

## LAND A GREEN ENERGY JOB AS A VETERAN



Ben Noland served in the U.S. Marine Corps for eight years, he then spent 10 months trying to find a job. "I've probably put my resume in to 300 places in the past year," says the 33-year-old Kenton resident. "The farthest that I have ever gotten was getting a phone interview." Noland finally landed a job installing some solar panels over at Tipping Point Renewable Energy, which is a Columbus-based solar power company that will only hire military veterans for the installation crews. These jobs come at a time when the unemployment rate for former service men is higher than the rate for civilians. Tipping Point's efforts resound those of the companies and groups nationwide to hire veterans in the green industry. The Denver-based nonprofit Veterans Green Jobs is one of the largest companies, they have trained and placed over 370 veterans in the past four years. A pilot programs by five of the nation's biggest energy provided, called the Troops to Energy Jobs, provides some training and credentials to the military veterans, as well as a few college credits for their military training experience. Around 240,000 veterans from both of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have all returned to the U.S. and are still out there trying to find themselves a job. Together they all make up a growing number of those 850,000 veterans who are all out of work. The White House expects 1 million more service members to return to civilian life by the year 2016. The veteran unemployment rate in the month of October was 12.1 percent, which is compared with the 9 percent for the U.S. For the veterans from the ages of 18 to 24, the rate was then 30.4 percent. The renewable energy industry is growing quite fast--the solar and wind energy has grown more than tenfold in the last decade or so--also, the military veterans often make good fits for the



green industry jobs. Such green jobs like manufacturing and maintenance of wind turbines or solar arrays require skills that are similar to those that a service man has learned when he/she was in the military, says Bill Scott of the Bradley-Morris Inc., which is the largest military-focused recruiting firm here in the U.S. today. The veterans generally get the technical training that is lacking in civilians, says Scott. The number of projects providing solar energy more than doubled in number in the U.S. from 2008 through 2010. During that time period, the amount of solar energy generated increased from enough power 1.4 million homes back in 2008 to 3.2 million homes back in 2010. The wind energy has increased 1.5 times more in capacity over the same time period, is able to power 39 million homes back in 2010, which is a number that is up from 25 million in 2010.