

VETERAN EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Veterans Employment Program Office

The *Veteran Employee Spotlight Profile* is an opportunity to learn about the personal journey and professional development of fellow veterans into federal government. Read about what advice they have for you and as a future Treasury employee. Current Treasury employees will also have an opportunity to learn more about their fellow colleagues and the unique skills and experiences they bring to the workplace.



Catherine Haines **Diversity and Inclusion Specialist** **Internal Revenue Service**

Background:

Ms. Catherine Haines was born in New London, Connecticut to a Navy Family. Ms. Haines began her military life at four months old when her family moved to Guam. By the time she finished high school, her family's military travels included four U.S. states and Ireland. Ms. Haines graduated in 1986 from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Academy, beginning her career as an Ensign, a junior commissioned officer. Her first assignment was on the seagoing buoy tender - USCG Cutter FIREBUSH (WLB-393), out of Kodiak, Alaska, providing aids to navigation throughout the waters of the United States. Ms. Haines served in a variety of assignments (operational/human resources) and was privileged to have command of two Coast Guard operational groups. *"It truly, was an adventure."*

What is your current position at Treasury?

I serve as a Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, in the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. I also serve in other collateral roles such as the Vice President of the Treasury Veterans - Employee Resource Group and Secretary for the Capital Area Chapter of the IRS Employee Resource Group Military Outreach for Service.

Why were you attracted to military service?

I grew up in a military environment. In my earliest memory as a young girl, I took a field trip on the USCGC EAGLE - a tall ship operated by the USCG to train cadets. I remember saying then, *"I want to sail on this"* and one of cadets responded, *"women are not allowed to do that."* Immediately, anger set in. However, luckily for me and many other women, all of that changed in 1976, when women were finally permitted to apply to the Coast Guard Academy.



"I want to sail on the USCGC EAGLE."

Fast forward to 1982, my interest in attending college, became the driver to apply to service academies, including Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) scholarships that could supplement the cost. Determined to serve, I even considered applying to the U.S. Air Force on a ROTC scholarship. My application for the Coast Guard Academy (my top choice) was first ranked as an alternate for consideration, however, it become an official appointment in 1986.

What was your most memorable experience in the military?

I had many memorable experiences, but the one that rises to the top is a search and rescue mission while in the field. I was the Commander of U.S. Coast Guard Group at Fort Macon, North Carolina where I oversaw operations in the command center. The search and rescue mission was to locate four men who had gone fishing and had not returned. It lasted 30 hours, finding the men in the water clinging to a cooler. The men stopped to fish about 30 miles off shore and did not realize they'd forgotten to plug their boat, causing them to immediately start to sink. The complexity of this mission resulted in our unit receiving the 1998 Coast Guard Search and Rescue Controller of the Year Award - *Team Work = Success*.

How do the skills you gained in the military translate to your success as a federal employee?

My military experience gave me (and other veterans) many skills to bring to the table. If I had to name three quick ones, it would be *initiative, strong work habits* and the *ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines*. I also try to live every day by the Coast Guard Core Values of *Honor, Respect* and *Devotion to Duty*.

What hobbies do you enjoy and how do you spend your time?

My husband and I enjoy traveling and hiking with our two rescue dogs, Lady and Rico. We are avid Washington Capitals hockey fans and splurge on season tickets to cheer our team on to victory. I also enjoy gardening in my yard - I find digging in the dirt relieves stress. We are proud parents of three young and amazing adults. When our schedules match, we like to invite our children to travel with us. This past year, two of our children were able to join us on an adventure to Belize.

Share your Story

If you would like to share your story, please contact the Treasury Veterans Employment Program Office (VEPO) at veys@treasury.gov. Your story can possibly be the next feature in the Veteran's Focus quarterly newsletter. The Veteran's Focus is also distributed to veterans seeking employment with the Department of the Treasury and Treasury employees.



Ensign Catherine Haines

