



Update

CITIZEN SOLDIER SUPPORT PROGRAM

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Strengthening CSSP

As part of our efforts to effectively establish military and community collaborations that support Reserve Component members and their families, we continue to build our staff. In the last few months, CSSP has:

- Added a deputy director. Lieutenant Colonel (retired) William Abb brings to the position more than 23 years of active duty Army and US Army Reserve experience and a lifelong commitment to serving the needs of Service members and their families. Bill oversees the daily operations of the CSSP program.
- Strengthened our Behavioral Health Initiative. Ms. Thu-Mai Lewis Christian, a former member of the US Air Force, joined CSSP as a project coordinator for behavioral health. She holds a Master's degree and has a strong background in survey research and data collection.

Greetings from CSSP

Since our last e-newsletter, we have been busy with a number of new and exciting initiatives to support our Reserve Component members and their families. Following are some of the highlights.

In collaboration with Army OneSource (AOS), we provided one of our signature courses, "Confident Communications," to AOS Community Support Coordinators (CSCs). CSCs provide an invaluable service at the local level by connecting military and community systems and organizations that support our Reserve Component. This training was very well received, and CSSP is working closely with AOS to develop ongoing training and technical assistance for CSCs throughout the country.

CSSP also developed "The Invisible Wounds of War," a free, online tutorial that offers CME and CEU credits and is targeted to primary care health providers and other medical service gatekeepers. The tutorial focuses on the symptoms of traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and is being offered in collaboration with the North Carolina Area Health Education Centers (AHECs).

We look forward to the continued growth and success of our work and to your ongoing support and involvement. Please contact us if you have suggestions or questions about CSSP.

Susan Kerner-Hoeg
 Director, Military Relations
 CSSP

- Expanded our knowledge management capacity. Ms. Brenna Burch, our new program manager for knowledge and community outreach, brings specialized skills to assist CSSP in conducting “knowledge audits” in our core areas of concentration. Her work will facilitate our understanding of what others at the local, state, and national levels are doing, and will identify evidence-based practices and collaboration opportunities.
- Engaged a UNC graduate student. Ms. Elizabeth Marks has joined CSSP for the summer to assist us in completing knowledge audits and to contribute to our work for Army OneSource. Ms. Marks, a graduate of the US Naval Academy, is pursuing a Master’s degree at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

Looking Ahead

- In the months ahead, CSSP will roll out suicide prevention training for civilian clinicians, emphasizing an innovative outreach strategy to rural Reserve Component Service members and their families.
- CSSP will further its work with several telepsychiatry organizations to provide mental health services in remote and underserved areas.
- During the summer/fall of 2009, CSSP will launch three online training tools to improve partnership-building skills.
- During the fall of 2009, CSSP will partner with Lexington, KY and surrounding counties to build sustaining military and

Building Community Partnerships

ARMY ONESOURCE

Through agreement with the Army Family Programs office, CSSP continues to seek new ways to assist the military in effectively engaging communities to serve the needs of Reserve Component members and their families. In April, CSSP conducted an executive training course, “Confident Communication,” for all 38 of Army OneSource’s Regional and Community Support Coordinators (R/CSCs). This course is designed to develop skills in networking and presenting at the executive level. During training, participants had opportunities to practice their communication skills, work with communication coaches, develop individual action steps, and engage directly with their local community leaders to schedule meetings.

Training coaches possessed executive-level experience either in sales and marketing, corporate partnerships and mergers, public governance, military programs, or not-for-profit leadership. Drawing upon their experience as successful leaders, coaches worked with R/CSCs individually and in small groups to plan, practice, videotape, analyze, and improve their communication tactics and styles.

Supporting the R/CSCs will be a CSSP priority for the remainder of 2009. CSSP continues to design new training and technical assistance opportunities, identify model partnerships, and support AOS leaders in planning and executing a roadmap for success in the field.

CSSP Building Community Partnerships consistently receives exemplary evaluations by participants. Here’s what they are saying:

“This was great training — the best I’ve had. I learned a lot of new skills that I plan to implement soon.”

“Now we’ll be more successful at building community partnerships and presenting a unified front without duplicating efforts.”

“Very good training. The presenters were awesome, and we had great opportunities for networking.”

“This information was right on target. Best of all, the training gave me new insight that helps me understand how to keep my own strengths and weaknesses in perspective as I make decisions and take positive actions.”

community partnerships in preparation for an Army Community Covenant ceremony.

- CSSP and AHEConnect have started work on a free TBI web conference that will be released in the fall of 2009.

Your comments, please...

We value your continued involvement and input. Please call or e-mail at any time:

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CENTRAL KENTUCKY AND ARMY COMMUNITY COVENANT

As part of our efforts to engage local policy makers and program managers in understanding how to meet the needs of Reserve Component members and their families, CSSP has been working to support the Army Community Covenant program. Through a joint effort with leaders in an eight-county region of central Kentucky, we are creating a model for developing effective partnerships within the Army Community Covenant planning process. The initial meetings in Lexington have included government officials, Commerce Lexington, local nonprofit leadership, the Kentucky National Guard, Army OneSource, Military OneSource, the US Army Reserve Family Programs, and CSSP staff.

CSSP ONLINE COURSE DEVELOPMENT

To enhance the skills of military/community partnership builders, CSSP is custom designing three online courses. Each course will allow participants to apply current knowledge and best practices for building partnerships in their unique situations. Courses currently in design and development include:

- Your Personal Style and Community Partnerships
- Community Capacity and Military Member Resiliency
- Organizational Culture and Effective Partnerships
- These courses will be made available on the CSSP website in the fall.

Behavioral Health

Through our Behavioral Health Initiative, CSSP is working to improve access to services for Reserve Component members and their families, especially those who are dealing with combat-related behavioral health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

CSSP is building national partnerships with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, the Office of the Chief Army Reserves, and the Health Resources and Services Administration to expand development of a statewide model for behavioral health.

Since starting these efforts in January 2008, we have provided nearly 1,700 participants with CSSP/AHEC continuing education and training. Over the last few months, CSSP's Behavioral Health Initiative:

- Began offering, "Treating the Invisible Wounds of War" as a free, three-hour online tutorial that provides CME and CEU credits and is targeted to

the needs of primary and behavioral health care providers. It is available at: www.aheconnect.com/citizensoldier.

- Conducted a free, one-hour web conference on TBI for 136 professionals. This conference was held in conjunction with Robin Hurley, MD, Associate Director of Education at the Veterans Integrated Service Network 6 Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Center.
- Presented “State Efforts to Address Mental Health Needs of Rural Returning Soldiers, Veterans, and their Families” on May 7, 2009 at the 32nd National Rural Health Association’s Annual Rural Health Conference. Harold Kudler, MD, Director, Mental Health Coordinator, VA Mid-Atlantic Network; and CSSP’s Bob Goodale led the session.
- Coordinated one-day PTSD training for 100 providers at the Pee Dee, South Carolina and Mid-Missouri Area Health Education Centers. Content and technical assistance were provided by CSSP and Harold Kudler, MD, Director, Mental Health Coordinator, VA Mid-Atlantic Network.
- CSSP is partnering with the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at UNC-Chapel Hill to develop an easily searchable, open-source provider database that Veterans and their families can use to connect with providers who have received PTSD/TBI training and/or who have expressed interest in serving Veterans and their families. The database will be launched later this year.

THE DUKE ENDOWMENT-FUNDED “OPERATION COMPASSION”

The goal of “Operation Compassion” is to connect pastors and congregations with families of deployed Service members, Veterans and returning Service members. Funded by CSSP and a grant from the Duke Endowment, Operation Compassion was launched in March 2009 by Dennis Goodwin, an Army Chaplain who serves as superintendent of the New Bern, NC district of the United Methodist Church and as chair of CSSP’s Behavioral Health Steering Committee.

The grant consists of a two-tiered training approach aimed at behavioral health care providers and clergy as well as lay leaders and congregants in eastern North Carolina. “Working Miracles in People’s Lives” is a one-day training session for behavioral health care providers and clergy. Harold Kudler, MD, Director, Mental Health Coordinator, VA Mid-Atlantic Network and John Oliver, D. Min., Chief of Chaplain Service, Durham VA Medical Center developed and presented

the content. Four sessions have been held in Morehead City, Jacksonville, and New Bern, NC, where 179 clergy and behavioral health care providers have completed the training.

Operation Compassion also provides one-day regional training sessions for lay leaders and congregants who want to launch support team ministries for military families in their respective churches. These ministries are mentored and supported by Operation Compassion staff as they expand throughout the five-county area targeted by the grant. Over 80 lay leaders have attended the regional trainings which have been held at Faith Harbor United Methodist in Surf City, NC; Beech Grove United Methodist in New Bern, NC; and Core Creek United Methodist in Newport, NC. The next series of leadership trainings is scheduled to begin in the fall with the first training set for October 3 at Centenary United Methodist Church in New Bern, NC.

Rev. Goodwin, who deployed to Iraq, notes:

“At a time when stress levels run high because of repeated deployments, this ministry can provide a very concrete, meaningful way to support our 50,000 Marines, Sailors and Reserve Component members and their families who live in the [New Bern, NC] district and surrounding communities.”

NC National Guard Command Sergeant Major (retired) Billy Spencer serves as project director.



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