

A White Paper

Expanding Public-Private Partnerships

The Office of Warrior and Family Support

Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

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Expanding Public-Private Partnerships

Veterans and Military Families continue to face challenges during the transition and reintegration back into civilian communities, despite the impressive efforts of many organizations: governmental, non-governmental, profit and non-profit, faith-based, community, higher education, and professional sports teams. Some public-private partnerships are excelling across the country. Their efforts capitalize on unity of effort, local expertise, and a vested interest in solving community challenges without relying on constrained federal funding or displaced leadership. Much of this support comes from the *Sea of Goodwill*.¹ Individuals, organizations, and foundations, as well as the educational, healthcare, faith-based and business communities comprise this vast network of assistance. Their sustained support, however, is not guaranteed.

Private organizations may often share the same interests as public offices when it comes to the broad Military Family. There are some 40,000 non-profit organizations currently engaged in the Warrior and Military Family landscape.² These organizations usually understand well local community problems. However, some of these private organizations are fatigued, frustrated with bureaucracy, or unaware of related efforts that could influence their communities. At the same time, it is evident that discretionary funding – specific to public organizations – will continue to receive increased scrutiny, thereby affecting future budgets in nearly every public domain.

None of the myriad organizations, foundations, or government offices can tackle every obstacle alone. Expanded public-private partnerships can reinvigorate local organizations, help

¹ Major Copeland, John W. and Colonel David W. Sutherland, *Sea of Goodwill, Matching the Donor to the Need*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Warrior and Family Support, May 17, 2010), 1.

² Berglass, Nancy, “Investing in the Best: How to Support the Nonprofits that Serve Veterans, Service Members and Their Families,” *Center for a New American Security*, April 2012, http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_InvestingInTheBest_Berglass.pdf, (accessed July 5, 2013).

navigate through a complex bureaucratic landscape, and synchronize efforts to affect real change. The following paper will highlight successful examples of partnerships, challenges to public-private partnerships, and a way ahead.

Current Conditions

As the United States ends its combat operations in Afghanistan, the media and the American public will likely shift attention away from the military. The dwindling mobilizations of National Guard and Reserve Component units across the country, the epitome of citizen Soldiers living across hundreds of communities, may reinforce the misperception that the nation's military has successfully returned home.³ This reduced visibility will likely contribute to a reduction in the *Sea of Goodwill*. Any loss of donations, collaborative efforts, and volunteer initiatives would adversely affect public-private partnerships in support of the Military Family.

Given these conditions, it is the responsibility and obligation of the nation to develop and implement a harmonized, wide-ranging, support-to-veterans-and-military-families strategy that is both executable and sustainable. In a fiscally constrained environment, close coordination across the Veteran and Military Family landscape in pursuit of a unified effort becomes critical within the inter-agency, private, and philanthropic landscapes. Coordination and synchronization of similar efforts offers an opportunity for a timely unity of effort – one that could more comprehensively address Veteran and Military Family needs across the entire population.

³ It is important to note that even after an end to combat operation in Afghanistan, the US military would still maintain more than 70,000 servicemen and women deployed across the globe.

Definitions

Leveraging the *Sea of Goodwill* for the betterment of Veterans and Military Families works best when businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies work in collaborative environments free from barriers, stagnant paradigms, or egos. It comes as no surprise that “large-scale social change comes from better cross-sector coordination rather than from the isolated intervention of individual organizations.”⁴ Because collaborative approaches and public-private partnerships show the most promise toward affecting positive changes for complex social problems, it is important to define effective public-private partnerships.

Effective public-private partnerships employ the strengths of multiple stakeholders against a common objective. At their best, these partnerships “combine focused conversation, deliberate development of leadership capabilities, and results-oriented action in an open-ended network of leaders from multiple organizations.”⁵ In the case of the *Sea of Goodwill*, the active involvement of state, local and federal government (public entities), businesses and nonprofit organizations (private), and individual citizens (civil) in pursuit of a common goal ensures successful outcomes for Veterans and Military Families. Only when community stakeholders from all three segments come together on a regular, recurring basis--working through actionable objectives--can we expect to achieve our full potential in improving the transition and reintegration outcomes for Veterans and Military Families. If, however, each segment stays within their programmatic paradigms, in isolation from other organizations, agencies, and business that conduct similar work or provide similar services, we will likely remain blind to inefficient redundancies while Veterans and Military Families struggle during the transition and reintegration phases.

⁴ Collective Impact, John Kania & Mark Kramer, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Winter 2011.

⁵ *The Defining Features of a Megacommunity*, Chris Kelly, Mark Gerencser, Fernando Napolitano, & Reginald Van Lee, 2007.

Effective public-private partnerships involve the collective works of all relevant stakeholders on a consistent and recurring basis. These partnerships need to be rigid enough to withstand external pressures to disband or abandon the effort when facing difficult circumstances but flexible enough to change focus and priorities when the needs of Veterans and Military Families shift within the affected community. Establishing an organizational charter that outlines specific goals for the partnership, identifies key members, and formalizes timelines and milestones is a valuable step in ensuring a lasting effort.

If effective public-private partnerships involve strong leadership and collaboration toward common objectives, what does an ineffective public-private partnership look like? Some communities wrongly confuse a strong public-private partnership with strong community support. Though community support in the form of free tickets to local events or festivals for Military Families or annual community-based military appreciation events are valued and indicate the strength of the American appreciation and patriotism, this type of support is short-lived, and fails to help identify and pursue sustainable solutions for the needs of reintegrating Veterans and Military Families. Communities have an opportunity to graduate their good will and appreciation into more substantive programs and services if our Nation hopes to redefine successfully reintegrated Military Families.

Innovative Examples with Tangible Influence on Support and Services for Military Families

Web Portals – Expanding Collaboration and Information Sharing at the Local Level

There is a need to expand collaboration and information sharing with Web portals through public-private partnerships to reduce costs, competition, and duplication of efforts. For example, the web portals listed below assist community organizations in helping Veterans, Service

Members and families access the wide range of services and resources available to them during transition and community reintegration. Community organizations are encouraged to contribute information and resources to these portals as a way to expand their reach and effectiveness.

- **Illinois Joining Forces (IJF)**

After only its first year in operation, Illinois Joining Forces (IJF) remains a strong example for public-private collaboration efforts. IJF is a state-wide, public-private network of organizations working together to create a "no wrong door" system of support and to bridge gaps in service for Illinois service members, veterans, and their families. Sponsored by the Illinois Department of Military Affairs (IDMA) and Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA), IJF has 150+ member organizations who work together in-person through IJF Working Groups and online through www.illinoisjoiningforces.org. The member-driven IJF website gives individual service members and families the ability to search by topic, county, and zip code for services such as housing, education, employment and job training, behavioral health, disability benefits, emergency assistance, and legal support; the site is also manned by IDVA/IDMA staff who assist individuals in finding the right IJF or other resource.

Website: www.illinoisjoiningforces.org

- **Nevada Green Zone Initiative (GZI)**

The Nevada GZI is a major Nevada Office of Veterans Services outreach initiative which aims to ensure that the State of Nevada can both attract new Veterans and Veteran resources as well as optimize support efforts for the current Veteran population. It has a planning and research component and a social networking component, and it is focused on three primary areas—

education, workforce development and entrepreneurship, and wellness. Philosophically, this is intended to be two things: a collective, interagency effort to better coordinate/deliver Veterans Services, and a grassroots network on a platform. GZI is not a one-size-fits-all, top-down program. The purpose of the GZI is to marshal all available resources in the areas of health, education, and employment outcomes to attract transitioning service members, Veterans, and their families to Nevada to start their education, their businesses, and their careers, and to ensure the successful reintegration for Nevada's existing service members, Veterans, and their families into communities by improving the systems of access, services and service delivery through regional planning, coordination, and evaluation of strategies.

http://www.veterans.nv.gov/GZI_Brochure.htmlwww.greenzonenetwork.org

Community Action Teams – Collaborating to Support Veterans

- **Augusta Warrior Project**

The Augusta Warrior Project (AWP) connects Warriors and their families in the Greater Augusta area and South Carolina's Central Savannah River Area with resources that provide health and wellness resources, career building education opportunities, and meaningful employment.

Augusta Warrior Project's model is based on developing a proactive relationship with Military Families in order to prevent or mitigate life crises. Collaborative relationships with local, state, and national organizations ensure the support for Warriors and their families. AWP uses case coordination, a one-on-one approach that encompasses a holistic view, taking into account both service-related events and life events after service.

The AWP Four Step Plan is comprised of:

1. Connect: Find and link Warriors to the AWP network of resources

2. Educate: Inform Warriors of the services and opportunities available to them
3. Advocate: Ensure Warriors receive the support they have earned
4. Collaborate: Work with partners at all levels to facilitate total Warrior care

Website: www.augustawarriorproject.org

- **Charlotte Bridge Home**

Charlotte Bridge Home (CBH) assists in the successful transition and reintegration of Charlotte Veterans by identifying their education, employment and healthcare needs and connecting them to available community, state and federal resources. CBH seeks to fully integrate employment and education to build career opportunities for Military Families in the Charlotte area. CBH's 2013 *Community Veteran's Summit* had a wide array of participants and contributors, including more than "400 business, nonprofit, education and civic leaders," to develop strategic priorities to support returning Veterans and their families in the next 12 - 18 months.

Website: www.charlottebridgehome.org

- **Los Angeles Veterans Collaborative**

The University of Southern California's (USC) Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans & Military Families administers the Los Angeles Veterans Collaborative which is composed of community stakeholders and representatives from organizations serving Veterans and Military Families in the LA-area. Since 2010, over 200 government, business, and nonprofit organizations have gathered monthly to discuss the issues affecting Veterans in the local community and to coordinate the resolution of gaps in service or needed policy changes that they identify through the collaborative's Working Groups. Each Working Group is focused on a particular issue area

regarding Veterans: Behavioral Health Working Group, Career Advancement Working Group, Families & Children Working Group, Housing & Homelessness Working Group, and the Legal & Re-Entry Working Group. Most recently, the LA Veterans Collaborative, in partnership with Deloitte, initiated a pro bono environmental scan of the Greater Los Angeles Area to assess the need of Veterans and Military Families in the community. The results of this project will serve as the basis for the work of the collaborative in the years ahead.

Website: <http://cir.usc.edu/los-angeles-veterans-collaborative>

Corporate and Educational Institutions – Collaborating to Support Veterans

- **Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF)**

Syracuse University’s Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF), in partnership with JP Morgan Chase, is a nationally-focused effort to coordinate and leverage higher education for Veterans and their families. IVMF aims to provide the Military Family with the skills needed to be successful in education, work, and life. The institute develops education and employment-focused programs in collaboration with private industry, public offices, non-governmental organizations and the Veteran community to address the primary economic and public policy concerns of our nation’s servicemen and women and their families. IVMF operates a range of programs serving the entire spectrum of the Military Family, from the Entrepreneur Boot camp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) that exists at eight universities across the United States to Operation Boots to Business, a component of DoD’s new Transition GPS entrepreneurial track for transitioning service members.

Website: <http://vets.syr.edu/about/>

Public-Private Collaboration – Influencing Legislative Change to Support Military Families

- **USA4 Military Families**

DoD's USA4 Military Families initiative seeks to engage and educate state policymakers, not-for-profit associations, concerned business interests, and other state leaders about the needs of military members and their families. Each year, DoD's State Liaison and Educational Opportunities Office publishes the DoD's Top 10 Key Issues where communities can continue to focus efforts toward improving outcomes for Veterans and Military Families.

1. Facilitate service members receiving licensure and academic credit for military education, training and experience
2. Facilitate military spouse transition through licensure portability and eligibility for unemployment compensation
3. Support development of Veterans Treatment Courts open to eligible Veterans and service members throughout the state
4. Increase access to quality, affordable childcare for Military Families
5. Promote consumer protections and enforcement of the predatory lending regulation
6. Allow service members to retain their earned priority for receiving Medicaid home and community care waivers
7. Improve absentee voting for military members and their families
8. Waive required waiting time to establish residency for separating service members to obtain in-state tuition rate
9. Assign an identifier for military children in education data systems

10. Create state-wide MoUs between the DoD and the state child welfare agency to standardize relationships

Website: <http://www.usa4militaryfamilies.dod.mil/MOS/f?p=USA4:HOME:0>

Challenges in Establishing Effective Public-Private Partnerships

Unfortunately, despite the synergistic benefits of effective public-private partnerships, many obstacles prevent effective partnerships from developing, sustaining, or thriving.

Military service members and all Department of Defense (DoD) employees are legally bound and responsible for ensuring the highest standards of ethical conduct in the performance of their duties. Department of Defense 5500.07-R, Joint Ethics Regulation (JER), governs the ethical standards by which DoD employees are bound. The JER explicitly prohibits DoD employees from soliciting from, endorsing, or showing preference to Non-Federal Entities (NFE) in the conduct of their official duties.⁶ Beyond the restrictions imposed by this regulation, DoD employees are morally bound to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct as a matter of professionalism and in recognition of the special trust and confidence bestowed on them by the American citizenry.

Notwithstanding any actual violations of these ethical requirements, the mere perception that a DoD employee is soliciting, endorsing, or showing preference toward a Non-Federal Entity can be extremely damaging to DoD's ability to work effectively with all Non-Federal Entities. DoD personnel must be careful to guard against creating these perceptions as they collaborate, share information, and cooperate with Non-Federal Entities in an effort to address the challenges faced by our Veterans and Military Families. DoD employees' legal and moral

⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Ethics Regulation*, DoD Regulation 5500.07R (Washington, DC: Secretary of Defense, August 30, 1993), 34.

obligation to established law and the Profession of Arms, as well as the imperative of maintaining the Nation's trust demands nothing less.

The boundaries within which DoD employees must engage with Non-Federal Entities, as established in the JER, are intended to help DoD employees and Non-Federal Entities work effectively together while avoiding conflicts of interest and criminal violations of the law. These boundaries are often interpreted as challenging obstacles that block effective partnerships between DoD and Non-Federal Entities altogether. It would be more helpful if all involved recognized the US government ethics regulations for what they are: a necessary structure to avoid any appearance that members of government are being influenced by private interests in the conduct of their duties. For those in DoD charged with enabling the effective transition and reintegration of the Veterans and Military Families, it is imperative that they work to overcome these perceptions and find ways to establish effective public-private partnerships within the boundaries of the JER.

Our Veterans and Military Families return home to communities. These communities are comprised of local and state governments as well as private organizations that significantly augment the Federal Government's capacity to address the challenges faced by transitioning Veterans and Military Families. We cannot reach our full potential for addressing Veteran and Military Family issues until government entities and the private sector embrace the other's efforts, eliminate redundancies, and resolve challenges through cooperation, collaboration, and an acknowledgment of their respective ethics requirements.

In the DoD, we have an acquisition career field that works extensively with Non-Federal Entities. Acquisition professionals are trained to work effectively with private entities that they, through their professional judgment, determine to be *responsible parties*. The public-private

partnerships established in the acquisition arena are bound by rules and regulations that are no less restrictive than those established by the JER, yet the work routinely and effectively with Non-Federal Entities. Those responsible for the transition and reintegration of Veterans and Military Families are not in the business of acquisition, but in a less mature realm that merits greater attention in the form of standards of conduct policy. Given these conditions, those in the DoD who are charged with addressing the challenges faced by the Military Family must work closely with legal advisors to adhere to existing regulations while still working to foster effective partnerships with the private sector.

A Way Ahead

Stakeholders interested in having more effective influence when it comes to Veterans and Military Families can take several steps toward developing more effective public-private partnerships. Local commanders, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and state/local government agencies can accelerate the transition and reintegration process by active involvement.

Military installation commanders maintain potentially pivotal roles in establishing effective public-private partnerships. Despite the various issues making cooperation with non-federal entities challenging, local commanders should encourage their legal counsel to find creative solutions without violating existing regulations. While a risk-averse approach might precipitate an easy “no” to any proposed relationship with non-federal agencies, a more progressive approach would help installation commanders find a way to partner with like-minded agencies and organizations to help better prepare their military service members and their families for transition—all without violating any standards of conduct. Commanders can

actively pursue these relationships. A good example is Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) near Tacoma, Washington. Legal counsel has been helpful to the installation commander in finding ways to offer transition services to Soldiers and Airmen leaving the service, thus allowing JBLM to develop several partnerships with local organizations and businesses, which in turn ensures more successful transitions. For example, by working with the Center for Advanced Manufacturing Puget Sound (CAMPS), service members have on-post access to orientation and training events highlighting job opportunities in the Puget Sound area with small and medium advanced manufacturing companies. Additionally, JBLM, in partnership with Direct Technology, Microsoft, and Saint Martin's University, offers a Software Engineer Academy at the installation education center. This 16-week education program is designed for Active Duty service members transitioning from military service and offers employment opportunities with Direct Technology upon completion. These are two important examples of the successful (and legal) integration of public and private efforts to better address transition and reintegration needs.

The importance of establishing public-private partnerships was reinforced in the joint policy memorandum signed by Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter and Admiral James Winnefeld on April 25, 2013. This memorandum acknowledged the tangible benefits that can result from collaboration with Non-Federal Entities and encourages leaders “to be forward thinking in order to resolve concerns and eliminate unnecessary impediments to cooperation.”⁷

As the DoD works toward increased cooperation with local stakeholders, so too should local government agencies, nonprofits and businesses. For many, this is no new concept. Organizations near military installations have been working tirelessly for decades to gain access to military installations to offer their goods and services to this population. It is when local

⁷ “Public-Private Partnerships Supporting the DoD Mission.” Joint policy memo signed by Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral James Winnefeld, 25 Apr 2013.

organizations and well-informed installation commanders work together that an open environment of collaboration and support can be achieved and sustained.

In addition to the obvious partnerships between installation commanders and community-based service providers, other opportunities exist for educational institutions and philanthropic foundations. These two sets of organizations offer a neutral platform from which collaborative forums can operate. Often well resourced, educational institutions and foundations can deliver resources needed to develop and sustain a local collaborative forum while avoiding perceptions of bias more common in collaborative forums led by either local government agencies or service providers. Previously cited, USC's Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans & Military Families shows how one educational institution can lead in this area with significant effect. Other institutions of higher learning or foundations across America could fill similar roles to facilitate effective, results-oriented collaborative forums supporting Veterans and Military Families.

Conclusion

In order to fully realize successful collaboration in support of service members, Veterans, and their families, public-private partnerships must be embraced. Only through the teamwork of these partnerships can the necessary resources and expertise bring real improvements to fruition. As noted by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, ADM James Winnefeld, public-private partnerships are not new to the DoD. They are common to the DoD's acquisitions, logistics, and cyber programs, among others.⁸ We must overcome cultural reluctance to engage with other organizations, foundations, or public entities that share common interests. Public-private partnerships are critical to improving the support

⁸ Ibid.

network for our nation's Military Family. No individual, organization, foundation, or government office alone holds the comprehensive solution. Only through effective public-private partnerships will we witness the full potential of concerted resources applied against a common challenge: the successful reintegration of Veterans and their families into our respective communities.