Clarion Review

Business & Economics

Military Millionaires: Written by a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom to promote financial prosperity among all those that choose to serve in the United States military

Michael Stephen Hamlin
CreateSpace
978-1-4538-3379-7
Five Stars (out of Five)

In *Military Millionaires*, a former U.S. Army infantryman with a degree in business administration provides cogent, easy-to-follow financial advice for young men and women joining the U.S. military.

With an aim to lead young people to a future of financial security, Michael Stephen Hamlin's step-by-step guide to managing money offers sound advice for just about anyone—young or old, military or civilian. He covers all of the basics: start saving early; know the difference between needs and wants; set concrete goals; learn to live with less; build up a six-month emergency fund; develop a workable budget; pay down debt; organize important documents; and, last but not least, stick to a plan.

Young recruits will benefit from Hamlin's commonsense reminders. He points out that avoiding expensive, impulse purchases "can be the most challenging part of building a secure financial future," that saving up to pay cash for a used automobile might be smarter than taking out a loan to buy a new one, or that readers might want to hang on to "bills for insured items such as jewelry, appliances, electronics, and collectibles, in case you need to file an insurance claim."

Hamlin shares financial expertise based on his own experiences and the experiences of others, and mixes his advice about dollars and cents with a dash of homespun philosophy. He wants to help young recruits avoid common financial mistakes, cut back on unnecessary purchases, and build a sizable nest egg for the future. All of which will become easier, Hamlin suggests, if one learns along the way that real happiness can't be found in fancy cars and expensive houses. True satisfaction, writes Hamlin, "comes from faith, family, friendship, and helping others."

With its details about the financial benefits available to military personnel, *Military Millionaires* should be required reading for all new recruits. Living in military housing, for example, means not paying rent or utilities. A career in the military provides full medical coverage regardless of a person's age at the time of retirement, which means that there is no need to purchase health insurance between the time of retirement and the start of Medicare coverage at age 65. Unlike its civilian counterparts, the U.S. military still provides generous pensions. Military personnel can contribute up to $16,500 annually to individual retirement accounts, a full $11,000 more than their peers in the private sector.

In Hamlin's book, any young person who has just joined the military, or is just thinking about joining the military, will find a solid, workable plan for creating a secure financial future.

Diane Taylor