order to provide support for those chosen for the positions on the contract Able Forces is offering training programs that will help with “developing or enhancing job skills.” The programs are made possible through a recent grant that Able Forces acquired with the help of Easter Seals.

“As veterans, the partners of Able Forces have always supported veterans. Both of us have known one another for almost 25 years. We have spent years working together, through our Church and in our community, supporting those less fortunate,” said Rogers.

Along with that support the pair have spent over 30 years working in or around the federal marketplace.

“Several years ago we both knew our work needed to move from a profit making business focus to non-profit charitable work focused on assisting our heroes in finding good solid employment and a future for themselves and families,” Rogers said. “We recently sold our service disabled veteran-owned small business to start Able Forces. It has been one of the best decisions we’ve ever made.”