

Military Family Readiness Council Meeting Minutes

The Pentagon Conference Center, Room B6

April 27, 2017

1-3 p.m.

Meeting attendees:

Office of the Secretary of Defense:

Mr. Anthony Kurta, Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Chairman

Mr. Bill Story, Acting Director, Office of Military Family Readiness Policy

Army:

COL Robert Menist, representing LTG Gwen Bingham, USA, Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management (ACSIM)

Sergeant Major of the Army Daniel Dailey

Ms. Laura Conley, U.S. Army National Guard Spouse

Army National Guard:

MG Kevin McNeely, Director, Manpower and Personnel (J1) (By phone)

BG Jessica Meyeraan, representing MG Kevin McNeely, Director, Manpower and Personnel (J1)

Marine Corps:

Ms. Marie Balocki, representing BGen Kurt Stein, USMC, Director, Marine and Family Programs

Ms. Julie Margolis, Marine Corps Active Duty Spouse

Ms. Andrea Smith-Green, Spouse of Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Ronald Green (By phone)

Navy:

Mr. Thomas Yavorski, representing RDML (sel) Karl Thomas, Director, Twenty-First Century Sailor Office (N17)

Ms. Jennifer Luscher, Navy Reserve Component Spouse

Ms. Elka Franco-Giordano, Spouse of Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Steve Giordano

Air Force:

Ms. Tamre Newton, representing Brig Gen Kathleen Cook, USAF, Director of Air Force Services

CMSgt Stanley Cadell, representing CMSAF Kaleth Wright

Ms. Michelle Padgett, Air Force Active Duty Spouse

Military Family Organizations:

Dr. Mary Keller, Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)

Dr. David Rubin, Children's Hospital Association (CHA) (By phone)

Ms. Karen Ruedisueli, National Military Family Association (NMFA)

DoD Guest Speakers:

BG Shawn O'Brien, New Hampshire Army National Guard
LTC Roy Hunter, New Hampshire Army National Guard
Mr. Eddy Mentzer, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy)
Ms. Zona Lewis, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy)
Ms. Erika Slaton, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy)

Military Panel Guest Speakers:

Mr. Rob Hansgen, U.S. Army
Mr. Keith Goosby, U.S. Navy
Ms. Christine Heit, U.S. Marine Corps
Ms. Stacey Young, U.S. Air Force

Also Present:

Mr. Dave Julian, Acting Principal Director, Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP)
Ms. Julie Blanks, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Civilian Personnel Policy (CPP)
Ms. Patricia Mulcahy, representing the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Military Personnel Policy (MPP)
CAPT Steven Knight, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Reserve Integration (RI)
Ms. Darla Siegel, Outreach Program Manager, National Guard Bureau (NGB)
Mr. John Hastings, Acting Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Readiness (R)
Mr. Ed Chan, Defense Health Agency (DHA)
CAPT Ed Simmer, Deputy Director, TRICARE/DHA
Mr. Marcus Beauregard, Director, Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO)
Col Sean Jones, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Personnel and Readiness (J1)
Mrs. Holly Dailey, Spouse of Sergeant Major of the Army Daniel Dailey
Mrs. Tonya Wright, Spouse of Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright
Ms. Ellyn Dunford, Spouse of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford
Ms. Nancy Rice, Spouse of the Director of the Air National Guard

MFRC Designated Federal Officer:

Dr. Randy N. Eltringham

MFRC Support Staff:

Ms. Betsy Graham
Ms. Melody McDonald
Mr. Frank Emery

Proceedings of the Meeting:

On Thursday, April 27, 2017, the second Military Family Readiness Council meeting of FY2017 was held in the Pentagon Library and Conference Center (Room B6). The purpose of this meeting was to receive informational briefings on collaborating with community partners, and to discuss how community collaboratives can help fill gaps in needed support services.

A full transcript of the meeting, with attendance of members and advisers noted, is available and will be posted online prior to the final FY2017 Council meeting.

The MFRC Designated Federal Officer, Dr. Randy Eltringham, opened the meeting by welcoming Council members, advisors and public guests. She announced that with so many good speaker recommendations for this second meeting, the Council would hear presentations about three Department-wide collaborations as well as four Military Service specific initiatives.

Dr. Eltringham then introduced the MFRC Chair, Mr. Anthony Kurta, who is performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness). Mr. Kurta began his remarks by welcoming three new Council members (below):

- RDML (sel) Karl Thomas, Director, Twenty-First Century Sailor Office (N17)
- Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Kaleth Wright
- Mr. Bill Story, Acting Director, Office of Military Family Readiness Policy

Dr. Eltringham reminded Council members and attendees that the Council's mission is to review, evaluate and monitor Military Family Readiness (MFR) policies, programs, plans and initiatives. She explained that over time, the Council addresses a comprehensive list of MFR topics which are reviewed in a multi-year rotational process in order to address the needs of Service and family members. With a larger number of annual recommendations and focus areas than in past years, in FY2017, the Council expanded its schedule to accommodate three meetings. The final meeting of the year will be held on August 29, 2017.

Dr. Eltringham explained that some recent minor changes in law will affect Council membership and said these changes will be shared soon. She called attention to the certified, signed minutes from the February 15, 2017 Council meeting which are included in member briefing packages. The public can review these meeting minutes on the MFRC webpage. She also noted that Mr. Kurta and Council members have reviewed 14 written public submissions for today's meeting. Public submissions help the Council to focus on issues that are important to Service members and families.

Dr. Eltringham told the Council that the new MFRC Communique is in its final review. Once approved by Mr. Kurta, it will be distributed to members and advisors and posted to the MFRC webpage for use by DoD and Military Service staff, service providers, and members of the public.

Dr. Eltringham announced that Title 10 USC §1781(a) requires the Council to have 18 members and that there was a quorum at today's meeting. She acknowledged some Council members were unable to attend, but sent representatives who could answer questions or provide

input if called upon by the MFRC Chairman. All in attendance were reminded that the Council is available via email at osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.family-readiness-council@mail.mil, via the web at www.militaryonesource.mil/service-providers/mfrc, or via mail at Office of Military Family Readiness Policy, Attention: Military Family Readiness Council, 4800 Mark Center Drive, Suite 3G15, Alexandria, VA 22350-2300.

She then turned the floor over to Mr. Kurta.

Mr. Kurta thanked Dr. Eltringham and welcomed everyone. He acknowledged that the February meeting, with a discussion about the Exceptional Family Member Program, drew a record-setting crowd. He thanked Ms. Stephanie Barna for sitting in for him during the previous meeting and noted this was his first official meeting as Chairman. He told members to expect to learn more about building strong community collaboratives and working relationships that are keeping military families strong and resilient as they face challenges throughout their military lifecycle. Mr. Kurta said Secretary of Defense James Mattis had just spoken a day earlier to OUSD Personnel and Readiness leaders and staff about the need for policies and programs that increase the strength of military families and the armed forces. Community collaboratives help ensure that goal is met.

Before returning the floor back to Dr. Eltringham, Mr. Kurta recognized and thanked four groups who are playing a critical role every day as they reach out and serve military families using collaborative best practices. They include:

- Military OneSource – which is building and expanding a Department-wide network of vetted information and resource referrals with the continued strong support of the Military Services and community partners;
- Military Service Family Support Centers – which are providing local and regional family support, Department-wide information and referrals, military family readiness-related services that are community-based, and information and connections that are unique to each Military Service;
- Public Affairs Officers, the Public Press and Community Outreach Professionals – who are working collaboratively to ensure that correct information is provided to the public and who help promote the supportive resources that Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and their families need; and,
- Community Partner Organizations and Representatives – (e.g., Military Support Organizations (MSOs), Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and other community partners including 3 members of MFRC: the National Military Family Association (NMFA), Children’s Hospital Association (CHA) and the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)) – which are helping to close gaps in service delivery by raising awareness and encouraging cross-referrals which integrate civilian sector community resources with those offered by DoD and the Military Services.

Dr. Eltringham then summarized 14 written public submissions (below) that were recently received by the Council and noted this was another large number of submissions – a good trend showing growing interest in bringing the voice of the public to the attention of the Council and ultimately to the Secretary of Defense.

Executive Summary of Public Submissions

- (1) Need for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Providers
- (2) Lack of Nursing Care Options through TRICARE
- (3) Model Program: Horses Healing Maryland’s Military
- (4) Model Program: Home Base: Summer Camp and Youth Development
- (5) Pilot Program: Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC)
- (6) Recommendations for Additional MFRC Briefings (two submissions)
 - ✓ Military medical partnerships that are expanding support for family well-being, including support for families with autistic children
 - ✓ School behavioral health and special education partnerships
 - ✓ Community Best Practices from Joint Base Lewis-McCord
- (7) Support for Beyond Yellow Ribbon Programs (four submissions)
- (8) Recommendation that one GS position be established in each state to assist in identifying needed resources and connecting Guard and Reserve Component Service members and families to sources of assistance
- (9) Need for Transitional Assistance Programs and Policies (two submissions)

Dr. Eltringham concluded her administrative review by explaining the procedure for today’s meeting. There would be three guest speakers providing presentations on Department-wide collaborations followed by a 20-minute discussion period. Then, there would be four Military Service Best Practice panel member presentations followed by another 15-20 minute discussion period. She then introduced Zona Lewis and Erika Slaton from the Office of Military Community and Family Policy to provide an update on Military OneSource’s network of support.

Presentations to the Council

Briefing #1:

Military OneSource and Non-medical Counseling: Creating a World Class I&R Network of Support Through Community Collaboration

Ms. Zona Lewis, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy), briefed the Council on the Military OneSource website, the flagship site for providing information, resource referrals and confidential non-medical counseling services to military families. She began by noting that during the summer of 2016, their team conducted more than 200 interviews at 10 installations both CONUS and OCONUS to find out what challenges Service and family members had with Military OneSource’s services and website. Social listening and keyword research also assisted the team as they analyzed information gathered prior to the October Military OneSource beta site launch. The team also interviewed service providers. Their feedback is being used to redesign service provider pages within the Military OneSource system.

The Military OneSource beta site will continue to use on-going research and user feedback in the days and months ahead. Ms. Lewis said the team plans to move the site, with a modern design and refreshed Military OneSource branding, into production by mid-summer 2017. She explained that Military OneSource is being built with mobile users in mind and will be responsive to all monitor sizes. Ms. Lewis then introduced her colleague, Ms. Erika Slaton.

Ms. Erika Slaton, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy), explained to the Council that Military OneSource includes a 24/7 call center for assistance with every aspect of military life. She said the call center receives 30,000 to 40,000 calls each month and is ideal for serving geographically dispersed military families who are then able to more quickly access the support resources they need. She noted the most requested service is confidential non-medical counseling. The work of Military OneSource Consultants in every state impacts Service and family members in many positive ways. She explained that with ongoing user feedback and trend analysis, the team has been able to enhance the information, referral and counseling services provided, including help for veterans.

At the conclusion of Ms. Slaton's presentation, Dr. Eltringham introduced Mr. Eddy Mentzer from the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy) to provide an update on DoD Spouse Employment initiatives which are using collaboration strategies.

Briefing #2:

Best Practice Community Collaboratives with Military Support Organizations

Mr. Eddy Mentzer told the Council that the Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) initiative was launched in 2010 to connect military spouses with resources that could help them attain their education, career and employment goals. He said for the more than 1 million spouses across DoD, Permanent Change of Station (PCS) relocations are one of their biggest challenges. Mr. Mentzer noted that the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) was launched in 2011 to connect spouses with employers who want to hire, train, promote and retain them despite their mobile military lifecycle. The number of companies currently participating in MSEP is about 350. Since 2011, MSEP partner employers have hired nearly 110,000 military spouses.

Mr. Mentzer explained that his office continues to be challenged as they work to ensure spouses are aware of the support services, tools and benefits that are available to them. During a recent meeting with senior Army spouses in Tampa, FL, most participants didn't know what SECO is or that there is a call center with licensed, masters level spouse employment counselors available to assist them. He pointed out that only 25 percent of spouses who are eligible for the My Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) scholarship (a scholarship worth up to \$4,000 for spouses seeking education in support of a portable career) used available funding last year.

Recognizing that other organizations are available to help military spouses, but that each organization has different resources and unique support services, Mr. Mentzer and his colleagues

established the Spouse Ambassador Network (SAN). SAN's goal is to bring member organizations together regularly for the purpose of sharing and promoting support resources and sources of assistance. The Spouse Ambassador Network began with 11 organizations and now has 22 participating.

Mr. Mentzer also noted the importance of engaging with senior military spouses and leveraging their connections and influence to bring continued awareness to available resources.

When Mr. Mentzer concluded his briefing, Dr. Eltringham acknowledged the senior leadership spouses in attendance at today's MFRC meeting and thanked them for promoting Spouse Education and Career Opportunity related programs and services as well as other resources needed by military spouses throughout their military lifecycle. She then introduced Brigadier General Shawn O'Brien and Lieutenant Colonel Roy Hunter from the New Hampshire Army National Guard.

Briefing #3:

New Hampshire's Care Coordination/Beyond Yellow Ribbon Program: A State Best Practice for Military Family Support

BG Shawn O'Brien, from the New Hampshire Army National Guard, thanked Council members for everything they are doing to raise awareness and facilitate connections to resources needed by Service and family members, including the Guard and Reserve. He then introduced LTC Roy Hunter who is spearheading New Hampshire's Army National Guard family support efforts.

LTC Roy Hunter noted that while today's agenda noted they are serving the National Guard and Reserve, their program actually serves active duty, inactive, and Reserve components of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard across the state of New Hampshire. Their shared goal is to increase overall readiness and retention. LTC Hunter then provided a brief description of the military population that his program serves:

- Around 1,000 active duty
- 4,000 reservists
- Ranked 8th highest in veteran population
- Low unemployment in the State of New Hampshire

LTC Hunter explained that New Hampshire's program began in 2007 as a pilot program operated through New Hampshire Health and Human Services with funding from the National Guard Program. In 2011, the program expanded into "Beyond Yellow Ribbon" and since 2014, has operated through a contract with a local service provider. Under the current structure, program staffing includes:

- One program manager
- One clinical director
- One intake coordinator/administrator

- Two personal financial counselors
- Eight care coordinators

LTC Hunter noted that the goal of their Care Coordination Program is not to supplant programs sponsored by other organizations (at the local, state and national level) but to supplement them. He stressed that the program is not a hand-down, but a hand-up to get the warrior and family ready to be successful on their own. He pointed out that more than 50 percent of their cases began as questions about personal finances, but as they spoke more with clients, they identified other challenges such as marital issues and underemployment.

LTC Hunter explained that an important part of the program's mission is to build relationships with community resources and service providers so long-term sustainability can be achieved and seamless service can be provided. One way they accomplish this mission is by working with Family Assistance Center specialists and being active participants on the Community Health Promotion Council and High Risk Assessment Team.

In terms of community outreach, program representatives regularly attend Spouse Education and Career Opportunity (SECO) events and military family expos. They also contact military units directly to get the word out to commands and warriors about their program and community resources. LTC Hunter highlighted the fact that care coordination is the key to bringing needed resources together. For example, a phone line is manned 24/7 with assurance that a care coordinator will reach out to all callers within four hours of the initial contact. Care coordinators subsequently provide warm handoffs if the caller is directed to additional resources.

At the conclusion of LTC Hunter's briefing, Dr. Eltringham opened the floor to Council members for a 20-minute discussion period.

Discussion of the briefings:

Dr. Keller asked Ms. Zona Lewis if they have looked into ways to make it easier for organizations serving youth to provide materials to Military OneSource. Ms. Lewis replied that the website has a feedback button so organizations can submit a request. She said if it's a state-specific or community-specific resource, it would be more likely directed towards the Military OneSource call center database rather than for presentation on the Military OneSource website.

Ms. Ruedisueli asked LTC Roy Hunter if New Hampshire has experienced staffing losses at family assistance centers due to wage cuts associated with a new contract. LTC Hunter said yes, they lost 75 percent of their staff, including five specialists and one care coordinator. He said two specialists remained on staff as did one care coordinator. He noted of those who stayed, some are looking for other employment, but they don't want to leave. BG Meyeraan said she was aware of a recent news article that called attention to this situation and that there were some misinterpretations and representations regarding their contracting problems that did not fully explain the situation. She said they are taking the concerns seriously and the contracting office is working on the challenges they are facing.

Dr. Eltringham reminded Council members that they received additional, in-depth information about Beyond Yellow Ribbon Programs and other model programs in their briefing books and by email.

Mr. Kurta asked Mr. Mentzer if the number of MSEP employers could be expanded beyond the current number. Mr. Mentzer replied that the MSEP network gains about 50 to 60 new partners each year. He noted the focus is on larger companies that have facilities and work opportunities that go beyond local jurisdictions. Mr. Mentzer noted the program is working to change the thinking of companies who do not hire military spouses because they relocate in two to three years. He said partners go through a significant vetting process prior to bringing them onboard to ensure they are committed to hiring and retaining mobile military spouses.

Mr. Kurta followed up by asking Mr. Mentzer how to engage corporate America on a strategic level to change the conversation about spouses leaving their jobs at the time of relocation. Mr. Mentzer said in the past, senior leaders and the Secretary of Defense have engaged in this effort. He stated that the program sees new employers approach because other employers shared stories about the great military spouses they've hired. He added that the Soldier for Life program is also helping to refer employers.

Ms. Padgett then asked Ms. Slaton if Military OneSource is able to track referrals. Ms. Slaton replied that people can use non-medical counseling services in a number of ways, including face-to-face, video and online. She said they also see the Military Family Life Counseling (MFLC) program being used at the installation level, while those who need more flexibility use Military OneSource resources. Ms. Padgett followed up by asking where referrals come from. Ms. Slaton provided the information below as a follow-up submission to the Council:

"Yes. Military Community and Family Policy collects aggregate data from the Military Family Life Counseling Program activity reports that capture the source of referrals to military and family life counselors (MFLCs). Based on this data, the top three referrals to MFLCs originate from these sources:

1. Current counselor on assignment
2. Casual outreach, and
3. Military and Family Support Centers."

Dr. Keller asked representatives from the New Hampshire National Guard if they have seen suicide prevention data and if so, if there is a positive impact from prevention efforts. LTC Roy Hunter noted that while it's difficult to see trends in such a small state, they do track how many people contact them with suicide ideation. Counselors stay current with training so they are able to intervene. He said there were two suicides in the New Hampshire National Guard in the past year, but there were years before without any deaths. He commented that for the last reported fiscal year, there were 16 reports of suicide ideation, but they had all stabilized.

Ms. Luscher asked Ms. Lewis who updates the Exceptional Family Member Program school list and how often. When she last looked, the information was from 2014. Ms. Lewis said she

believes the information comes from the University of Ohio. She said it is checked annually for accuracy, but it takes time to update it.

Dr. Eltringham announced the end of the question period. She told members if there are remaining questions, they should give them to her and she'll forward them to the appropriate person for response. She then introduced military panel speakers who presented their community collaborative best practices as effective models for sharing information and connecting military families to a full range of needed resources.

Briefing #4: Military Services Panel

Military Service Best Practice Spotlights: Demonstrating the Positive Impacts of Sharing Information and Connecting Military Families to Needed Resources

Army Community Covenant Initiative (CCI)

Mr. Rob Hansgen, representing the U.S. Army, told Council members that the Army's Community Covenant Initiative (CCI) was launched by then Army Secretary Geren in 2008 with the purpose being to increase collaboration and partnerships with communities. The first partnership locations were Army installation communities, but over time, more communities that were geographically dispersed - and made up of organizations, individuals, companies and Chambers of Commerce - wanted to join Army communities to form an expanded network of support.

As the Community Covenant movement continued to grow and mature, the Army National Guard saw an opportunity to integrate CCI with an even larger number of community partnerships through Joining Community Forces. They also brought together into this mix new DoD Building Healthy Military Communities initiatives.

Today, there are over 1,000 CCI partnerships in all 50 states and U.S. territories. Mr. Hansgen explained that each unique initiative needs to find what works best for that community and for partnership participants in terms of what they can offer and how they can help. He closed by pointing out that what all CCI have in common is the same spirit and intent to provide support and assistance to Military Service and family members.

Navy "zero8hundred" Initiative

Dr. Eltringham then introduced Mr. Keith Goosby, representing the U.S. Navy, who presented the San Diego "zero8hundred" transition assistance program. Mr. Goosby explained that "zero8hundred" references the time Service members stop and salute the flag at the beginning of each new day. For program participants, this is what "zero8hundred" signifies: the beginning of a new day.

Mr. Goosby said that approximately 7,000 Sailors exit the Navy in San Diego, CA, each year and when you add the Marines who exit each year in this same geographic area, the number goes up to 20,000. Seventy-seven percent of separatees are young E-3 to E5 Servicemembers and families who are not retiring with a paycheck or the benefits upon which they previously

depended. Roughly 30% of these individuals stay in the San Diego area after departing military service.

As Sailors and their families approach their unique time for separation and transition, they are introduced to “zero8hundred.” Their needs are assessed at that time and they are offered an opportunity to self-navigate the “zero8hundred” system of support or work with a trained navigator who can help them connect to needed resources beginning nine months before they leave and continuing for a year after separation. Mr. Goosby said “zero8hundred” connects transitioning Sailors to one or more of the over 6,000 appropriate resources which have been vetted through the 211 San Diego resource database. In closing, Mr. Goosby reminded Council members that the ultimate goal of “zero8hundred” is to promote overall veteran and family wellness as Service members and their families successfully transition to civilian life in the San Diego community. One of their remaining challenges is how to help Sailors and their families who are separating and relocating to other geographic locations. He wishes there were more collaborative programs like “zero8hundred.”

Marine Corps Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program

Dr. Eltringham introduced Ms. Christine Heit, from the U.S. Marine Corps, who talked about their Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program (SAPR). Ms. Heit said when SAPR began, the purpose was to find out how to take care of victims and do it properly. However, in order for a successful prevention program to work, organizations have to be collaborative and understand how big a role relationships and community play.

The Marine Corps started using official social media platforms to share targeted messages and to debunk myths. They continue today to engage with the public in real time, so once a post goes live, someone monitors that post for the next eight hours to ensure that individuals who respond are connected to helpful resources right away.

The Marine Corps considers social media to be an effective prevention tool. Because social media platforms don’t have measures of effectiveness, the Marine Corps measures related performance. For example, so far, the Marine Corps has reached over 9 million people with targeted messages and linked over 3,000 people to supportive resources. Additionally, since debunking myths about male victims of sexual assault, the Marine Corps has seen an increase in the number of reports from male victims.

Knowing that targeted social media communications can send positive effective leadership messages, the Marine Corps is now teaming with the Navy to promote responsible use of social media.

Air Force Reserve Air National Guard Teen Leadership Summits

Dr. Eltringham then introduced Ms. Stacey Young, from the U.S. Air Force, to give the Council a sneak peek into how the Air Force is building future leaders. Ms. Young said the purpose of the Air Force Reserve Air National Guard Teen Leadership Summit is to take teens who do not live near military bases and introduce them more fully to the Air Force and as well as

to community support resources. They also talk to teens about the issues and challenges they face, core values, citizenship and resilience.

During their week-long summits, teens participate in leadership courses and use different high-adventure high-risk activities to build leadership skills. They also work with community partners who teach teens about the programs and services that are available to them, including scholarships from the American Legion. Teens are able to ask questions of representatives from partnership agencies including Boys and Girls Clubs of America and 4-H, and they are introduced to Military OneSource to connect them to available resources such as counseling services and other support options designed specifically for children and youth.

Ms. Young explained that throughout these summits, teens learn about patriotism, identify their commonalities, and celebrate their differences. At the end of the week-long adventure, they take their new found knowledge, experience, skills and resources back to their communities where they become ambassadors for the rest of the Air Force for other youth and community members, many of whom have never left their local communities.

So far, Air Force Teen Summits have welcomed over 1,000 youth to their camps, with teens traveling from every state in the US as well as Puerto Rico and Guam. And in the process, the Air Force has built community partner connections, competence, confidence and leaders.

Before moving to the follow-on discussion period, Dr. Eltringham asked the panel if anyone had any last thoughts or comments. Mr. Goosby said “zero8hundred” connects transitioning Sailors with 211 San Diego, which has a large database of vetted resources. Ms. Lewis explained that one of the objectives of Military OneSource is actually to be the “start here” one source. She said they are building the new Military OneSource site to be an agile platform so if new programs or new DoD partners want to be a part of Military OneSource and use Military OneSource to get their information delivered, the new platform can accommodate them.

Discussion of Military Panel Briefings:

CMSgt Cadell asked if “zero8hundred” is available to spouses. Mr. Goosby confirmed the program is available to spouses.

Ms. Conley asked how someone can find out if their community has a Community Covenant Initiative. Mr. Hansgen has suggested to each CCI that they reach out to the military community to let community members know they have signed on. He is also willing to look at his list and let Council members know if their community is on his list. Dr. Eltringham asked if a list of CCI communities with covenant signatures is online. Mr. Hansgen replied that it is not.

Dr. Keller asked Mr. Hansgen how he would refute the confusion that the White House’s Joining Forces continues to make a difference although it has stood down. Mr. Hansgen said when the Army’s CCI partnered with Joining Forces, the program took back a lot of the communication being pushed out. The Army has since taken the covenant and turned it into a commander’s tool to use as he or she thinks best rather than spend time explaining community partnership differences.

Dr. Eltringham then asked Mr. Kurta if he wished to call on anyone else to ask questions or make comments. In absence of any hands being raised, he acknowledged that the briefs were so thorough and informative that they seemed to answer everyone's questions.

Dr. Eltringham asked for a round of applause for today's speakers, stating the community collaborative and communication strategies being used by DoD and the Military Services are truly remarkable. She offered her personal thanks to CAPT Ed Simmer, Deputy Director of TRICARE/DHA, who was attending on behalf of the Military Health System, saying the issues faced by mobile military families today are very challenging. She acknowledged that he, Dr. Adirim, and representatives from the Defense Health Board are working hard to address a broad range of military family readiness needs in partnership with MFRC. Dr. Eltringham also thanked Dr. Tyner, Mr. Beauregard, and other key leaders in the room for their on-going support and assistance in addressing identified military family readiness needs. She then turned the floor over to Mr. Kurta for closing remarks.

Closing remarks:

Mr. Kurta thanked everyone and noted today's meeting was a great meeting of the minds and an opportunity to share and relay important information to community members and leaders. He said everyone would be taking away new and better information and maybe even creating new relationships and initiatives as a result.

He reminded all Council members of the Defense Health Board's May 16, 2017 meeting with open public testimony being taken on topics of interest to MFRC.

Mr. Kurta asked all Council members to have recommendations prepared and ready for the next MFRC meeting on August 29, 2017. At that time, the Council will choose the final recommendations that are most important and actionable to send to the Secretary of Defense.

Mr. Kurta thanked the speakers and offered a special thank you to Dr. Eltringham for coordinating today's meeting. He encouraged members to reach out to him or Dr. Eltringham if they need any assistance.

Next meeting:

The next Military Family Readiness Council meeting will take place on August 29, 2017, from 1 to 3 p.m., at the Pentagon Library and Conference Center, Room B6.

The meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Submitted by:



Randy N. Eltringham, EdD
Designated Federal Officer
Military Family Readiness Council

Certified by:



A. M. Kurta
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary
of Defense (Personnel & Readiness)