

646th Regional Support Group

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE



Patriot 2013,
CSTX and More



Fall 2013

Volume I Issue II



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The Commitment to Service is a command publication by the 646th Regional Support Group produced by the 368th Public Affairs Detachment on a bi-annual basis.

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RSG News & Info

Introduction from the new full time S-3 - Maj. Andrew Freihage

My name is Maj. Andrew Freihage and I am the new Operations Officer at the Group. I reported on 30 Sep. I am slowly taking everything in and seeing where the Group is at a whole. A little about myself, I just PCS'ed from 1/104th Training Division in Denver. I was the Deputy S3 there for the last two years. I was at the 75th Training Command before that as an analyst in the S3 shop and am school trained as a 57A, Simulations Officer. I also was the 620th CSSB S3 in St. Louis on my first AGR tour, so I know what a CSSB does, especially the challenges of having a very limited S3 shop and all the assets in the SPO. I am a 90A/57A functional area officer. I deployed to Iraq as an MCT CDR in Taji from 06-07 and I was a Platoon Leader in 3rd ACR in Iraq from 03-04.

On the Cover: Firefighters from the 826th and the 395th Ordnance Companies train with the Wisconsin Air National Guard during the Patriot Exercise 2013. (Photo by Capt. Dan Marchik)

Table of Contents: Spc. Andrew Madson from the 377th Support Maintenance Company awards headbands to finishers of the Tough Mudder event in Oshkosh, Wis. this summer. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Alexander Kartanos)

376th FMSU Soldier Awarded Full Scholarship by Capt. Dan Marchik

Staff Sgt. Jarred Davenport of the 376th Financial Management Support Unit was awarded a full scholarship from Colorado Technical University on Nov. 14th. Davenport is currently at Walter Reed Medical Center in the Warrior Transition Unit as a result of a shoulder injury suffered in Iraq in 2011. Davenport is among 25 recipients of the Wounded Warrior Scholarship Program, which covers all tuition and course fees. While recovering from his injury, Davenport has not only worked on his undergraduate degree in accounting but is also working towards his associate's degree at Ivy Tech Community College. Davenport is able to pursue his degree through online courses offered by both schools. His experience in the Army as a financial management technician has helped him in his coursework.

"CTU has really worked well with me while working on my degree," said Davenport. As Davenport continues to recover, he expects to complete his associate's degree in the spring, and complete his bachelor's in the fall.



Photo by Robert Davenport

West Point Opportunity for Army Reserve Soldiers

United States Military Academy (West Point) has allocated a total of 85 slots to Army Reserve and Army National Guard Soldiers that each year remain mostly unfilled. One of the biggest detractors to Army Reserve Soldiers applying to West Point is the "belief" that they need a congressional nomination. THAT IS NOT TRUE!!! Army Commanders, company level or higher, in lieu of congress, are authorized (under US Code Title 10, Section 4342) to nominate Soldiers for admission to West Point. All that is required for a Commander to do is fill out USMA Form 351-12 (attached). The Soldier must submit that document along with other requirements (application, letters of recommendation, SAT or ACT scores, etc.)

to complete the admission packet. Please keep in mind that the Soldier must meet other minimum qualifications (SAT, ACT, Physical, etc) in order to qualify for admission into the United States Military Academy.

The admission deadline to have a completed packet is 28 February 2014.

However, those Soldiers that complete the packet by 31 December 2013 have a much better chance for admission.

For more information, please visit the United States Military Academy website at:
http://www.usma.edu/admissions/SitePages/Pros_Cadets_Soldiers.aspx or contact the Army Reserve POC, MAJ Thomas Manion, at thomas.h.manion.mil@mail.mil or 703-806-7469.

RSG News & Info



Spc. Bryant B. Bille, food service specialist for the 826th Ordnance Co., 687th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, serves Soldiers from the 826th Ordnance Co. during the Philip A. Connelly tactical food service competition. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Rachel S. Krogstad)

826th Competes in Food Service Competition

by Sgt. Rachel Krogstad

Fort McCoy, Wis. - The 826th Ordnance Company food service section prepared a meal for the U.S. Army Reserve Command level of the Philip A. Connelly Awards Program at Fort Mc-

Coy, Wis., on May 3.

The competition evaluates more than the four-man-team's ability to cook. "It also evaluates how well they set up a tactical field kitchen site and the overall ability of the food service section," said Sgt. 1st Class James Dennett, 377th Theater Sustainment Command.

"It instills professionalism; it gives

food service some recognition for the hard work that they do," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Pamela Null, an Army food advisor who serves as one of the two judges traveling to individual unit competitions. "We evaluate them in ten different categories, including field food safety, food quality, site layout, and attitude."

This year the judges at the USARC level are evaluating 14 units. The top four will move on to the Department of the Army (DA) level. The top four food service teams will be announced Aug. 1. The DA level competition begins in October and runs through December.

The Philip A. Connelly Award Competition is an annual evaluation by the Department of the Army, in conjunction with the International Food Service Executives Association, to recognize the skills and achievements of Army food service Soldiers.

395th Supports Suicide Awareness Walk

by Capt. Dan Marchik

Kaukauna, Wis. - In a show of support for their local community, the 395th Ordnance Company out of Appleton, Wis., participated in a suicide awareness walk September 14 in Kaukauna, Wis. The walk is meant to raise awareness and educate people about the warning signs of suicide as well as battle the stigma associated with seeking help for suicidal thoughts.

"Having the military be a part of this shows that it is not just one city, one organization, or just the military that is impacted by suicide. It affects all of us," said event organizer Barb Bigalke. Bigalke started the walk three years ago as a way to bring the message of suicide prevention to more people. The inaugural walk had 500 participants and has grown to nearly two thousand participants this year.

As the military continues to focus on

suicide prevention and education, it's crucial to have the local community's support for Army Reserve Soldiers and units.

"We want the military to know they are not alone in this and we are here for their support as well," said Bigalke.

As for the military's participation, it was an easy decision for the 395th's commander, Capt. Randy Baumgart.

"The issue of creating more awareness is one I strongly believe in. Suicide affects many people, military and civilian alike. The 395th had a Soldier commit suicide two years prior in Afghanistan. This is an issue that hit home for many in the unit," said Baumgart.

Although this is the largest event in Wisconsin, other communities are also working to raise awareness about suicide prevention. Army Reserve Soldier's integration with local communities is essential to the success of the Army Reserve mission.

"We rely on the support of our local communities and it's great to see Soldiers working together with members of the

community, especially in an event like this," said Col. Robert Carlson, commander of the 646th Regional Support Group, the 395th's higher command.

Bigalke hopes that the increased awareness and education will have a positive impact on attendees and will continue putting these walks together.



Capt. Randy Baumgart, commander of the 395th, walks with other supporters during the event. (Photo by Lori Baumgart)

Schutzenschnur

646th RSG teams with German Air Force for Marksmanship Event

by Staff Sgt. Alexander Kartanos

Fort McCoy, Wis. - It is not very often that Reserve Soldiers are given the opportunity to compete for a foreign award during their normal weapons qualification battle assembly. Even more so going home with the award in hand it at the end.

German Air Force personnel stationed in the United States administered the Schuetzenschnur (German Marksmanship Award) for Soldiers from the Army Reserve in September at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Hauptman Guglielmo Jansen and Oberstabsgefreiter David Fischer from the German Air Force Flying Center located in Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico made the trip and brought the hot 90-degree weather with them.

The idea to set up the event came from Col. Robert Carlson, the Commander of the 646th Regional Support Group, who never got the chance to compete when he was stationed in Germany.

"I never got the chance to do it, but now with our alignment under U.S. European Command we can start to build these relationships," Carlson stated in a brief to unit commanders.

The two guests provided information about the 900 some German Air Force personnel that are stationed in the United States and the qualifications that need to be met for the Schuetzenschnur.

The Schuetzenschnur comprises both a pistol and a rifle element. The event served as a challenge for many because the requirements are different than what is normally expected for weapons qualification. Firing the rifle from the standing position at targets at 200 meters was the biggest difference.

"Normally we use our [German] weapons but the time crunch didn't al-



Competitors pose with their Schuetzenschnur awards along with Col. Robert Carlson, Hauptman Jansen (right) and Oberstabsgefreiter Fischer (left) at Fort McCoy, Wis., during the September FTX. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Gorzek)

low it," explained Jansen.

Serving in the place of the German P-8 was the U.S. M-9 as well as the M-16 for the G-36. Jansen stated that they normally focus on one of the weapons and schedule the other weapon for a later date, so people are more focused.

The event is also just a piece of the training that German military personnel must perform. NBC, Combat Life Saver and rucksack marches are all training that needs to be attended by them.

The award comes in gold, silver and bronze based on the shooter's score. Both officer and enlisted can be awarded but only enlisted can wear it on the dress uniform.

In the end more than 20 Soldiers from the 646th RSG and other participating units were awarded one of the three badges.

Both Hauptman Jansen and Oberstabsgefreiter Fischer will be returning to Fort McCoy in May, with the 646th RSG, to administer the larger German sports test, which involves various physical fitness events including swimming and shot put.



Hauptman Jansen speaks with a Soldier after recording scores during the pistol marksmanship event. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alexander Kartanos)

CSTX



Soldiers with the 376th Financial Mangement Support Unit participate in an obstacle course at Fort McCoy, Wis., as part of the Combat Support Training Exercise 86-13-01 in August. The course is meant to build confidence and teamwork. (U.S.Army photos by Staff Sgt. Jeff Hansen)



Patriot Exercise



Soldiers from the 826th OD Co and the 395th OD Co participate in joint firefighter training with Wisconsin Air National Guard firefighters. (U.S.Army photo by Capt. Dan Marchik)

Army Reserve Participates in Patriot Exercise

Story By Capt. Dan Marchik

Volk Field, Wis., July 19th, 2013 - The Army Reserve made its debut appearance in Patriot 13, an exercise that brings together response teams from local, state, and regional organizations for a natural disaster or emergency. In the past, the use of military resources have been limited to those under state control, but thanks to the National Defense Authorization Act 2012, states can now request assistance from federal military resources such as the Army Reserve. This year's exercise at Volk Field, Wis., was the first time in the history of the exercise that the Army Reserve participated.

Lt. Col. Saul Hage, director of the

exercise said that not only was it good to have the Army Reserve at the exercise, but it also provided event organizers the opportunity to go through the process of requesting a federal force.

"The integration was very well done. It was easy for the Patriot staff to incorporate them into the process. Patriot is about the joint environment and interagency support," said Hage.

The 646th Regional Support Group out of Madison Wis., provided firefighting, water purification and public affairs assets for the exercise.

"I think it makes perfect sense to call on the skills and capabilities of the Army Reserve in response to disasters and emergencies when local and state responders are overwhelmed. This is a mission our Soldiers need to be ready for and they

are doing a great job here at Patriot Guard learning how to work with the National Guard and emergency responders to help their fellow citizens", said 646th RSG Commander Col. Robert Carlson.

The 753rd Quartermaster Company from Green Bay, Wis., provided drinking water as well as water for the chemical decontamination section of the medical operation. 753rd Soldiers cleaned water from a source on post and delivered it to various areas and participants at Volk Field.

"This was a blast. We were able to work with some of the EPA guys. We got to work with the Air Force as well as the National Guard guys. We gave them some training and familiarization", said Staff Sgt. Jesse Veaser of the 753rd
(Continues on next page)

Patriot Exercise

Quartermaster Company out of Green Bay Wisconsin speaking about his water purification mission at the Patriot exercise.

Firefighters from the 826th Ordnance Company out of Madison Wis., and 395th Ordnance Company of Appleton, Wis., also participated. The firefighters integrated with Wisconsin Air National Guard firefighters familiarizing themselves with the different vehicles and techniques, and working together to extinguish a burning aircraft.

The 368th Public Affairs Detachment escorted media around the exercise site and provided video footage of the exercise events for download to media outlets not able to attend the event. The ability of the media to cover this type of event in a real world situation is essential in keeping local and state residents informed of the response efforts and possible dangers.

The participation of the Army Reserve is significant because it allows states to take advantage of the resources and skills of the many Reserve units throughout the state. The exercise itself allows the Reserve to practice their skills with other units and adjust those skills more towards an emergency response as opposed to their war-time mission.

"I think it's important that the skills and capabilities of the Army Reserve are not just used during times of conflict. We have the ability to quickly respond to local disasters and emergencies and if we can help our neighbors and communities I think we should. It's our duty to help the citizens of our country in these situations and our Soldiers are motivated to do just that", said 646th RSG Commander Col. Robert Carlson.

The Army Reserve Soldiers spent five days at the exercise before returning home. Although the weather was brutally hot and the days long, the Army Reserve looks forward to participating in future Patriot exercises.



U.S. Army Spc. Joseph Pitzlin and Spc. Shawn Denis, both assigned to the 753rd Quartermaster Company, Army Reserve, deliver purified water to exercise participants during Patriot 13 at Volk Field Air National Guard Base, Wis., July 16, 2013. The Patriot exercise is a domestic operations scenario to assess the National Guard's ability to assist state and local agencies in response to multiple emergencies. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Dan Marchik)



Units from the 646th RSG participate in Patriot 2013 (U.S. Army video by Staff Sgt. Alexander Kartanos)

To play video click on image and controls will appear. Internet connection required.

Retirement

Right: Chaplain (Maj) Noel Cisneros conducts his final field service during CSTX 86-13-01 in Volk Field, Wis. in August. He is retiring after 27 years of service. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alexander Kartanos)



Below: Col. Robert Carlson presents Chaplain Cisneros with various commendations for his years of service during his retireent ceremony during the September FTX at Fort McCoy, Wis. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Matt Hartfield)

646th RSG Chaplain Retires

Story by Staff Sgt. Kevin Gorzek

Fort McCoy, Wis. -- Chaplain (Maj.) Noel V. Cisneros said he did not think he would be a "lifer" when he enlisted in the Army in 1973. He spent about three years in the Army as an enlisted Soldier.

In 1989, he said he felt a calling to minister to Soldiers as an Army Chaplain. After returning he would spend the next 26 years, 11 months and 24 days as a spiritual leader of Soldiers.

The 646th Regional Support Group from Madison, Wis., celebrated Cisneros' career with a retirement ceremony for him at Fort McCoy, Wis., Sept. 7.

The ceremony was about honoring his service and his family's service and sacrifice, said Col. Robert Carlson, commander of the 646th.

During Cisneros' deployment to Kuwait in 2003, he helped a massive amount Soldiers get through difficult times in a desolate place, said Carlson.

When Carlson first met Cisneros he said he knew the chaplain could help the unit. Carlson said the 646th's spiritual health was hurt and needed help healing from several suicides within the command. Since Cisneros joined the unit there has not been a single suicide in the 646th.

He was presented with several certificates of appreciation including one from the President, the secretary of the Army and the Army chief of staff.

During his tenure as an Army chaplain, Cisneros served at units in Kansas, Minnesota, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin. He has received many awards, including the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medals and Army Achievement Medals.

Cisneros said team effort is necessary for mission success both in the Army and at his congregation.

He plans to continue to lead as a minister at the Prairie Lakes Covenant Church in Chetek, Wis.



Around the Group

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker and Colonel Robert Carlson attend an event at Johnson Controls in Milwaukee, where an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Statement of Support was signed by Mr. Alex Molinaroli, President and CEO of Johnson Controls. (Photo by Caitrin Smith)



Col. Robert Carlson presides at the 646th RSG HHD Change of Command ceremony in November as Capt. John Neppl passes on command to Capt. Michael Wittkowske. (Photo by Spc. Jessica Williams)



395th and 826th Ordnance Company Firefighters getting ready to ride on a Blackhawk at Volk Field after participating in the Patriot 2013 exercise. (Photo by Capt. Dan Marchik)



1st Lt. Cassandra Immel, Commander of the 687th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Headquarters Company promotes Pfc. Doua Lor to Specialist at the Madison Mallards baseball game. (Photo courtesy of Madison Mallards)



Soldiers from the 377th Support Maintenance Company in Manitowoc pose for a picture after the Dirty Girl run on August 17, 2013.



Tough Mudder

Army Reserve Kicks Off Partnership with Tough Mudder

by Capt. Dan Marchik

Oshkosh, Wis. - Crawling through mud, under barbed wire, and many other obstacles spread along a twelve mile course is something one might associate with a military confidence course, but people actually paid to do in Oshkosh, Wis. this weekend at a Tough Mudder event. The Army Reserve was there helping motivate participants throughout the course and at one of the obstacles called the Berlin Wall, an eight foot tall wall with no way over without a help from a team member.

The Tough Mudder is not a race, but rather an event. Tough Mudder's co-founder and CEO, Will Dean, developed this idea while at the Harvard Business School and, despite his professors' doubts about an event that didn't have a winner or loser but could still be profitable, turned the Tough Mudder into a very successful event that's hosted throughout the world.

"Will's premise for this event was that there's a lot more to life than coming in first. Getting done and proving that you can set and meet a goal is the only individual part of the event," said Bodkins. Soldiers who ran the event echoed Bodkins' teamwork sentiments. Brig. Gen. Daniel Ammerman, commander of the 353rd Civil Affairs Command ran the event with his son.

"It took a lot of physical fitness to get through there and a little mental toughness, but the big piece about this is teamwork. That's why the Army Reserve is at this event because the competitors have to demonstrate a lot of the same values that Army Reserve Soldiers have to demonstrate," said Ammerman.

This is the Army Reserve's first participation in a Tough Mudder event and it is a unique and creative recruiting platform. Recruiting company commander Cpt. John Plumstead noticed that there seemed to be common values shared between Tough Mudder participants and Soldiers in the Army Reserve.



Army Reserve soldier Sgt. Matthew Beyer from the 395th Ordnance Company motivates participants up the Army Reserve obstacle during the Tough Mudder event in Oshkosh, Wis. on Sept. 8, 2013. Soldiers from units in the Midwest served as motivators and support for the event. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alexander Kartanos)

"We're looking for people that know how to overcome adversity and be part of a team and work together for a common goal," said Plumstead.

Ammerman enforced the fact that the Army Reserve is made up of the type of people that are at Tough Mudder events.

"The Army Reserve capitalizes on civilian skills and the people that participate in the Tough Mudder are professionals and that's what we're looking for in the Army Reserve are those professional skills," said Ammerman.

The partnership between the Army Reserve and Tough Mudder also gives the public more exposure to the Army Reserve and helps the public understand what the civilian-Soldier is like.

"I think that the story that doesn't get told is that a lot of professional people are reservists. It's fascinating hearing what the different occupations in the Army Reserve are about and capable of," said Bodkins.

Not only does the partnership help shed light on the Soldiers and capabilities of the Army Reserve, it also ties into one of the event's beneficiaries, the Wounded Warrior Project.

The Tough Mudder event has helped raise over \$5 million so far for the Wounded Warrior Project which generates awareness and provides programs directed at the needs of injured service members. Tough Mudder helps participants raise money for Wounded Warrior Project through online donations.

"I can't think of a better cause than that," said Ammerman of the donations to Wounded Warrior.

The Oshkosh event was the first of eight events that include the Army Reserve scheduled for this year and judging from participant feedback, this partnership is ideal. Bodkins captured the spirit of this perfectly when he said "the event is very much focused around pulling out the best in people and making you realize you are a stronger person than you think you are."

JLead



Left/Below: Soldiers from the 395th Ordnance Company navigate a compass course at Fort McCoy as part of their land navigation training. (Photos by Rob Schuette)



Left: Soldiers from the 395th Ordnance Company take a land navigation course at Fort McCoy to learn/refresh their map reading skills. (Photos by Rob Schuette)

Army Wide News

Sergeant Major of the Army Speaks at Resiliency Summit

Story by Sgt. Rachel Krogstad

Ann Arbor, Mich., April 26, 2013 - The National Research Summit on Reserve Component Military Families was held Thursday and Friday, April 25-26, 2013, on the University of Michigan campus in Ann Arbor.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond Chandler joined a broad mix of nearly 300 DOD, healthcare and civilian academic professionals from 30 states who met in Ann Arbor to discuss the need to work collaboratively to address the resiliency needs of Reserve and National Guard service members and their families.

"The skills, the best of what we have, should be brought to service for those who are returning home. When you are coming back as a member of Reserve or Guard, you aren't coming back to a military base," said Dr. John Greden, executive director of the University of Michigan Comprehensive Depression Center, and one of the summit leaders. "We worry about this, and care about it."

In the past decade of conflict, the DOD and its services have learned much about the needs in family situations, before, during, and after mobilizations, but Reserve component families have unique challenges that often cannot effectively be addressed the same way as an active component family's needs.

Reservists tend to live much farther away from military installations, where the bulk of resources are located that could help them.

"Sixty-three percent of military families live in the community. That includes reserve and active component. Yet, the majority of programs are on installations. That's a huge discrepancy," said Dr. Michelle Kees, conference chair, clinical psychologist at the University of Michigan, and spouse of a former National Guardsman. She works with military family initiatives at Military Support Programs and Networks, or M-SPAN.

"I'm a big supporter of the movement



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond Chandler speaks to the crowd during the National Research Summit on Reserve Component Military Families. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Rachel Krogstad)

for resiliency programs, and integrating these programs into our communities and creating public-private partnerships. With our [Reserve component] families living in 4,000 communities nationwide, we can't just have programs on installations. We have to work with our community providers. We have to be able to work with our local area to build the supports and build the programs in place," she said.

This approach of involving communities in the care of their Reserve component service members and their families not only addresses the needs of those individuals, but also creates opportunities for the community to become more involved with the U.S. military.

"Since we have a voluntary military

force, a significantly smaller percentage of people are going to war compared to when we had a draft," said U.S. Army Reserve Lt. Col. Katherine White, summer term instructor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and a member of the University of Michigan Board of Regents.

"Before people came back [from war] and they knew others around them who had a similar experience, and now that's not the case. It's really important that the whole society is involved in understanding what's going on," said White.

Greden acknowledged that the geographic isolation is sometimes furthered by veterans not wanting to seek help from people who do not have first-hand

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Army Wide News

experience of the situation they are coming from.

"I think one has to break through the protective barrier. I can remember being told to by the individuals who had been [deployed] early on, 'you haven't been there, you don't get it, and we take care of our own.' We started to say, 'let's use that instead of criticize it,'" said Greden. This new concept of using internal trust led the Michigan National Guard and University of Michigan to start Buddy-to-Buddy, a peer-to-peer program, and integral part of M-SPAN.

Greden said the program trains Guard and Reserve current or former members to "become allies to bring people in who need help." This gives service members someone they can turn to for advice, and "if necessary to identify a place they can go for specific treatments for sleep disturbances, suicide risk, or other aspects. Putting all of that together, that program has been very helpful," said Greden. In addition to Buddy-to-Buddy for service members, M-SPAN also provides current and former military members and their families with programs and networks that provide support groups, parenting and relationship training, and guidance for those entering civilian education.

"The family program that we're working with brings together the resources of spouses, partners, parents, [and] children. All of those people also do their own kind of struggling and our goal isn't just to say 'oh, let's help them,' the goal is to help the entire [family] unit," said Greden.

Distance from resources and other military families were not the only problems addressed during the summit. Chandler, the event's keynote speaker, discussed another key aspect in delivering support to Reserve component families: the need to reduce stigma around service members asking for help with family and mental health issues. He used his own story of a rocket exploding in his room during a 2004 deployment and the effects it had on his personal life as an example of a common military story that needs to be addressed.

"There are several ways a person can



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond Chandler speaks to attendees during the National Research Summit on Reserve Component Military Families. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Rachel Krogstad)

react in this type of situation," he told the nearly 300 attendees. "In my case, I really turned off my feelings. I kept this inside me, knowing something was wrong. I became destructive, started to drink more, lost my connection with my family, and I made some bad personal choices."

After three years of destructive actions, he overcame the military's notorious stigma regarding behavioral health and sought help. "My relationship with my wife and kids greatly improved, and I stand here today a better husband, father, Soldier and person because of the counseling I received."

The planners of this summit and the Reserve component service members there said they are proud of the role Michigan and other states have taken. They hope the summit will encourage other states to develop more resiliency resources for their military families.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jean Isaac Odell, Michigan Army National Guard state family programs director, explained why her state has been so involved in getting community-based programs up and running.

"We do not have a military base, here, in Michigan. We are not active duty, but we do activate many Soldiers. This affects many families, and children throughout the state of Michigan. It's the best way for us to support our families, and our Soldiers, spouses throughout the state of Michigan and make better living conditions," said Odell.

"If we do this on a collaborative basis and we address the specific issues of concern that they care about, if we listen to the families, if we listen to the citizen-Soldier, [and] if we listen to the leadership, we're going to respond to the things that are more important. One of the compliments I heard from the leadership of the Michigan National Guard is that we have been very helpful to them. As long as we keep getting that kind of feedback, being called a force multiplier, things like that, I think we are ready to keep doing what we're doing, and I hope it's helpful," said Greden.

The summit participants and planners from M-SPAN stated they will use results of this event to encourage the development of similar and expanded programs in other states.