



MILITARY  
CHILDREN  
ON THE MOVE

MILITARY  
FAMILIES

DEPLOYED  
SOLDIERS

**Strength of Soldiers**  
comes from the strength of their Families.

**Strength of Families**  
is supported by the strength of the community.

SURVIVING  
SPOUSES

WOUNDED WARRIORS  
ACTIVE-GUARD-RESERVE



## Mission Sustainability

The role Community Covenant will play in leveraging partnerships between military installations and adjacent communities

*"I want to say this to all of you: You have done everything that has been asked of you. The United States of America is proud of you. I'm proud to be your Commander-in-Chief.... Your families will always be a priority of Michelle's and mine, and remain on our hearts and on our minds. And when our service members do return home, it will be to an America that always welcomes them home with the care that they were promised."*

*President Barack Obama  
To Military Members and their Families  
The White House, July 4, 2009*



# Overview

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- Community Covenant is a formal commitment of support by state and local communities to Soldiers and their Families – Active, Guard and Reserve
- Community Covenant fosters and sustains effective state and community relationships to improve the quality of life for Soldiers and their Families
- Tailored to the local level, covenant signing ceremonies recognize the strength of Soldiers, their Families, and the support of the local community.
- Allows the sharing of “best practices” to assist communities find ways to support, and for Soldiers and Families to find access to additional programs
- Program launched April 17, 2008 with signing ceremony in Columbus, Georgia with Fort Benning community
- An Army program but community programs support all Military Services



# Program Strategy

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*Integrate state and community programs and services into the holistic program and service delivery system to enhance Soldier and Family resilience*

- Community support is a key cog in support network to build resilience
- Turn Community Covenant signing ceremonies into action
- Use Community Covenant platform to inspire and organize comprehensive community support network of organizations – regional collaborations
- Link community support to specific Soldier/Family needs



# What We Have Done

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To date, over **450 signing ceremonies** conducted in 48 states, 3 territories, and the District of Columbia

Categorized **community programs** of support based on Army needs

- 88 national programs
- 243 state-level programs
- 225 local programs outside the gates of Army installations

**Web Site** [www.army.mil/community](http://www.army.mil/community)

- National, state and local programs
- Social media site for feedback



# Categories and Examples

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## **Deployed Soldier/Unit Support**

Adopt a unit, Operation Gratitude, USO

## **Education Support**

In-state tuition, tuition assistance, Interstate Compact

## **Employment Support**

Hire a Hero, Spouses to Teachers, MilSpouse.org, Nurse Licensure Compact

## **Family Support**

Our Military Kids, Fisher House, Give an Hour, MCEC, NMFA

## **Financial Support**

AER, USA Cares, American Red Cross, Operation Homefront

## **Surviving Spouses**

American Widow Project, TAPS

## **Wounded Warrior Support**

Building Homes for Heroes, Intrepid Fund, Challenge America



# How It Works

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## Building Community Support

- Partner with government agencies, nonprofit and service organizations
- Harness existing support from community groups and volunteers
- Identify regional collaborations and support networks
- Educate communities about military life and effects of deployments

## Sample “Best Practices”

- Adopt-A-Unit/Soldier (and their Family)
- Fayetteville Cares (Fort Bragg)
- Landings Military Relief Fund (Savannah)
- Brownsville, Texas (new initiative within faith-based community)



# Impact

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## Community Covenant – An Enduring and Necessary Program

- Helps fill gaps and provide alternatives to Army services
- Finds new programs to support geographically dispersed Soldiers and Families
- Links community support to specific Soldier/Family needs
- Programs help lessen stress of daily hassles and some chronic stressors



## Conclusion

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Thank you for supporting our military

The Army can't do it alone

Community support and partnerships are key to mission sustainability now and in the future



**COMMUNITY  
COVENANT**  
supporting those who serve

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*“I try to encourage every American to either call their National Guard unit, or their Army unit, or Marine unit in their area, and say what can I do to help? What that means is that when the families at home are taken care of, our soldiers can then concentrate and focus on the job they’re supposed to do.”*

*Dr. Jill Biden  
NBC “Today” Show  
New York City, June 4, 2009*