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Wounded US War Vets Offered Chance To Join Financial Industry

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NEW YORK -(Dow Jones)- After fighting in battles around the world, some U.S. military veterans are now preparing to enter Wall Street's more figurative war zone.

The Wall Street Warfighters Foundation, Inc., is launching a training program called Operation Wall Street for wounded U.S. war veterans to get a start in the financial industry.

As part of Operation Wall Street, the recruited veterans will get hands-on training from major financial institutions, such as Drexel Hamilton, Goldman Sachs (GS), NYSE Euronext Inc.'s (NYX) New York Stock Exchange, the NASDAQ OMX Group (NDAQ) and the Chicago Board Options Exchange.

"The skills they learned in the military in addition to this training makes them doubly capable for working in the financial industry. Operation Wall Street will give them opportunities they wouldn't have had otherwise," said retired Marine General Peter Pace, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The program is six months long and covers all the trainees' expenses, including room and board, travel, the securities industry licensing exams and a monthly stipend. Once they get complete the training, they will be employed at one of the sponsoring firms or another financial institution.

The first training class includes just two students, but the goal of the foundation is to eventually have about 20 in each class.

"We will have a great impact, but we don't want to rush it," said Lawrence Doll, chief executive of Drexel Hamilton.

Doll is also a disabled Vietnam War veteran who is one of the founders of Operation Wall Street.

The first two students of the training program are Marine Staff Sergeant John Jones and U.S. Army Master Sergeant George Holmes.

Jones was on duty in Iraq when his Humvee was blown up, causing him to lose both of his legs below the knees. He had been in the Marine Corps for 12 years.

Holmes was on duty in Afghanistan when a rocket attack severely injured his arm and both legs, also leaving him with a collapsed lung and perforated eardrum.

The two veterans begin their training this month.

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