



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

By Craig Kelly | Lima News

LIMA &mdash; Rhodes State College was offering a different kind of education Tuesday.

The college hosted Smart Money Choices, a financial literacy workshop aimed at veterans and military families. This was the third such event in the state, part of an initiative by Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel to help local veterans become aware of various programs and resources available to help veterans gain financial stability.

"As an Iraq War veteran, I know that a strong support system can have a positive impact when veterans return home," Mandel said in a statement. "Unfortunately, many servicemen and women are unaware of the programs and resources available to them to help ease their transition into civilian life. I want to make sure that our nation's veterans are provided with knowledge and access to resources that will help empower them to continue serving our country in their communities across Ohio."

For Judith Mazzarelli, associate dean of student services at Rhodes State, events such as this are a solution to a growing problem as more veterans return home from duty.

"Financial literacy for veterans is a growing concern," she said. "Many states across the nation are doing events like this."

The goals of this event align perfectly with those of Rhodes State College, according to Dr. Cynthia Spiers, vice-president for student affairs.

"Rhodes State is focused on access and student success, and this is a perfect example of how we can work with the state of Ohio to assist our veterans in accessing support to achieve success," she said.

Tuesday's event focused on a variety of financial issues, ranging from access to veteran benefits to investment and retirement planning. There were also workshops on identity theft and fraud prevention, as well as credit and debt management.

"We have people here from all types of veterans service organizations, from Social Security, counseling services and others," Mazzarelli said. "We have a table in there, too, promoting not only Rhodes, but also a scholarship that we are now providing for veterans."

Among the representatives of area veteran service agencies present were Rollie Benedum, president of the Vietnam Veterans Association, Chapter 89 and the Allen County Veterans Service Organization. He and his wife, Rosemary, attended the event to relay this information to their members in the hopes that it would benefit not only the veterans, but also their families.

"This is also for their children and grandchildren," Rosemary Benedum said. "So all this information we're getting today will go back to the group. We'll see to it that they learn all of this."



# JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

They also noted that with many veterans coming back with various injuries or disabilities, transitioning to civilian life can be very difficult, and the more information available to them, the easier that transition can become.

"Education's the key, because they've got to come back into society, and events like this can help us in giving them direction," Rosemary Benedum said.