Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

A Model for Cross-Sector Collaboration

ACE Summit

June 5-6, 208

Photo by Jason Sather, Central Lakes College student
“Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

Minnesota’s Deployment Cycle Support Program

COL Kevin Gerdes
“Reunion is an event, after which we remove the yellow ribbon.”

“Reintegration is a process that requires training before, during, and beyond the yellow ribbon.”
Purpose: “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

- **Educate** and **empower** Soldiers, Families, & Communities;
- Transition from Warrior to Citizen-Soldier;
- Provide **information**, **services**, **referral**, and **outreach**:
  - Phase 1: Upon Alert
  - Phase 2: During Deployment
  - Phase 3: After Deployment (Reintegration)
Objectives of “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

1. Every MN combat veteran, and family successfully deals with combat operational stress.

2. Every Minnesota community is trained to support combat veterans and families to deal with combat operational stress.

3. Under the Governor’s leadership, a coalition of Federal, State, County and local agencies are networked to assist combat veterans and their families.
Vision for
“Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

“Look ‘em in the Eye!”

Major General Larry Shellito
The Adjutant General of Minnesota
Training Strategy: “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

Phase 1: Upon Alert

• Soldiers:
  - Soldier Readiness

• Families
  - “Family Preparation Academy”
Training Strategy: “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

Phase 2: During Deployment

• Soldiers:
  – Warrior Transition Training
  – Pre-Screening of Soldiers to identify transition issues

• Families:
  – Community Outreach – clergy, educators, medical, law enforcement, higher education
  – Family Reintegration Academies
Training Strategy: “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon”

Phase 3: Post-Deployment (Reintegration)

- Initial Training (4 hrs @ Demob Site)
- 30-Day Training (1 day – Soldier & Family)
- 60-Day Training (1 day – Soldier & Family)
- 90-Day Training (3 days – Soldier Only)
Obstacles to Reintegration for Reserve Component

- 90-Day “hands-off” policy restricts RC reintegration programs
- Mobilization Models ignore reintegration for RC
- No funding to support PPG Reintegration requirements (to pay soldiers, provide full-time manning, or purchase supplies)
- No “on-base” network to provide reintegration training or family/soldier support
- Geographic separation of families/Soldiers
- DCS program needs to be tailored for the
Risks for Soldiers/Families

- Suicide
- Divorce
- PTSD
- Substance Abuse
- Gambling Addiction
- Auto/Motorcycle Accidents
- Unemployment
- College Drop-Out
- Family Alienation
- Untreated Mental Illness
- Untreated Medical Injuries/Illness
Minnesota’s Initiatives

- “Yellow Ribbon” Task Force
  - 82 members
  - 56 State Agencies
- Higher Education
- Veterans Hotline
- Job Fairs
- Motorcycle Safety Training
- MN Military Family Foundation
- “Camp Noah”
Soldier’s Creed

“I WILL NEVER LEAVE A FALLEN COMRADE”
Overview

• Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
  ✓ Full partnership with Minnesota National Guard

• Focus on Education
  ✓ Higher Education Veterans Assistance Program
  ✓ MyMilitaryEducation.org website
  ✓ Minnesota GI Bill
Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

Program Partnership

• Improve awareness of benefits
• Enhance access to benefits
• Help veterans and families navigate claims process
Campus Rep Program

- 56 Campus Veteran’s Resource Centers at schools throughout the state
- 3,500-4,000 veterans and family members served
- Emphasis on Institutional Readiness Program
- 12 Regional coordinators
MyMilitaryEducation.org

- FAQ based website through MN Online
- Multiple levels of contact
- Staffed with counseling and advising teams 7 days a week
- More than 14,000 contacts reached
- High satisfaction rate with more than 90% of inquiries answered within 24 hours
MyMilitaryEducation.org

- Accessible information on transfer of military credits
- Ability to maintain ongoing relationships
- Link users via tracked referral system
Minnesota GI Bill

- Started in 2007
- Lifetime benefit
- Inclusive of other programs and scholarships
- Minnesota is the only state to offer “last dollar in” system
Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Dr. James McCormick
Chancellor

Dr. Steven Frantz
System Director
Veterans Friendly Campuses

• Training and education
  – Student development
  – Welcoming campuses

• Cooperative programming
  – Guard Online
  – Reintegration activities
  – Credit & customized courses
Veterans Friendly Campuses

- Campus veterans centers
  - 44 centers

- Veterans Upward Bound programs
Veterans Friendly Campuses

• Policies and procedures
  – Application fee waiver
  – In-state resident rates
  – Tuition deferral policy
  – Credit for prior learning policy
  – ACE Guidelines
  – Deployment policy
  – SOC membership
Veterans Friendly Campuses

• Community activities
  – Hosting activities
  – Local partnerships
  – Family days
    • Photos
    • Clean-up
    • Family ITV
Veterans Friendly Campuses

- Partnerships
- Serving people
It takes an entire state....

Questions and Contact Information:

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