

Utah Community Covenant Quarterly



Jan-March 2012

“Dust-off”

THE 1-211 AVIATION DEPLOYS TO AFGHANISTAN

The snowy weather matched the somber feeling at the Army Aviation Support Facility in West Jordan, Utah, where nearly 360 Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 211th Aviation, prepared to leave for their deployment to Afghanistan.

“It’s mixed feelings of course,” said CPT Robert Hyatt, an intelligence officer deploying with the unit. “We have an important mission. We’re going to be doing a lot of good things for the Afghan people, but we have to say goodbye to our families for a year. That’s not always fun.”

Soldiers were joined by more than a thousand family members and friends at the Aviation Support Facility, where the majority of Soldiers boarded buses and were then flown to Fort Hood, Texas, aboard chartered aircraft Jan. 16. After a brief training period at Fort Hood, the Battalion will move forward into Afghanistan to complete a yearlong deployment.

Rep. Jim Matheson, D-Utah, delivered words of encouragement to Soldiers and their families, as did MG Brian Tarbet, adjutant general of the Utah National Guard. Matheson said that he was among true heroes.

With the snow coming down, flakes burning any exposed skin, the realization came that the AH-64 Apaches would not leave the ground that morning.

“I predicted the weather for Jan. 16, 2012, last November,” said LTC Greg Hartvigsen, commander of the 1-211th. “The aircraft will follow us to Fort Hood as weather allows.”

Pilots took off in their assigned AH-64 Apaches the following morning under blue skies to join the rest of the unit in Texas. There they will receive several weeks of training and be validated as an AH-64D Attack Battalion. This validation is required due to the Battalion’s transforming from an AH-64A Battalion to an AH-64D Battalion.

The 211th will be providing attack and reconnaissance support to units stationed with Central Command in Afghanistan.

“First Battalion of the 211th is uniquely qualified to take this mission because Afghanistan has a similar geography to Utah,” said MAJ Dante Fontenot, executive officer of the Battalion. “We are used to flying in a mountainous environment.”

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“Our force is so diverse; our pilots come from civilian airlines, law enforcement and various other occupations that enhance our structure. Active duty doesn’t have that to draw from,” continued Fontenot. “We can think outside the box more effectively to accomplish the mission.”

This is the third deployment for the 1-211th in the past decade. They served in Kuwait in 2001-2002 and Afghanistan in 2004-2005. For nearly half of the Soldiers in the unit, this will be their first deployment. Several Soldiers have already served as many as four tours since 9/11.

“We will miss our families terribly,” said CW2 Deena Koon. “But I’m glad we finally get to do the jobs that we’ve been trained for.”



*The approximately 260 Soldiers of the Utah Army National Guard’s First Battalion, 211th Aviation depart Utah on the first leg of their 12-month deployment to Afghanistan Monday, January 16, from the Utah Guard’s Army Aviation Support Facility in West Jordan. Photo and article courtesy of the Utah National Guard.

ATTENTION !!!!!



The first-ever partnership with programs from:

- The National Association of Social Workers, Utah Chapter
- University of Utah Department of Psychiatry
- The Utah Autism Resource Partnership
- Utah Coalition for Caregiver Support
- Utah Commission on Marriage
- Utah Division of Substance Abuse & Mental Health
- Utah Veterans and Military Employment Coalition

When: MARCH 28-30 2012

Where: The Salt Palace Convention Center

Do you work for your City? Are you clergy, employers, higher-ed leaders, service members - past and present, family members and or anyone interested in the pertinent issues and critical topics facing our multi-generational families and communities? Then please attend this conference! You will be able to glean useful information from a multitude of experts in a first-ever, broad forum under one roof. A military committee comprised of individuals paralleling these audiences designed this special day for The Utah Veterans & Families Summit.

Generations, the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs and the Utah Veterans & Military Employment Coalition working with the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce and Utah Department of Workforce Services will host a major employment fair for our military. This fair will run in tandem with the educational programs and include a resource fair which will provide connections for individuals to access and use long after this Summit concludes. (Youth activities will be provided by Operation: Military Kids.)

A new partnership with the Utah Commission on Marriage has granted Generations the honor of welcoming the notable and popular annual couples' counseling training aboard - forming an even broader and wider appealing program. Professionals will benefit from a comprehensive program on 'Working with Couples on the Brink' and 'A Step-By Step Approach for Healing From Infidelity' presented by Michele Weiner-Davis, an internally renowned relationship expert. Ms. Weiner-Davis will also stay and present a special evening 'date night' program for all attendees and the general public on 'Keeping Love Alive'.

The last day (30 March) is for military personnel and their significant other to attend at no cost to the service member or their family, to include parking.

**The only thing you will have to purchase is your lunch.

For more information

Please call ESI Management Group at 801-501-9446 or toll-free 877-501-9446

Or check out this website

<http://bit.ly/y9I2UM>

The Community Covenant Corner



Dr. Biden: Military kids need schools' support

By Elaine Sanchez
American Forces Press Service

Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, on Thursday January 19th joined a group of educators for a discussion on how schools can better serve and support military families and to learn about a program that's having a positive impact in military children's lives.

Sitting alongside teachers, administrators and military family members at the University of Southern California Dr. Jill Biden, who holds a doctorate in education, noted the importance of community and school support for military families, especially as they weather the multiple challenges of moves, new schools and deployments.

As a military mom, "I know firsthand just how important it is for a child to have the support of a community and school when Mom or Dad is at war," she said. The Bidens' son, Beau, a major in the Delaware Army National Guard, deployed to Iraq for a year in 2008, leaving two young children behind.

While he was away, Biden recalled, her granddaughter Natalie's teacher hung a picture of her father's unit outside her classroom. "Every day when she walked into her class, she would stop and kiss her dad," she said. "All of her schoolmates knew her dad was at war."

In some cases, however, a child's struggles may go unnoticed by teachers who aren't aware of the military family members in their midst. Biden recalled a story a general told her while she was in Iraq two years ago. During a concert at his 6-year-old daughter's school, a child burst into tears during the song "Ave Maria." A teacher rushed over and asked her what was wrong. "That was the song that they played at my father's funeral," she told the teacher. "He died in Iraq."

"That story is heartbreaking for all of us, especially the educators here who can imagine the impact an incident like that would have on a child," said Biden, who is a longtime educator herself.

This story spotlights the importance of boosting community and school-based support, she noted. Biden lauded the educators around her for taking on this challenge through the Building Capacity in Military-connected Schools project, a consortium of eight military-connected school districts in Southern California, the Department of Defense

Education Activity and the University of Southern California. The consortium's intent is to create military-friendly environments in schools, to spread the word about effective programs and resources, and to raise military family awareness among educators, administrators and school counselors. Biden wrapped up the roundtable by thanking the educators for their work and for rising to the challenge of Joining Forces, the campaign First Lady Michelle Obama and Biden launched last year to raise awareness of troops, veterans and their families and to call on all sectors of society to support them.

"One of the goals of Joining Forces is really to change the culture all across America," she said. "I think we will have been a success if at some point in time -- whether it's two years from now, 10 years from now -- that people just don't question this anymore because it's in all the school districts. "What you're doing is a perfect example of how we want to change things in America, where every state, every school district has programs like this," she told attendees. "You're doing exactly what needs to be done."

*The Community Covenant Program in the State of Utah is a branch of the national Joining Forces project. This article is courtesy of nationalgurad.com **If you have any questions on how your schools can become better informed on these issues please contact your nearest F.A.C. (pg. 6 of this newsletter)

Upcoming Signing Events in Utah



| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Beaver | 3 Feb |
| Santaquin | 15 Feb |
| Saratoga Springs | 21 Feb |
| Cedar Hills | 20 March |
| Enoch | 24 March |
| Apple Valley | 28 May |
| Parawon | 28 May |

Monthly Focus: Military Liaisons

The Community Covenant Program in the state of Utah has set the mark for the rest of the nation to follow. We as a team have been able to go to Utah communities and explain the importance of integrating the national, state and local resources to effectively support those service members in those areas. With that said our focus for this newsletter is the importance of having a military liaison that lives and works in the city that our service members live. Whether or not a town has signed a community covenant document makes no difference in the need for having a point of contact within our Utah communities. A military liaison is someone who can mediate between the service member and their community. The military liaison becomes a voice of the service member when it comes to community events and decisions that directly impact them. Many times people in small geographically dispersed areas have no idea who to go too to assist or volunteer to send letters, packages or support for deployed service members, so in that sense it also gives the community a direct link to help those in their community that are serving their country. The support for our armed forces in the state is astounding. With cities continuously joining this program it is essential that we continue to work fluidly with one another to maintain our relationship with leaders at the local level as well as our military services. This partnership is strengthened through our military liaisons that live in our communities. One important note is that some of the best practices have

been to assign a councilmember or one of the full time staff of the community to add this additional duty to their workload. In this way it lessens the stress of looking for outside sources. It also allows cities to choose who would be the best candidate for the position and also the ability to pass the position to the next person in case of election, retirement or whatever may occur. So if your community does not currently have a military liaison please consider creating this position. If you have any questions on the matter our contact information can be found below.

Important Websites

Utah Family Programs

<http://www.ut.ngb.army.mil/family/index.htm>

Military OneSource

www.militaryonesource.mil

Utah Department of Veteran's Affairs

<http://veterans.utah.gov/>

Community Covenant Program

<http://www.army.mil/community/>

*These websites contain information about resources available to military service members and their families

Community Covenant Contact Information

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Southern Utah

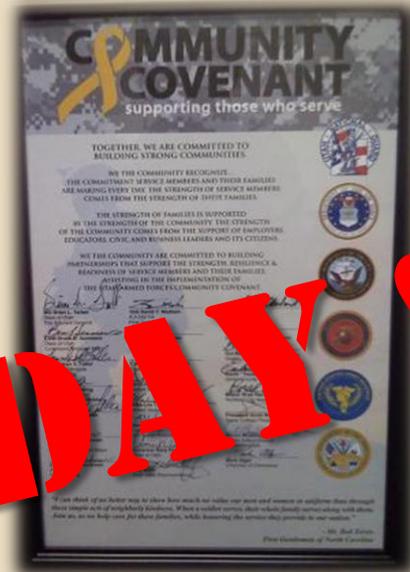
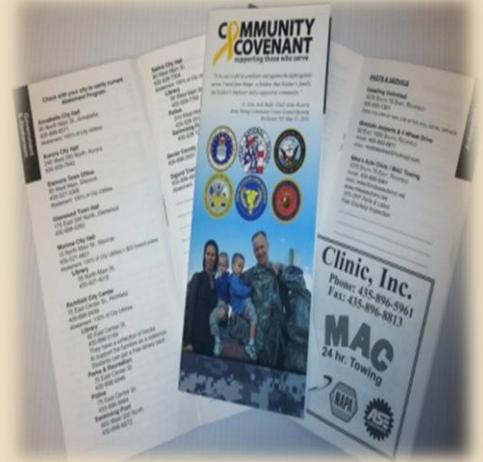
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If your city or town needs assistance or has questions regarding the Community Covenant Program please call one of our team members above. If you are a city who has not yet heard our Community Covenant Presentation please contact us, we would love to share this program with you. We would also like to hear from anyone wishing to provide success stories or ideas that might be included in future issues of this newsletter.

Joining Forces Challenge: Richfield Utah

In an effort to recognize those citizens and organizations with a demonstrated, genuine, and deep desire to be of service to military families, the First Lady and Dr. Biden have established the Joining Forces Community Challenge. It is our pleasure to announce that Richfield Utah has been selected as a finalist for this prestigious national award. Please help Richfield win this award by logging onto <http://joiningforces.challenge.gov> and submit your vote today. In order to submit your vote you must take just a minute to register, then check your email to confirm your vote, its that easy! Lets help bring this award to Utah so our communities can receive the recognition they deserve. Please register now, and vote once a day until the voting is closed! Also, spread the word through your families, communities, friends and social networking web-sites!



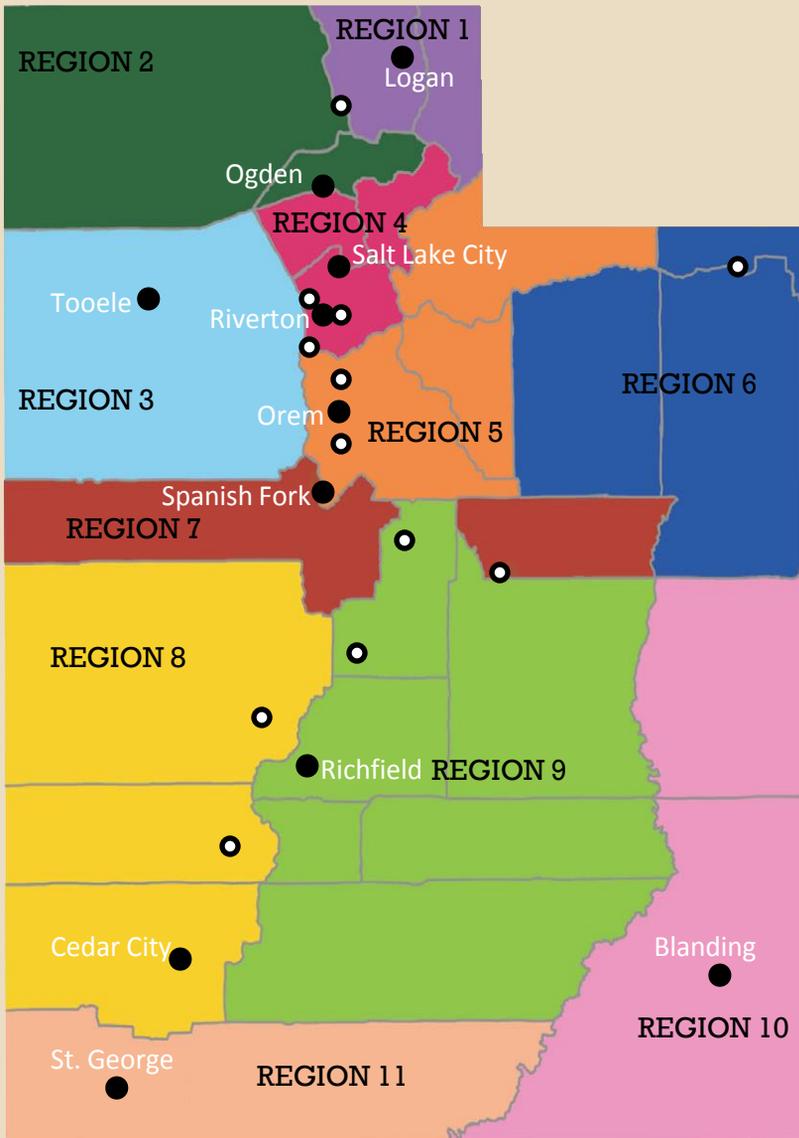
VOTE TODAY!

**You are only allowed to vote once a day. Total tallies will be counted and the winners will be decided by the number of total votes. So vote every day!!!

To find out more go to:

www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces

<http://joiningforces.challenge.gov>



Utah FAC Locations

| | | |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| Region 1 | Logan | (435) 753-3155 |
| Region 2 | Ogden | (801) 476-3811 |
| Region 3 | Camp Williams | (801) 878-5037 |
| Region 4 | Salt Lake City | (801) 715-3708 |
| Region 5 | Orem | (801)722-6913 |
| Region 6 | Tooele | (435) 621-6773 |
| Region 7 | Spanish Fork | (801) 794-6011 |
| Region 8 | Cedar City | (435) 867-6513 |
| Region 9 | Richfield | (435) 896-4326 |
| Region 10 | Blanding | (435) 678-2008 |
| Region 11 | St. George | (435) 986-6705 |
| ● | FAC Locations (Located at armories) | |
| ○ | Armory Locations | |

What is a Family Assistance Center?

Family Assistance Centers (FAC) are designed to assist the families of military service members during peacetime and during training or mobilization. FAC are open to all branches of the military (Army Guard, Air Guard, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marines, Navy, active-duty Army, and all Reserve Components).

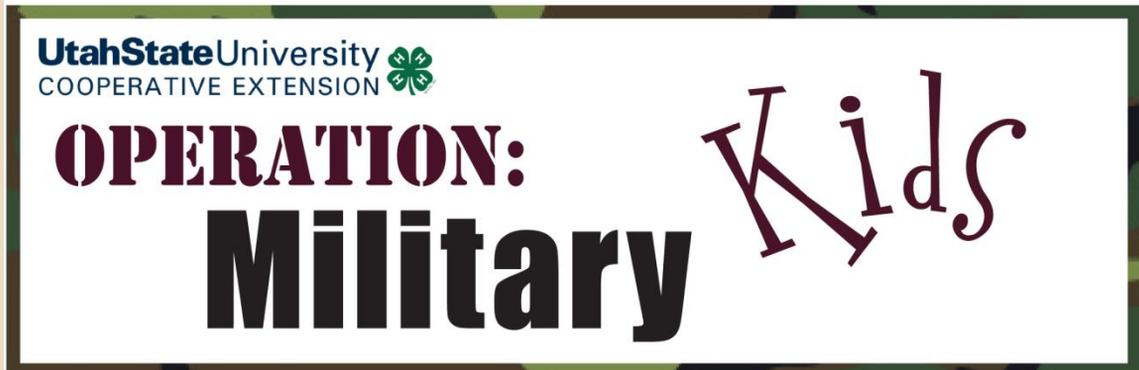
Family Assistance Centers provide "one-stop shopping" and resources to help family members cope with any issue they encounter as a military dependent. Locate your local FAC and contact them today.

What services are provided by a FAC?

- Basic services provided by FACs include the following, regardless of location:
- TRICARE/ TRICARE Dental Assistance
 - Point of contact (POC) for legal and pay issues
 - POC for community support
 - Emergency- assistance coordination
 - Counseling Support/ Referral
 - Family/ Household Emergencies
 - Family Care Plan Information
 - Information, Referral, Follow-up and Outreach
 - DEERS information (Defense Enrollment and Eligibility System)
 - Site for family communication
 - ID Cards referral
 - Financial Counseling and Referral
 - Support FRG programs

Please do not hesitate to contact the nearest FAC for any questions or issues you may have.

For more information visit us at www.ut.ngb.army.mil/family



Operation: Military Kids is the U.S. Army's collaborative effort with America's communities to support children and youth impacted by deployment, OMK's goal is to connect military children and youth with local resources in order to achieve a sense of community support and enhance their well-being.

With the partnership of key state team members and local community members working together to utilize core OMK program elements like the "Speak Out For Military Kids team", the "Hero Pack" program, the Mobile Technology Lab, and "Ready, Set, Go training to help school age children and youth through the deployment of a loved one, and also to provide educational and recreational opportunities through local 4-H extension offices.

Through a large network of National, State and Local Partners Operation: Military Kids provides access to youth programs and support services where military children live.

In addition, Operation: Military Kids, as part of the 4-H/Army Youth Development Project, is a vital part of supporting the Army Family Covenant, the Army Community Covenant and the Army Soldier Family Action Plan.

If you would like more information about Operation: Military Kids or would like to be involved, please contact OMK program coordinator, Rachelle Greenhalgh at rachelle.greenhalgh@usu.edu or by phone at 435-632-4608. Visit us on the web at www.operationmilitarykids.org and <http://utah4h.org/htm/featured-programs/4hmilitary> for more information.