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## FROM MARINE TO MARKETING MOGUL

For Mike Lozier, the transition from Officer of the United States Marine Corps to Valpak franchise owner was not one without much consideration.

Now, even after 10 years as a business owner, he still shares the same sentiment as all former Marines: "Once a Marine, Always a Marine." Here's how he used his military experience to build two successful businesses, all while continuing to support his fellow servicemen and women.

Mike Lozier, 45, is a native New Yorker, born and raised in North Babylon on Long Island. In 1990, Lozier was a freshman

studying Equine studies at the State University of Cobleskill in New York while three of his cousins were serving in the first Gulf War. Their service, coupled with the love and sense of duty Lozier felt for his country, motivated him to enlist.

In 1992, Lozier began a military career that would span over 15 years. He enlisted with the United States Marine Corps and completed basic training at Parris Island as a platoon honor graduate. Following graduation, Lozier received orders to Pensacola, Florida for intelligence training where he would qualify as a 2621 Morse code operator. Upon completion of training, Lozier received orders to Japan at Misawa Air Base where he was stationed for two years.

Over the next 12 years, Lozier relocated several times throughout the U.S. as well as completed two real world operations in Zaire and Sierra Leone, Africa while part of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (22 MEU). During this time frame, he completed extensive education and training that propelled him further in his career. While stationed at Fort Meade, Maryland from 1999-2002, Lozier worked with the National Security Agency as an



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intelligence analyst and was selected to become an officer in the Marine Corps' Marine Enlisted Commissioning Program (MECEP), giving him the opportunity to attend the University of Maryland.

It was in Washington D.C. while attending the University of Maryland that Lozier met a woman named Robyn Cohen who would later become his wife. After earning his bachelor's degree in history, Lozier received orders to Officer Candidate School and The Basic School at Base Quantico in Virginia where he graduated top of his class and became a financial management officer.

"It was a big change in career for me, but I was setting myself up for life after the Corps. It was important that I think of a future beyond the military because this life can wear you down," said Lozier.

Lozier was ordered to stay at Base Quantico and became the lead budget analyst for OPTARSS (Operations, Planning, Training and Resource Support Services) at Training and Education Command (TECOM). After three and a half years at TECOM, Mike made the decision to retire in 2007 to focus on his personal life and future family.

"When I met my wife, she became my top priority, and while I could've completed another five years in the Corps before retirement, I didn't want that lifestyle for my wife nor my future family. She changed my entire world and I felt that once you can no longer give 110 percent, it's not fair to you, it's not fair to the Marine Corps nor the people you're supposed to be protecting," said Lozier.

It was Robyn who introduced Mike to Valpak, helping to pave the way to business ownership and a career after the Marines. Robyn's parents, Jeff and Marsha Cohen, were among the original franchise owners with Valpak when the company first began franchising in 1972. After 40 years in business, the Cohens sold a portion of their New Jersey territory, including Essex and Union counties to Mike and Robyn.

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apart during my years of service. Valpak was a natural fit for us and offered us an opportunity to continue Robyn's family's legacy," said Lozier.

As a first-time business owner, Lozier discovered that his military skills and experience translated to his newfound career.

"The military teaches you to roll with the punches and work with people from all walks of life. Each individual acts and reacts differently, very much like our Valpak clients," said Lozier. "As Valpak franchisees, we've received unparalleled ongoing support and training to help us develop our business and implement successful strategies."

As part of its commitment to expanding veteran franchise ownership, Valpak is a proud supporter of VetFRAN, the Veterans Transition Franchise Initiative. For all honorably discharged veterans, Valpak offers a 20 percent discount on the initial franchise fee.

While Mike Lozier's career trajectory took an unexpected direction, he hasn't forgotten his roots as a Marine. In 2007, Lozier launched a holiday care package program that ships greeting cards and gifts to units of service members deployed overseas. Other Valpak franchise owners began to join in the effort, and eventually the entire Valpak franchise network joined.

Today, the Loziers own and operate Valpak of Garden State East. In addition, in 2016, the entrepreneur started a gutter cleaning business, Gutter Plumbers, geared towards veteran franchise owners, which he plans to franchise in the future.

"My intent with Gutter Plumbers is to create a franchise-based business that can offer qualified veterans a franchise of their own for a very nominal cost. My goal is to give back to the veterans who are transitioning from their military careers to civilian life, and get them started on their own."

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