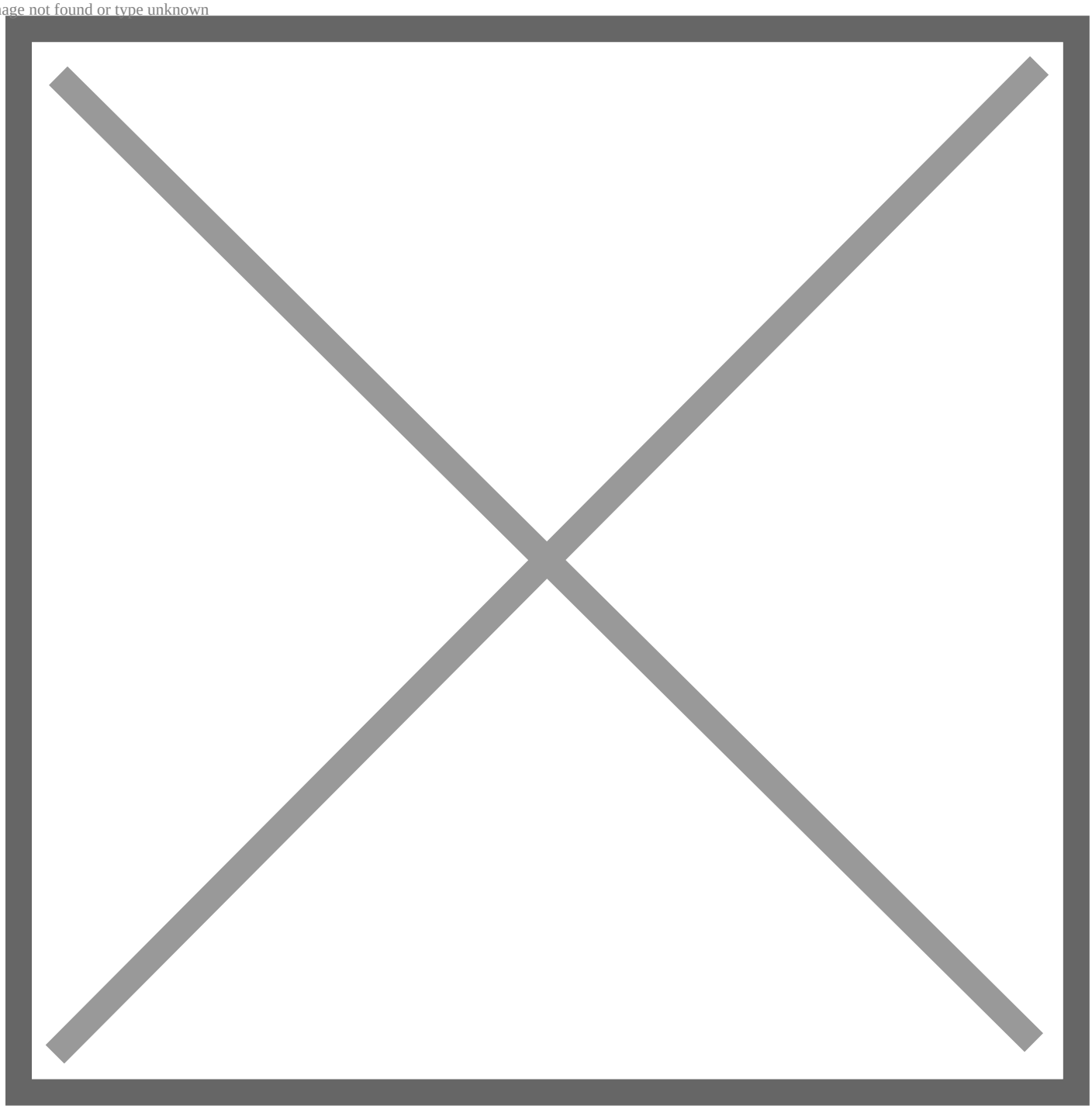
Honoring Veterans: Team Members Who’ve Served Our Country

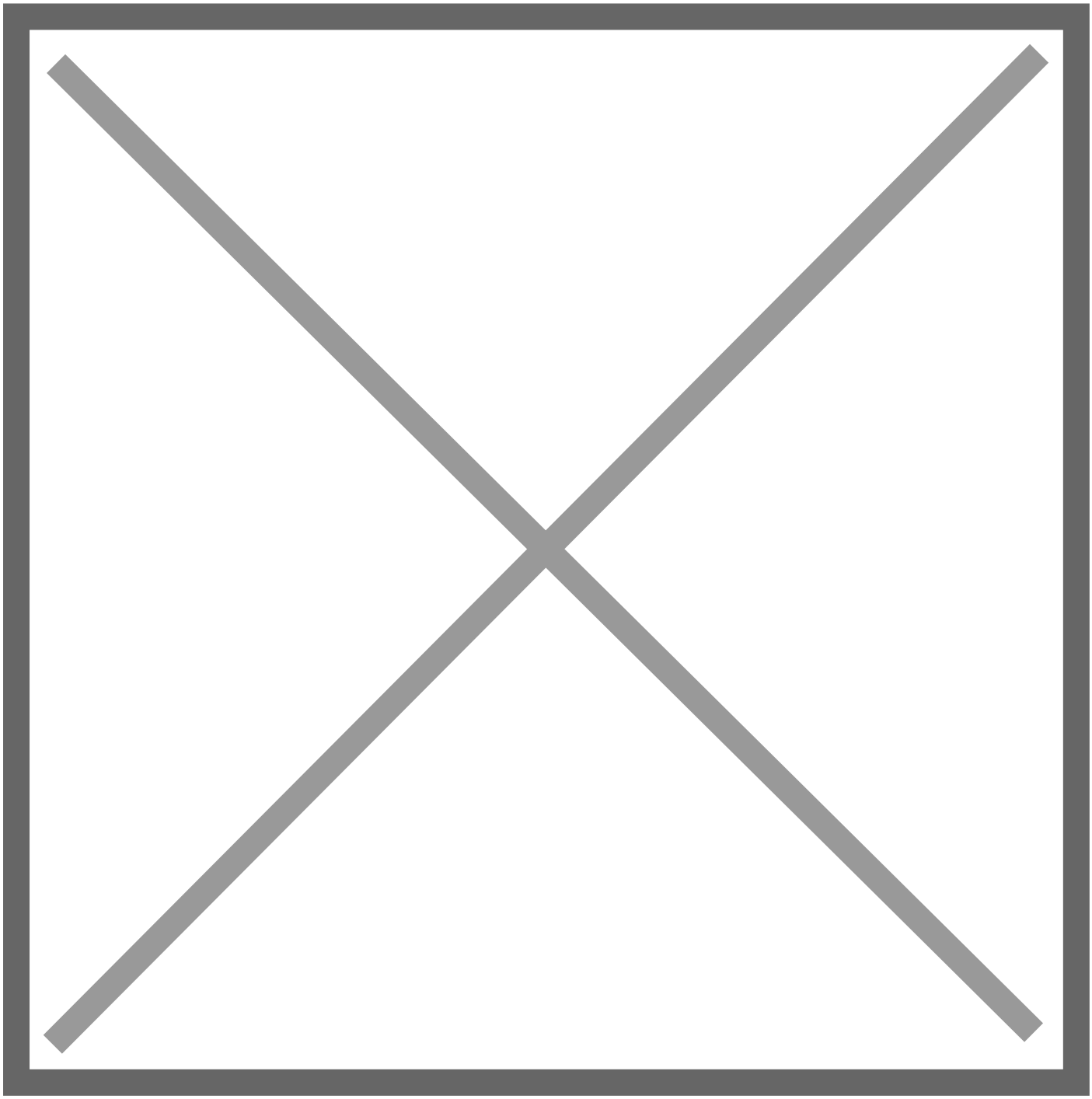
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It’s Veterans Day — and what better way to honor our heroes than by spotlighting Toyota team members who’ve served on the front lines?

Discover how their military experience fuels their success at Toyota and get an inside look at the Toyota Veterans Association, a dynamic group that connects vets, builds camaraderie and powers career growth.



How would you describe your role? What are your responsibilities?

Hogan: As a quality engineer in the quality assurance department, I act as the engineering liaison between the vehicle plants and Toyota North Carolina. I coordinate product changes with the vehicle plants and lead root cause analysis investigations based on vehicle plant claims to ensure quality issues are effectively resolved.

Can you talk about your military experience and how it's shaped your career at Toyota?

My experience in the U.S. Air Force has cultivated my ability to think creatively and approach challenges from multiple perspectives. This mindset has enabled me to develop effective solutions that improve operations and drive continuous improvement in my role at Toyota.

Tell us about your role with the Toyota Veterans Association, a business partnering group, and why it's important to recognize military veterans on this special day.

I'm a member of the Toyota Veterans Association (TVA) and have actively participated in volunteer events supporting the Ft. Bragg active military community. Our efforts focused on bridging the gap for transitioning service members as they pursue careers in manufacturing.

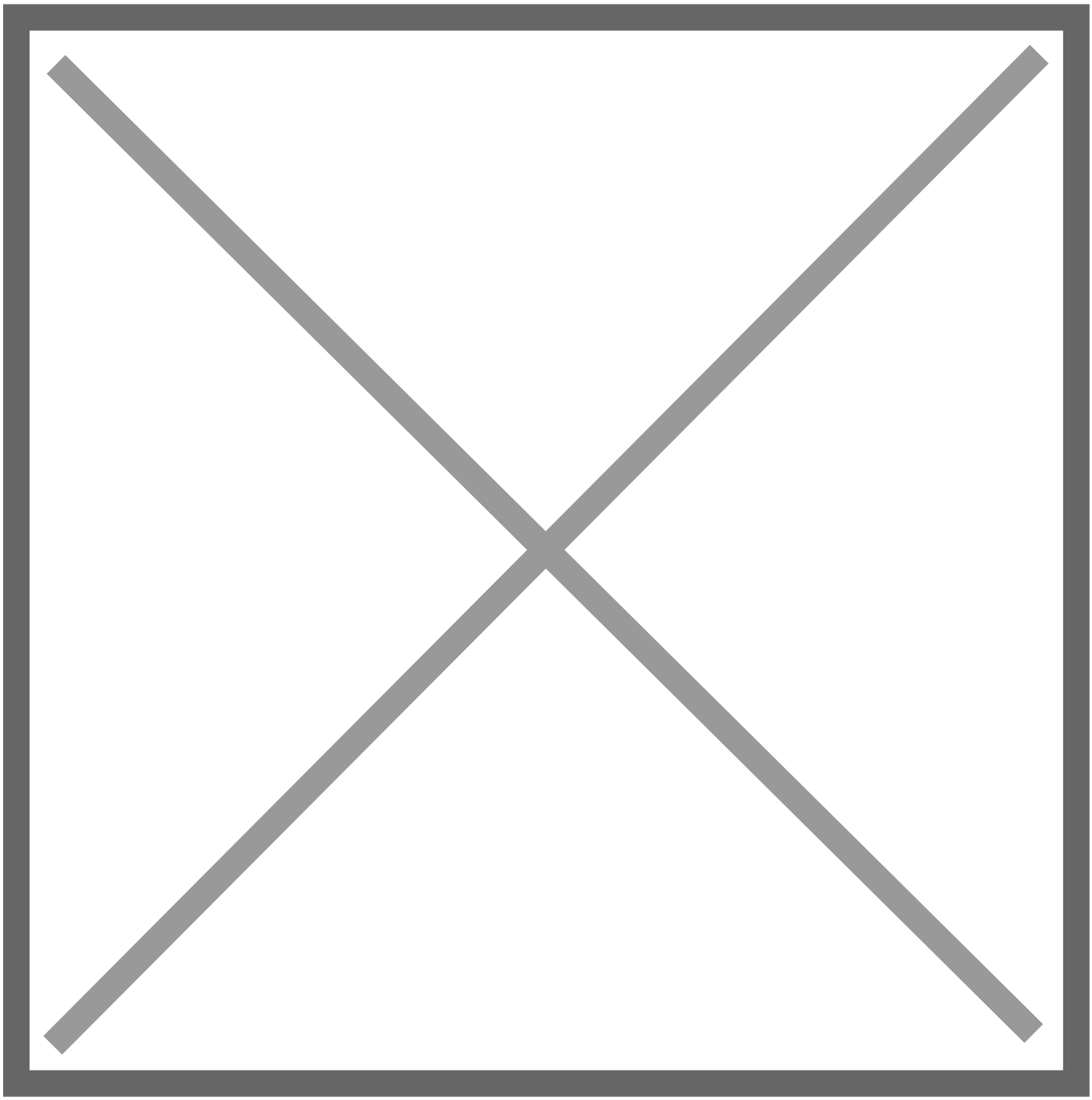
Recognizing military veterans on this special day is vital because these men and women have made profound sacrifices by missing holidays, children's births, birthdays, weddings and other significant life events to put their country before themselves.

Whether they have seen combat, been deployed or stayed in the continental U.S., all veterans have taken an oath to serve selflessly and honoring that commitment is a deeply respectful and important act.

What do you love about working at Toyota?

What I love most about working at Toyota is the constant challenge to learn and grow — whether it's mastering new technical skills or deepening my understanding of quality management.

Toyota fosters a culture of continuous learning and knowledge sharing, which keeps me engaged and motivated. Additionally, I truly appreciate Toyota's commitment to the value of Respect for People. This principle is clearly more than just words; it's reflected in how the company supports its team members. From initiatives through TVA to collaboration with other business partnering groups (BPGs), Toyota genuinely values every employee and actively supports their career development.



How would you describe your role? What are your responsibilities?

Sanchez*:* I support general maintenance operations in a variety of ways, in particular by providing training to team members who work with shop-specific equipment. In addition, I manage our shop's Safety Management Plan, provide Control of Hazardous Energy training, and oversee weekend work planning. I also play a role in Toyota's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) outreach initiatives to promote skill trades in our community.

Can you talk about your military experience and how it's shaped your career at Toyota?

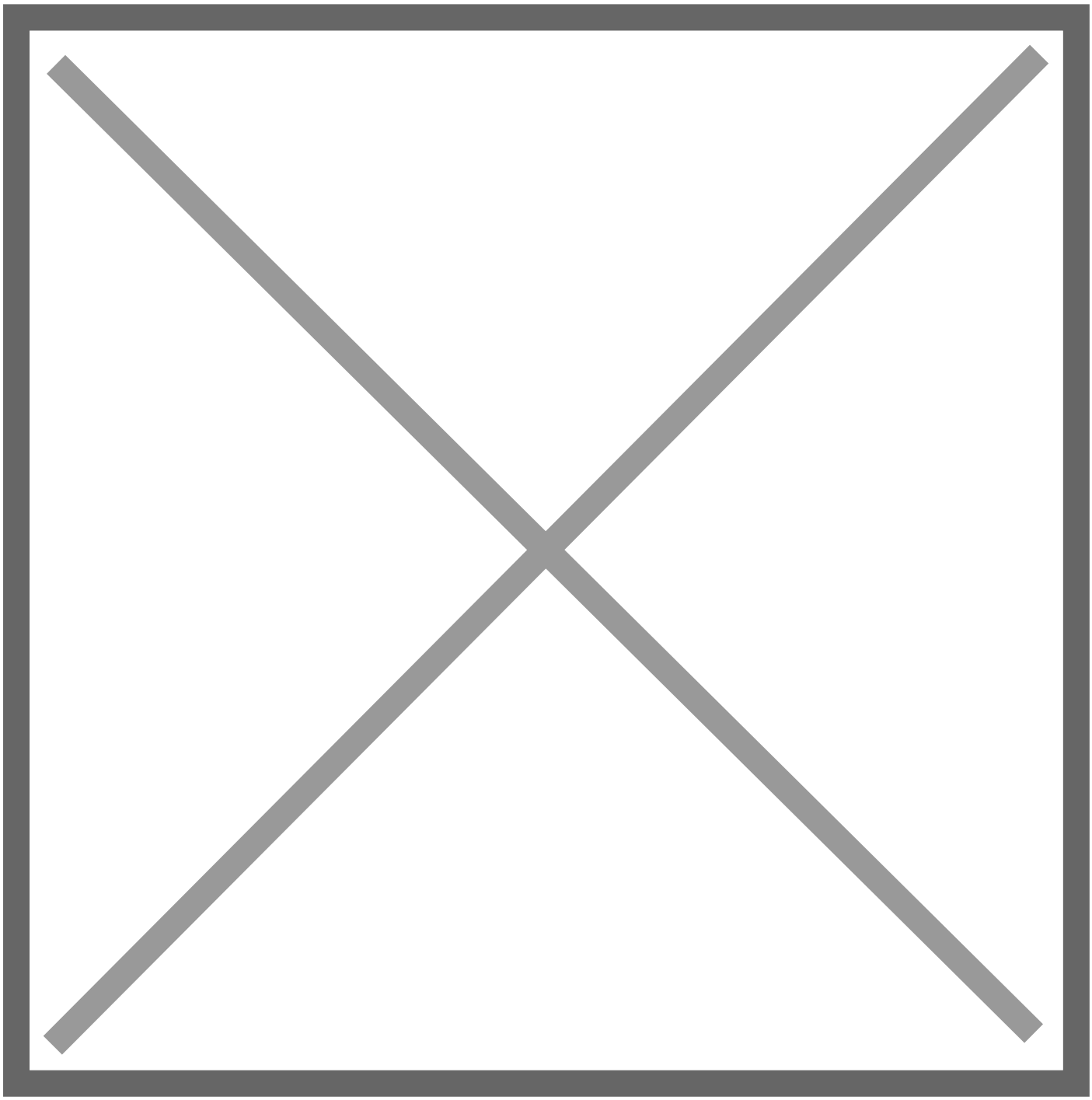
My role as a skilled team member at Toyota closely mirrors my duties as an F-16 avionics technician in the U.S. Air Force. In the military, a focus on safety and quality were absolutely critical. The pilots' lives depended on it. The same applies to our vehicles. Our customers depend on the same dedication to safety and quality. The structure and discipline I learned in the Air Force helped me make a smooth transition to Toyota and civilian life.

Tell us about your role with the Toyota Veterans Association and why it's important to recognize military veterans on this special day?

As vice chair, I play a lead role in organizing events that promote unity and camaraderie among Toyota military veterans, their allies and our local community in San Antonio. Veterans made sacrifices to protect our freedom, so they deserve our highest respect and admiration. I am deeply grateful that Toyota supports TVA, giving us a platform to support one another and help our veterans grow stronger.

What do you love about working at Toyota?

Where do I start? I love that Toyota stands by its people during difficult times, such as the 2008 financial crisis and during the COVID pandemic. I value the company's dedication to education and continuous improvement, in particular through the Advanced Manufacturing Technician (AMT) program. As an AMT lead, I see firsthand how it changes lives. And my work schedule and company benefits allow me to be fully present for my family.



How would you describe your role/responsibilities?

Turley: I serve as the general manager of manufacturing at Toyota West Virginia, overseeing the North Plant, which produces the Direct Shift-8AT, HV4 hybrid transmission and the upcoming HV6 project. Additionally, I hold campuswide responsibilities for safety, production engineering and skill development.

I'm also the executive sponsor for both Toyota Veterans Association (TVA) and Women Influencing and Impacting Toyota (WIIT) at West Virginia.

On a regional level, I recently joined the TVA North American Advisory Councils (NAAC) board as a co-executive sponsor and serve as the Unit Top Committee executive leader for the 3-Pillar working group.

Overall, I've been with Toyota West Virginia for 27 years, having started my career as a team member in 1998.

Can you talk about your military experience and how it shaped your career at Toyota?

One could say I was destined to be a veteran. I was born on Veterans Day and my initials spell vet.

My grandfather served as a Marine during World War II and my father was a Green Beret. From an early age, I was determined to serve. I joined the Marines in 1990 and served four years in the infantry.

During my service, my most significant deployment was with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Special Operations Capable (SOC) aboard the USS Wasp. I participated in Operation Restore Hope and Operation Sustain Hope in Somalia, as well as deployments to the Persian Gulf. Additional deployments included Operation GTMO at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, supporting humanitarian efforts for Haitian migrants, as well as assignments in Okinawa, South Korea and mountain warfare cold-weather training in Bridgeport, California, and Fairbanks, Alaska.

Serving was a profound honor, but my proudest moment came two years ago when I attended my son's Marine Corps graduation. He's currently serving in the Marine Corps and was recently meritoriously promoted to noncommissioned officer (NCO).

The Marine Corps has upheld strong core values and leadership principles that trace back over 250 years. Similarly, Toyota maintains longstanding core values that shape its culture. In both organizations, these principles foster a culture of respect, teamwork and dedication. While both environments are challenging, they're equally rewarding.

I've often heard from former Toyota employees — whether retired or relocated — who say what they miss most are the people. This sentiment closely mirrors that of many veterans who deeply value the camaraderie shared with those they served alongside.

Tell us about your role with the Toyota Veterans Association and why it's important to recognize military veterans on this special day.

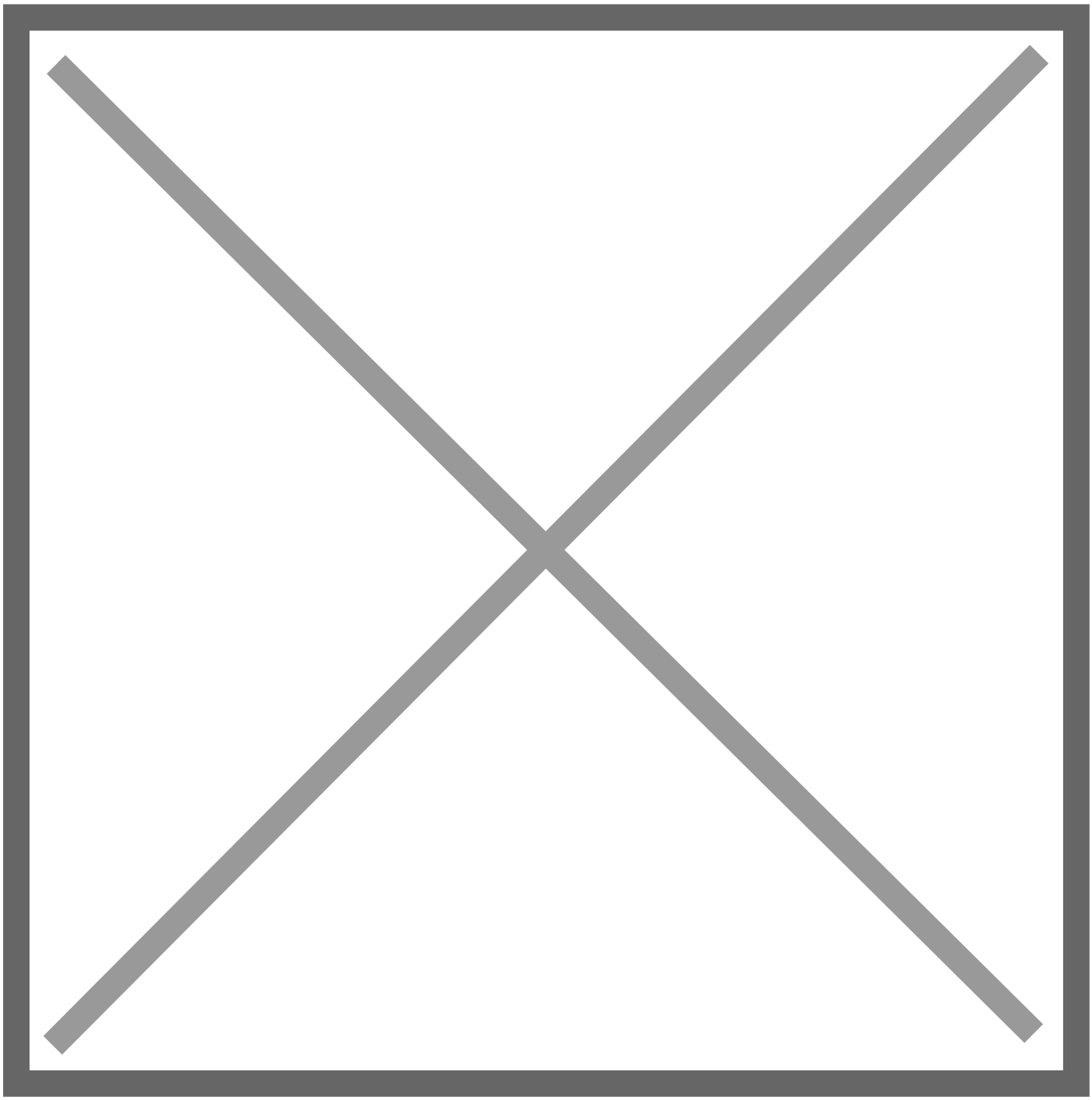
Camaraderie is important to veterans. TVA is an excellent organization to network and carry on the traditions of camaraderie that veterans desire. It's a way to ensure there's support within the organization for incoming veterans to welcome them and provide support.

What do you love about working for Toyota?

Being part of TVA at West Virginia has fostered camaraderie among our veteran team members and strengthened our support within the community. Our members have actively collaborated with The Challenge Academy to showcase manufacturing career opportunities for youth seeking guidance and direction. We have a longstanding commitment to supporting veterans through initiatives such as the DC Honor Flights, Hunting for Heroes and the annual Run for the Wall.

Recently, in partnership with Toyota Environmental Resources for Responsible Action (TERRA), TVA supported the dedication of a living memorial on-site honoring Gold Star Mothers. This memorial includes a 55-tree apple orchard, providing a serene space for reflection and remembrance of their lost loved ones.

Beyond my role at Toyota, I serve as the senior vice commandant for our local detachment of the Marine Corps League. TVA also partners with the Marine Corps League to support its annual fundraising trail run, which funds scholarships for local students with veteran parents.



How would you describe your role? What are your responsibilities?

Arias*:* I lead projects that reduce muda (waste) in our processes —enhancing safety, efficiency, productivity and quality. I also train team members on a range of Toyota Production System principles, such as standardized

work.

Can you talk about your military experience and how it's shaped your career at Toyota?

I enlisted in the U.S. Army after I graduated from high school in 1998 and proudly served in military logistics for eight years. In 2003, I completed a tour in Kuwait as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

My unit established a distribution center to deliver critical equipment to troops on the ground. That gave me hands-on experience in supply chain operations as well as the importance of precision, coordination and leadership under pressure — skills that have been foundational in my role at Toyota. The military also instilled in me a strong sense of discipline and adaptability that have also been instrumental in shaping my civilian career.

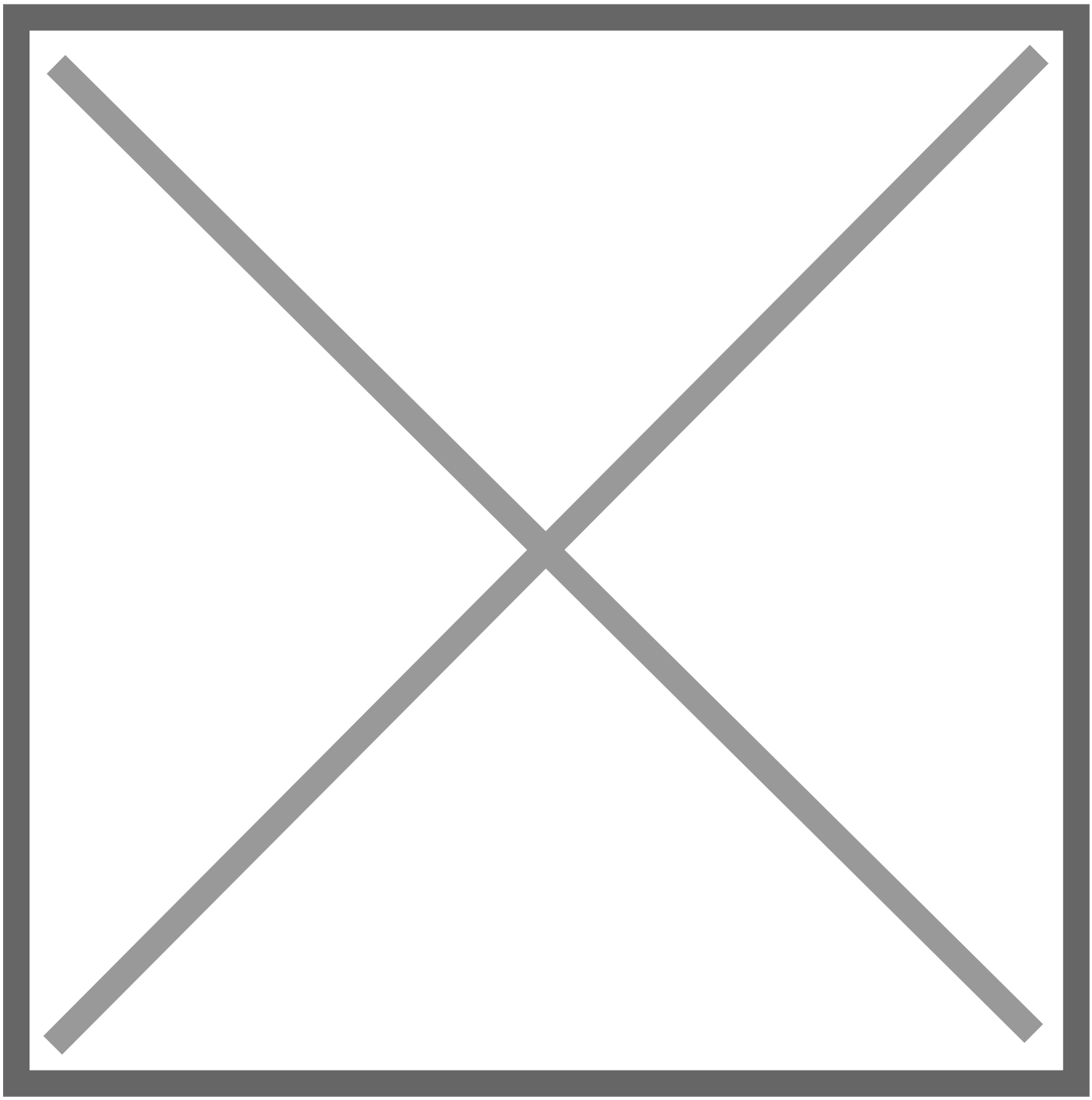
Tell us about your role with the Toyota Veterans Association and why it's important to recognize military veterans on this special day?

I am the communications chair of the TVA chapter here at the North American Parts Center California (NAPCC), so my primary responsibility is to promote our onsite and offsite events. Veterans Day is an opportunity to say, "thank you," to the people who put their lives on the line for something bigger than themselves.

Some of these veterans are still healing, some are thriving and some just want to know their service meant something. Behind every uniform there is a real person with a story to tell.

What do you love about working at Toyota?

The people! I get to work alongside people with intelligence, creativity and passion to make every day enjoyable. I feel lucky to collaborate with a talented and supportive team. I learn something new from them every day.



How would you describe your role? What are your responsibilities?

Amezquita: I'm responsible for developing and executing the monthly parts logistics plan for the Toyota Tacoma model at Toyota Motor Manufacturing de Baja California, based on the getsudo, monthly or short-term, forecast.

My role involves daily collaboration with cross-functional teams, including the manufacturing plant, suppliers, logistics providers and Toyota Motor North America (TMNA) route planners, to align parts supply and delivery

schedules. I apply Toyota Production System (TPS) principles and Toyota Way methodologies to design optimized route plans that maximize efficiency and minimize waste. This ensures that North American Manufacturing Centers (NAMCs) receive the right parts at the right time and in the right place to maintain continuous production flow.

Additionally, I monitor logistics performance and proactively adjust plans in response to forecast changes and operational demands, while leading continuous improvement initiatives to enhance logistics processes and support lean manufacturing objectives.

Can you talk about your military experience and how it shaped your career at Toyota??

I served four years of active duty and six years in the Air National Guard from 2009 to 2019, separating as a technical sergeant (E-6) in the 2T271 aerial transportation specialty.

In this role, I was responsible for the safe and efficient movement of military air cargo and passengers, including processing, loading and unloading aircraft, coordinating transportation schedules, preparing load plans and performing inspections and documentation. This experience instilled in me a strong foundation in logistics, discipline and operational efficiency. It also enabled me to pursue a degree in supply chain management at the University of North Texas, which led to a co-op rotation in demand and supply management at Toyota.

My military background has been instrumental in shaping my career at Toyota, providing me with the skills and mindset necessary to excel as a route planner and contribute effectively to our logistics operations.

My military service gave me the opportunity to see the world — from Delaware to Japan — and to engage with diverse people and cultures, all while contributing to the Air Force mission. It was an incredibly rewarding and challenging experience, one filled with valuable lessons and personal growth. While it was the most intense and demanding period of my life, it also provided some of the most memorable and meaningful experiences I've ever had.

Tell us about your role with the Toyota Veterans Association and why it's important to recognize military veterans on this special day.

As a member of the TVA, I'm proud to be part of a dedicated group that honors the commitment and core values embodied by those who have worn the uniform. For the Air Force, these values are integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do. Each TVA member embraces a similar guiding principle from their respective branch, serving as a daily reminder of the dedication and character required to serve.

Our mission is to honor all veterans — those who served before us, alongside us and those who will follow — recognizing that we stand on the shoulders of those who came before, and that future generations will stand on ours.

Veterans Day is a special occasion to acknowledge and celebrate the sacrifices and contributions of all who have served, reinforcing our collective respect and gratitude for their service. Additionally, during my military service, I had the honor of being part of a base honor guard that celebrated retirees, conducted change-of-command ceremonies and honored those who had passed. These experiences have deepened my respect for commitment and tradition — values I see reflected at Toyota.

What do you love about working for Toyota?

I love the company's philosophy and commitment to quality, innovation and continuous improvement. Toyota's dedication to producing reliable, safe and high-quality products gives me the confidence to recommend them to

my family and friends without hesitation. Unlike many brands, Toyota has earned my genuine trust and belief, which is why I proudly align myself with the brand and its values.