



eXtension – Military Families Monthly Report

Reporting Period: January 2012

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

1. *Significant Activities:*

- **No-Cost-Extensions:** Internally, all of the no-cost-extensions between the University of Nebraska Lincoln and the subcontracts with PF, CC, FD, NL, and other units were approved in January.
- **Developed Trouble-Shooting Help Document & Adobe Test Room:** A document was developed for DoD and other professionals to assist with connecting to the professional development sessions which included setting up a test room that is available 24/7 (<http://bit.ly/MFLNAdobeTest>).
- **Partnership Lead Institution Meetings:** Successful meetings were held in Columbia, MD (12JAN) between the various Lead Institutions. A MFLN update was provided and positive feedback was received from our Partners and other Leads.
- **CC/Air Force Team Leaders Meeting:** The Air Force invited leadership from the MFLN to attend and participate in their monthly Team Leaders Meeting (12JAN). This relationship continues to grow and there is a pledge from both sides to partner extensively in the areas of professional development.
- **University of Northern Iowa Family Life Education:** The MFLN was invited to present to faculty and students from the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of Northern Iowa on the Extension-Military Partnership, MFLN, and the Project Y.E.S! and Military Extension internship programs (23-24JAN).
- **FD Webinar:** A professional development webinar was conducted (25JAN) by the FD team titled *Helping Military Families Create Systems of Social Support* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/420>). The presenter was Dr. Dennis Orthner,

Professor of Social Work and Associate Director of the Jordan Institute for Families, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

- **Collaboration with MilitaryHOMEFRONT:** A significant amount of time was spent strengthening the relationship the MFLN has with MilitaryHOMEFRONT (<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/pls/psgprod/f?p=MHF:DETAIL1:0:::COHE:265901>). There is additional information on MFLN professional development opportunities at their Conferences and Workshops page as well.
- **Returning Warriors Kick-Off Meeting:** The kick-off meeting for the *Returning Warriors: A Study of the Social-Ecological Benefits of Coming Home to Nature* project was held (30JAN). This project is housed at Cornell University in their Extension Natural Resources unit. Kyle Kostelecky is a collaborator with the project.
- **Social Media Strategy Planning:** Weekly planning meetings between MFLN leadership and the pilot project Concentration Leaders continue.

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

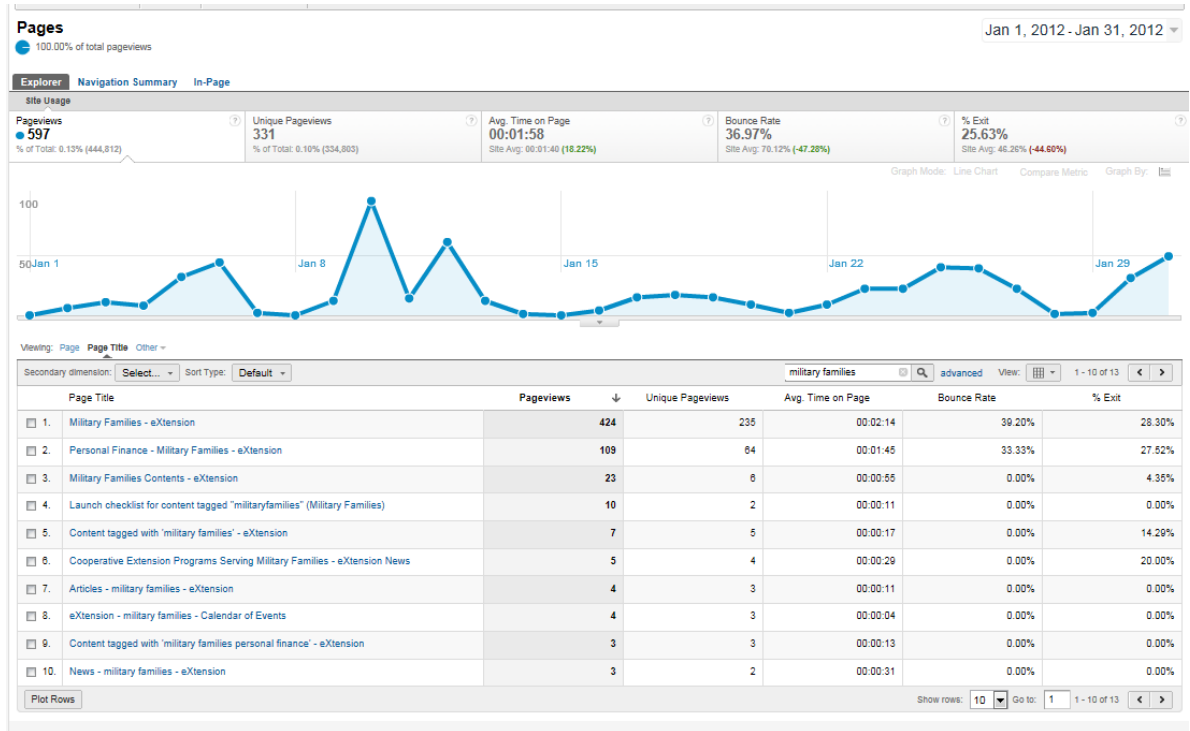
- **Military Families Learning Network (MFLN):** Significant activities related to deliverables for the MFLN are presented according to the Concentration Areas/CoPs.
 - **Personal Finance:**
 - 1) **Re-purpose Content/Establish Ask an Expert Resource:** The FAQs are transitioning to Barbara O'Neill with PF to get them copy-edited and to have them published by April 2012. The hope is to have all of the DoD reviews completed in the coming days and it may still be possible to meet the April deadline (although not 1 April).
 - 2) **Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media:** Three blogs were posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Foreclosures to Get Review, Using "Auto-Pilot" to Start Budgeting, Housing & Foreclosure Web Conference*). The Facebook page finished January with 68 Likes (<http://www.facebook.com/PersonalFinance4PFMs>) while Twitter followers grew to 56 with nearly 100 tweets and retweets. Engagement and interaction on DoD sites continues.
 - 3) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:**
 - ◆ Thursday, 2FEB2012 – *What If You Can't Sell Your House?* @ 11:30am ET (<http://learn.extension.org/events/427>)

- ♦ Wednesday, 23FEB2012 – *Talking With Military Kids About Money @ 2:30pm ET*
(<http://learn.extension.org/events/441>)
 - ♦ MAR2012, TBA – *Financial Implications Of Relatives Raising Children While Parents Are Deployed*
 - ♦ APR2012, TBA – *Financial Aspects Of Divorce*
 - ♦ Tuesday, 8MAY2012 – *Home Ownership, When Is The Right Time?*, time TBA
- 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:**
- The Concentration Leader for CC, Kathy Reschke, presented information about the MFLN and the *Child Care* project at the Board of Dayton Association for Young Children in Dayton, OH, the home of Wright-Patterson AFB (9JAN).
- 1) **Re-purpose and Create New Content:** An article on pretend play and military children is under review.
 - 2) **Engage the Target Audience Through Social Media:** One blog was posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (3 *Reasons to Allow War Play in Your Early Childhood Classroom*). The Facebook page ended the reporting period with 49 Likes, and a reach of 67 (<http://www.facebook.com/childcareandmilitaryfamilies>). Twitter followers were up 32 to 93 and there are 17 members in a newly developed LinkedIn group, Early Care & Education for Military Families.
 - 3) **Create a Searchable List of Children’s Books:** Worked with eXtension staff and a prototype was created on the Moodle system.
 - 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:**
 - ♦ Wednesday, 29FEB2012 - *Secure Attachments: Building Caring Relationships With Parents And Children @ 2:00pm ET* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/443>)
 - ♦ Wednesday, 25APR2012 - *Children’s Literacy @ 2:00pm ET*
 - 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):** Twenty short videos of military family development experts have been edited and placed on the FD YouTube channel: (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLE229C8C5F2BFC948>). They are being integrated into blog postings, tweets, and short social media blurbs related to the topics/issues raised by the interviewees. 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):** One blog was posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Kids Deploy Too!*). Concentration Leaders continue to be present in HOMEFRONTConnections.
 - 3) **Provide Professional Development Opportunities Through Web Conferencing:** The second professional development Web conference was offered on 25JAN at 11:00am ET and was titled, "*Helping Military Families Create Systems of Social Support*". It was presented by Dr. Dennis Orthner (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill). Attendance topped out at **223** and from those that shared their email addresses, about a third were Extension and another third were military. Other sessions are planned as follows:
 - ◆ Wednesday, 29FEB2012 - *Co-Parenting at a Distance @ 11:00am ET* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/445>)
 - ◆ Thursday, 5APR2012 – *Balancing Work and Family: A Focus on Building Military Family Resilience @ 11:00am ET* (<http://learn.extension.org/events/464>)

- **Network Literacy:**
 - One blog was posted at <http://blogs.extension.org/militaryfamilies> (*Your Next Big Professional Leap*).
 - Twenty-seven pieces of content (articles and FAQs) were published (see: http://www.extension.org/network_literacy).
 - Google+ immersive training was concluded with 17 participants. 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 (44).
 - The Ask an Expert NL category was initiated so questions are now being directed to the CoP membership.

- MFLN Google Analytics:
 - Pageviews were up significantly from 286 to 597 for all Military Families pages with the main page getting the most views followed by the Personal Finance Page. The bounce rate remains good and the time on page is up slightly from last month.



- The military families blog pages remains the second most viewed page on the eXtension blog site with 1,727 (1,302 unique) views which is 28% of the total eXtension blog site page views.
- Twitter: The MFLN has 234 followers (up from 187) 19% of whom are located outside the U.S. There were 69 tweets with 42 conversations/mts/rts for an engagement rate of 61% (up from 33%).

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

- **Deliverables:** There is a need for feedback in a number of areas:
 - 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:** All no-cost-extensions have been granted in the project with the sub-contracts. It is expected that the Phase II

continuation documents will be completed by the end of February and after a short stay at UNL, will be forwarded post-haste to NIFA.

4. Relevant challenges that need attention from DoD/NIFA

- See Item #3 above, Deliverables.

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

- Our own Evaluation and Research Specialist, Sarah Baughman recently published:
Baughman, S, Boyd, H. H., & Franz, N. K. (2011). Non-formal educator use of evaluation results. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 35*(3), 329-336.
*(Available online December, 2011; in print August, 2012)