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NEWS RELEASE

October 30, 2007

## **Maricopa Workforce Connections Supports U.S. Department of Labor HireVetsFirst 25-Day Veterans Job Fair Blitz**

Phoenix, Ariz. -- Maricopa Workforce Connections wholeheartedly supports the U.S. Department of Labor's efforts to assist returning veterans in securing viable employment upon reentry to civilian life.

Today's job market is experiencing the emergence of a new type of job seeker. "Recently separated veterans may return to civilian life with different aspirations and skill sets than they had prior to their military service," said Patrick Burkhart, assistant director, Workforce Development Division, Maricopa County Human Services Department, which operates Maricopa Workforce Connections. "A job-fair blitz occurring country-wide, in conjunction with the observance of Veterans Day, will certainly draw attention to the unique qualifications of America's returning soldiers. These dedicated individuals boast many qualities desired by employers as well as highly-specialized skill sets that, once matched with an appropriate industry or position, make the person a highly sought after future employee."

Complimenting the Department of Labor's efforts to employ veterans, Maricopa Workforce Connections recently opened the Elijah Wong Veteran's Services Center in September 2007 (1840 95<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ste. 160, Phoenix, AZ 85037). The unique design of the center, which brings representatives from several other entities together under one roof, will enrich and support the valley's existing veteran services year-round.

Attendance is encouraged at the Department of Economic Security/HireVetsFirst job fair being held Nov. 2, 2007, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., at the Maricopa Workforce Connections Gilbert Career Center, 735 N. Gilbert Road, Suite 134, Gilbert, Ariz. 85234.

"The impact of a collaborative nationwide job-fair blitz will undoubtedly heighten the awareness of the specialized skills our soldiers bring to the civilian workforce," noted Burkhart."

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### **About MWC**

Maricopa Workforce Connections (MWC) promotes and facilitates strategic alliances among public and private stakeholders within the Maricopa County to ensure workforce excellence and contribute to the economic vitality for area employers, incumbent and future workers. MWC is a division of the Maricopa County Human Services Department. Services are made possible via funding through the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Most services are provided to the community free of charge.

### **About the Elijah Wong Veterans Services Center**

The veterans' services center, named in honor of Mesa probation officer and Arizona National Guardsman Sgt. Elijah Wong, who died serving in Iraq, provides services solely to veterans and their families.

Located within the Maricopa Workforce Connections West Valley Career Center, 1840 N. 95<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Phoenix, Arizona, 85037, The Elijah Wong Veterans Services Center provides veterans and their families with a personal guide to navigate and access many state and federal veterans programs; links to housing and immediate transitional services; and one-on-one vocational assistance.



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