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Subject: Governor's Military Employment Initiative Hosts First of Three Regional Summits This Week

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Four New Palmetto Military Employers Recognized at Second Annual OPE Midlands Summit

COLUMBIA — Employers, hiring managers, veteran employment representatives and military service members met Thursday in Columbia to learn more about how to recruit and retain military hires through Operation Palmetto Employment (OPE), South Carolina's military employment initiative. Four companies were recognized as certified Palmetto Military

Employers: Ashby Search Group, BECU, Power Home Technologies and Sykes Enterprises.

"South Carolina's unemployment rate for veterans is 4.4 percent," said Darrell Scott, Chief of Staff at the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce. "This rate is below the national average of 4.9 percent, and below the state average of 5.5 percent." Scott reported that more than 23,000 veterans received services in 2015, and more than 8,000 entered employment.

"Through the collaborative work of its partner agencies and organizations, OPE is a tool that employers can use to access South Carolina's military talent," said Lieutenant Colonel David Gayle, representing the South Carolina Military Department and the South Carolina National Guard. "As Governor Haley said, we're doing great things, but there's more to be done. Everyone in this room can play an important part as we continue to work together to find meaningful civilian employment for our veterans, service members and military family members."

OPE will host two more regional summits in May: the [OPE Upstate Summit](#) on Wednesday, May 4 at the Spartanburg Readiness Center at USC-Upstate, and the [OPE Lowcountry Summit](#) on Thursday, May 26 at Verizon Solutions Center in North Charleston. Seating is limited for both events; advance registration is

required via Eventbrite.com.

[Click here](#) to watch a feature by reporter Sonia Gutierrez of WLTX-News 19 in Columbia.

To learn more about Operation Palmetto Employment and connect with OPE representatives in your area, email OperationPalmettoEmployment@gmail.com or call 803-299-4019.

Photo L-R caption: Steven Settle of Ashby Search Group, Mike Tutsie of Power Home Technologies, LTC David Gayle, Kyle Schnell of BECU, and Pamela Sweeney of Sykes Enterprises.

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