



## eXtension – Military Families Monthly Report

*Reporting Period: December 2011*

❖ **MFLN** = Military Families Learning Network; **PF** = Personal Finance; **CC** = Child Care; **FD** = Family Development; **NL** = Network Literacy; **WW** = Wounded Warrior

### 1. Significant Activities:

- **DoD/FD Meet & Greet Webinar:** The MFLN and FD leadership held a “Meet & Greet” webinar (1DEC) with DoD Family Advocacy program staff where a conversation took place about the FD plan of work and potential collaboration.
- **NL Google+ Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (2DEC) by the NL CoP titled *Google+, what’s the fuss?* [<http://learn.extension.org/events/372>]. Presenters were Drs. Stephen Judd, Manager, Information Technology & Distance Education, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension and Kevin Gamble, Associate Director, National eXtension Initiative.
- **FD Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (8DEC) by the FD team titled *Identifying and Building Upon Strengths in Military Families* [<http://learn.extension.org/events/387>]. Presenters were Drs. Kim Greder, Associate Professor & Extension and Outreach Specialist, Human Development & Family Studies, Iowa State University and David Brown, LMFT Wing Director of Psychological Health, 132nd Fighter Wing, Iowa Air National Guard.
- **Social Media Strategy Planning:** Weekly planning meetings between MFLN leadership and the pilot project Concentration Leaders continue.

### 2. Current deliverable(s), activity, goals/objectives:

- **Military Families Learning Network (MFLN):** Significant activities related to deliverables for the MFLN are presented according to the Concentration Areas/CoPs.

○ **Personal Finance:**

- 1) **Re-purpose Content/Establish Ask an Expert Resource:** The FAQs continue to be in the hands of DoD-MC&FP personal finance staff for a final review. A plan was established and approved by DoD to have them published by April 2012.
  - ✓ 275+ FAQs sent to Service Branch contacts (6DEC2011)
  - ? Service Branch contacts return FAQs to DoD (22DEC2011)
  - \* FAQs returned to PF leadership (15JAN2012)
    - PF leadership completes consolidation (1FEB2012)
    - Copy-editing is completed (1MAR2012)
    - FAQs are published (1APR2012)
- 2) **Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media:** The Facebook page finished December with 62 Likes (<http://www.facebook.com/PersonalFinance4PFMs>) and the Concentration Leader is assisting the NL CoP and tweeting as Alex NetLit. Engagement and interaction on DoD sites continues.
- 3) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** The first professional development Web conference is scheduled for 2FEB from 11:30am – 12:30pm ET and is titled, “*What If You Can’t Sell Your House?*”, presented by Dr. Michael Gutter (Family, Youth & Community Sciences, University of Florida) and Laura Royer (IFAS/University of Florida). Other sessions are planned as follows:
  - ♦ Wednesday, 23FEB2012 – *Talking With Kids About Money @ 2:30pm ET*
  - ♦ MAR2012, TBA – *Financial Implications Of Relatives Raising Children While Parents Are Deployed*
  - ♦ APR2012, TBA – *Financial Aspects Of Divorce*
  - ♦ MAY2012, TBA – *Home Ownership, When Is The Right Time?*
- 4) **Make Available and Distribute Current Research and Trends in Personal Finance:** The list continues to be updated (<http://www.extension.org/pages/18203/financial-security-for-all-research>).

○ **Child Care:**

- 1) **Re-purpose and Create New Content:** A publishing schedule was created with the goal to publish one article and one FAQ per month for the remainder of the project.
- 2) **Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media:** One child care blog was posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*If I’d Only Known: Enhancing Parent-Provider Communication*). The Facebook page

ended the reporting period with 45 Likes, and a reach of 40 (<http://www.facebook.com/childcareandmilitaryfamilies>). A news release was created to announce the availability of social media channels to be distributed to NAEYC state affiliates for publication in their newsletters, websites, etc.

- 3) **Create a Searchable List of Children's Books:** The search continues for appropriate platforms.
  - 4) **Create Online Training Course:** This project is in a holding pattern until DoD provides feedback and critical content information.
  - 5) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** Dates and times were selected for the upcoming web conferences (all at 2:00pm, ET):
    - ♦ Wednesday, 29FEB2012 - *Secure Attachments: Building Caring Relationships With Parents And Children*
    - ♦ Wednesday, 25APR2012 - *Children's Literacy*
  - 6) **Create a Comprehensive Listing of State Online Training Approval Requirements:** No activity at this time.
- **Family Development:**
- 1) **Identify, Promote, and Make Available Content (Re-purpose, Create New, and Disseminate Content):** Six short videos of military family development experts have been edited (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLE229C8C5F2BFC948>) [Francesca Adler-Baeder, Gary Bowen, Angela Huebner, Benjamin Karney, Jay Mancini, Heidi Radunovich]. Blog postings, tweets, and short social media blurbs related to the topics/issues raised by the interviewees are being created and prepared for dissemination in January 2012. Additionally some of the interviews will be used for podcasts and other interactive media for the Professional Commons, blog, and social media outlets.
  - 2) **Develop a Military Family Professional Commons (Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media):** Concentration Leaders continue to be present in HOMEFRONTConnections. The Professional Commons page/subpages were updated and enhanced (<http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies/family-and-youth-development/>). Videos from "Make the Connection: Shared experiences and support for veterans" (<http://maketheconnection.net/stories-of-connection>) are being used as appropriate to enliven the Family Development blog posts.
  - 3) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** The first professional development Web conference was offered on 8DEC at 11:00am ET and was titled, "Identifying and Building Upon Strengths in Military Families". It

was presented by Drs. Kim Greder (Iowa State University Families Extension) and David Brown (LMFT Wing Director of Psychological Health, 132nd Fighter Wing, Air National Guard). Other sessions are planned as follows (all at 11:00am, ET):

- ♦ Wednesday, 25JAN2012 - *Helping Military Families Create Systems of Social Support*
- ♦ Wednesday, 29FEB2012 - *Co-Parenting at a Distance*
- ♦ Thursday, 5APR2012 – *Boundaries and Self-Care*

○ **Network Literacy:**

- Two network literacy blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*The Value of Lurking; Why the World is Shifting Under Your Feet*).
- The NL public “skeleton” site was published ([http://www.extension.org/network\\_literacy](http://www.extension.org/network_literacy)).
- Content (articles and FAQs) continues to be developed and is in various stages of creation, review, and copy-edit on its way to publication. A “sprint” week is planned for 16JAN2012 to focus and expedite this work.
- NL is collaborating with the Ohio State University Extension on piloting Google+ immersive training to begin 19JAN2012 with approximately 15 participants at this time. Evaluation of this training will be coordinated by Sarah Baughman, Evaluation & Research Specialist with the MFLN.
- Alex NetLit’s Twitter account has been active for this reporting period (42).
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○ **Wounded Warrior/Family Caregiving CoP:** Although not funded with Partnership dollars, this CoP has been active in the work of the MFLN.

- One Wounded Warrior blog was posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Caregiver Support During the Holiday Season*).
- Impressive content continues to be developed and posted at: <http://www.extension.org/pages/60576/military-family-caregiving>.

- **Evaluation:** An evaluation summary report was completed for 2011 ([http://collaborate.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/58/MFLN\\_2011\\_Report.pdf](http://collaborate.extension.org/mediawiki/files/5/58/MFLN_2011_Report.pdf)). Work continues with each of the Concentration Areas in developing and finalizing evaluation efforts across the projects. First round of stakeholder interviews were completed. Most of the spikes in activity on Facebook are related to articles posted from outside sources (New York Times, Huffington Post, etc.). MFLN membership increases and activity is growing on Twitter (one

of the most active social media tools in use for the MFLN). The MFLN blog is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most viewed/read blog on eXtension and it's readership has increased steadily in recent weeks.

### *3. Action still needed to complete the current deliverable(s)*

- **Deliverables:** There is a need for feedback in a number of areas:
  - The return of PF FAQs so the copy edit and publishing process can continue.
  - Content/material/guidance for the CC learning module on military culture.
  - PFM Advisory Board membership completion and formation.
- **Update on Phase II Continuation of MFLN:** Work by the appropriate CoPs also continues on processing paperwork for subcontracts at the various institutions for requesting the release of the final funding (Phase II) for this current cooperative agreement. In addition, no-cost-extension requests are being developed and being submitted to UNL so the subcontracts can continue their work past the original contract date of 29FEB2012.

### *4. Relevant challenges that need attention from DoD/NIFA*

- It is a light month and there are no unusual or critical challenges at this time.

### *5. Success stories that would be of interest to USDA and or DoD Leadership*

- The CC twitter account (<https://twitter.com/#!/MilChildCare>) came to the attention of Dr. Michele Borba (<http://www.micheleborba.com/>), a parenting expert who, among other things, is a regular contributor on the Today Show at NBC. Dr. Borba has re-tweeted @milchildcare tweets to her 20,000+ followers. The Concentration Leader (Kathy Reschke) and Dr. Borba exchanged messages via Twitter and established a connection that has the potential to be very influential in raising awareness of our project's efforts.