

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program

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to Congress
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Yellow Ribbon Program

For Those Who Serve and Those Who Support



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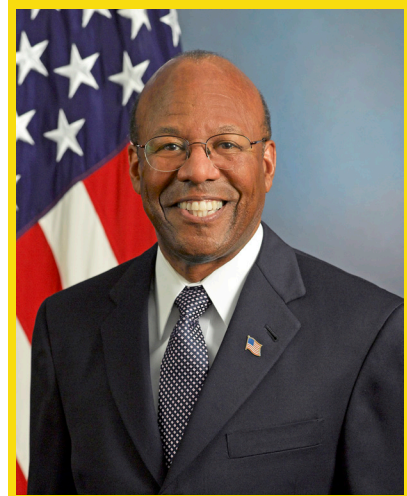


Yellow Ribbon Program

Message from the Chair

As the Executive Agent for the Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program and Chair of its Advisory Board, I am pleased to present this annual report to Congress.

It is my duty to honor, protect, and improve the lives of our National Guard and Reserve Service members. Most importantly, it is my duty to ensure that our Service members – and their families – are “ready.” The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program remains essential for military and family readiness, because I firmly believe that readiness for any future deployment begins with reintegration after the current deployment.



As we continue to plan for the Program’s future, it is important we consider the impact of the Program and the potential role of our National Guard and Reserve as conflict draws down. The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program has made progress in preparing for the changes that lay ahead. That said, it is critical we remain vigilant in the Program’s execution and ensure the readiness of our National Guard and Reserve Service and family members.

I am proud of what this report shares about the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program’s accomplishments and the candor with which it describes the Program’s challenges and plans for the future. Our National Guard and Reserve Force are ready, valued, experienced, and relevant. The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is committed to ensuring it stays that way.

I thank Congress for their recognition of the need for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program and their continued support of and dedication to our National Guard and Reserve Service members and their families.

Sincerely,

Dr. Clifford L. Stanley, Chair,
Under Secretary of Defense
(Personnel and Readiness)

MISSION

Provide National Guard and Reserve members and their Families with information, services, referrals, and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the deployment cycle.

VISION

Enable the National Guard and Reserve Components to deliver effective, timely and uniform Interservice support to Service members and their Families throughout the deployment cycle regardless of Service affiliation or location.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) is to ensure the readiness and well-being of National Guard and Reserve Service members and their Families by providing dynamic events, information, services, referrals, and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the entire deployment cycle.



“I think the importance of the Yellow Ribbon Program is to make sure that on the front end of deployment we are properly preparing the Soldier and the Family for everything they need to think about while their Soldier is gone. And then on the back end, it’s making sure we are doing everything to reintegrate that Soldier and Family and make them aware of all the resources that are available, not just immediately after deployment, but for the long term ”

*LTG Jack C. Stultz
Chief, Army Reserve*



Yellow Ribbon Program

Executive Summary

The Nation's reliance on the Reserve and National Guard has increased in support of overseas conflicts. On any given day, approximately 95,000 members of the Reserve and National Guard are in active status in support of Overseas Contingency Operations. Those Service members who are deployed and fight alongside their active counterparts experience the same challenges and combat situations that arise during deployment. However, National Guard and Reserve Service members often return home to minimal support or access to services to help them reintegrate into society. To address this concern, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) was mandated by Congress in January 2008 to provide support to those returning Service members of the National Guard and Reserve.

Reintegration into family, community, and job continues far beyond the time when the last Service member returns home. The reintegration process is ongoing for many Service members and requires multiple steps over an extended period of time. Furthermore, even as military operations draw down, the requirement for a ready and capable Reserve Force endures. YRRP will continue to address these readiness requirements for succeeding generations of military personnel and their families.

Leadership and Alignment

During 2010, the YRRP office was aligned under a new directorate, Family and Employer Programs & Policy (FEPP). This new directorate continues to report to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and aligns YRRP with Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), and Individual Family Support (IFS). This alignment is intended to make these three related programs mutually supporting.

Measures of Performance

During FY 10, the Services report there were 2,241 Yellow Ribbon Events held across the country, providing vital information and resources to 362,666 Service members, their families and loved ones.

Events	Service Members	Family Members	Total
2,241	186,000	176,666	362,666

These 2,241 events covered all phases of the deployment cycle. The information and resources provided at these events cover a broad range of topics. These topics are designed to help Service members and their families prepare for and endure the hardships of deployment, then successfully reintegrate back into their family, community and job.

Measure of Effectiveness

The Defense Management Data Center (DMDC) conducted a web-based survey of 86,000 Reserve Component members (31,815 respondents) between November 23, 2009 and January 8, 2010. DMDC findings show respondents felt YRRP to be very effective compared with other programs with which the respondents were familiar.

Successes and Challenges of the National Guard and Reserve Programs

The success of YRRP is largely predicated on the effectiveness of its events. It is for that reason Yellow Ribbon Event Planners are required to submit an After Action Report (AAR) following every Yellow Ribbon Event. These AARs allow the Reserve and National Guard Program Leadership and the YRRP Office to identify the needs and gauge the effectiveness of the Program. Based on the reports from the Services, it is evident that YRRP is meeting the needs of its Service and family members and community partners.

The most notable challenges facing YRRP are use of appropriated funding [for meals, child and youth curriculum, and supporting educational materials], ensuring the right person can attend with the Service member and encouraging those people to attend, and producing quality events. The YRRP Office has taken steps to address these challenges to provide the National Guard and Reserve the ability to conduct effective and meaningful events for Service members and their families.

Yellow Ribbon Outreach

- **2010 YRRP Conference:** The inaugural YRRP Conference “Good to GREAT” was held in September 2010. The conference’s target audience was Yellow Ribbon Event Planners with senior military policy makers, National Guard and Reserve Component Flag and General Officers, Senior Executive Service leadership, Service Yellow Ribbon Program Managers, service provider representatives, and the YRRP Office staff also participating for a total attendance of 621. Post-conference surveys and data indicate that all Conference objectives were met and participants gained significant knowledge, information, and resources to improve the delivery of YRRP across the country.
- **Cadre of Speakers:** The difference between a good Yellow Ribbon Event and a great experience for Service members and their families, more often than not, depends on the quality of presenters. In November 2010, the YRRP Office unveiled the Cadre of Speakers and made them available to Event Planners across the country. The Cadre of Speakers is a pool of highly effective and qualified presenters and facilitators capable of delivering dynamic presentations on a wide range of subjects. This initiative addresses the objective to enhance and improve the quality of Yellow Ribbon Events for Service and family members by creating an interactive and engaging environment.



Yellow Ribbon Program

- **Program Specialists:** Program Specialists are personnel assigned to various states across the country for the express purpose of helping in the coordination of YRRP Events and services. Additionally, the Program Specialists are available to assist with the coordination of Joint events. They have also become a valuable resource in the field by supporting key interaction with government and non-government resources. These relationships facilitate Joint Yellow Ribbon Events, and support Commanders and Event Planners. This increases the Program's ability to provide information on relevant local, state, and federal programs and benefits available to Service members and their families.
- **Web:** The Yellow Ribbon Web site, www.yellowribbon.mil, serves as a source for information about the Program. It provides a link to the Event Planning Tool which allows users to find events and Event Planners to access the resources they need to plan them. The Event Planning Tool is also the main reporting tool used by the Yellow Ribbon Center for Excellence (CfE) to collect AARs from Yellow Ribbon Events as well as other Program metrics.

Center for Excellence

The Yellow Ribbon Center for Excellence (CfE) is the analytical element of the YRRP Office and is actively engaged in the development of data collection, analysis, and distribution systems to provide best practices and measures of performance and effectiveness to YRRP. This data is gathered through AARs, participant feedback, lessons learned, and other mechanisms to enhance the Program. This information will allow the CfE to distribute best practices and help create improved events for Service and family members. In addition, the CfE will maintain a repository of presentations and materials that provide high quality results-oriented programs and information. The Yellow Ribbon CfE is committed to developing a rigorous process that will measure the effectiveness of the YRRP to ensure resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible and that the YRRP will have a demonstrated impact on Service members and their families.

Suicide Prevention

Public Law 111-84, Section 595 gave the YRRP Office the responsibility for establishing a program to provide Reserve and National Guard Service members, and their families, training in suicide prevention, community healing, and response to suicide. The YRRP Office has engaged several national associations to provide ongoing assistance in coordinating with community based behavioral health providers and conducted a needs and gap analysis of all the Reserve Components existing suicide prevention programs. During FY 11, the YRRP Office will build on these efforts.

Consulting Offices and Agencies

The YRRP Office consults closely with government organizations to include the Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor, Small Business Administration, United States Coast Guard, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Military Community and Family Policy, and Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury.

FY 11 Goals and Objectives

YRRP continues to proactively support dynamic events, provide access to direct services, and coordinate referrals for services as needed throughout the entire deployment cycle to over 300,000 Service and family members. In FY 11, YRRP will continue to build on its successes by pursuing a number of objectives including publishing the Department of Defense Instruction and developing a plan to execute Joint events.

Program Overview

YRRP is a DoD-wide effort, mandated in Public Law 110-181, Section 582, which calls for informational events and activities for National Guard and Reserve Service members and their families, to facilitate access to services supporting their health and well-being throughout the deployment cycle. The informational events and activities, known as Yellow Ribbon Events, take place during all phases of the deployment cycle with post-deployment events conducted at the 30, 60, and 90 day points after the Service member returns home.

Yellow Ribbon Events provide interactive and informative seminars on: communication, stress management, post-military career opportunities, money management, health education, parental skills, suicide prevention, resilience training, and other life-skills training. In addition to these seminars, YRRP provides access or referrals, through our relationships with other Federal and non-federal entities, to support services for issues concerning: mental health and substance use disorder; traumatic brain injury; housing stabilization; and family support. YRRP also offers access to employment resources and career counseling to support those Service members facing unemployment/ underemployment or who have career concerns after being demobilized/redeployed.



"I am convinced that the Center for Excellence is one of the cornerstones to success for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program "

*The Honorable
Dennis M. McCarthy,
Assistant Secretary of Defense
for Reserve Affairs*



Yellow Ribbon Program

Reintegration into family, community, and job continues far beyond the time when the last Service member returns home. The reintegration process is ongoing for many Service members and requires multiple steps over an extended period of time. Furthermore, even as military operations draw down, the requirement for a ready and capable Reserve Force endures. YRRP will continue to address these readiness requirements for succeeding generations of military personnel and their families.

Leadership and Alignment

In July of 2010, YRRP was aligned with Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and Individual Family Support under the new FEPP Directorate. This new directorate within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs brings together mutually supportive programs resulting in a broader array of capabilities under a single entity, including employer and family focused action programs. Additionally, it will result in greater efficiency and effectiveness in processes, operations, and activities to support the National Guard and Reserve and position Department of Defense (DoD) to better meet the needs of our Service members, their families, and employers.

Under this new alignment, YRRP will be able to work more closely with the 4,700 ESGR volunteers and representatives across the country. This connection enables YRRP to help address the broad range of employment issues that exist among Reserve and National Guard Service members. It also provides an avenue for employers to become more involved in YRRP and reach a large amount of potential employees.

Measures of Performance

During FY 10, the Services report there were 2,241 Yellow Ribbon Events held across the country, providing vital information and resources to 362,666 Service members, their families and loved ones (see Table 1 Yellow Ribbon Events, participation by Service and family members, and total number mobilized/deployed for each Service during FY 10). These 2,241 events covered all phases of the deployment cycle. The information and resources provided at these events cover

a broad range of topics. These topics are designed to help Service members and their families prepare for and endure the hardships of deployment, then successfully reintegrate back into their family, community and job.

According to data provided by the Services, attendance at Yellow Ribbon Events According to data provided by the Services, attendance at Yellow Ribbon Events has increased 50 percent from 2009 to 2010. Yellow Ribbon continues to expand its service offering as a result of its first conference despite the activated population decreasing by 9 percent from 2009 to 2010 (see chart in Appendix 1).

"It's an amazing program. The tips they give you, the information, they provide you, it's so vital."

*Juan Rivas,
Father of United States
Marine Corps
Reserve Member*

	Army National Guard	Army Reserve	Marine Forces Reserve	Navy Reserve	Air National Guard	Air Force Reserve	Total
Total Number of Events	1,249	525	40	125	220	82	2,241
Total Number of Attendees	246,321	51,932	5,806	34,844	15,614	8,149	362,666
Service Members	123,899	24,685	3,625	20,147	10,256	3,388	186,000
Family Members	122,422	27,247	2,181	14,697	5,358	4,761	176,666
Total Number Mobilized/ Deployed	46,835	15,009	3,627	6,306	13,277	8,000	93,054
Projected Number of Events for FY 11	1,250	550	136	155	Not Available	50	2,141

Table 1 - Event statistics by Service

Measures of Effectiveness

The Defense Management Data Center (DMDC) conducted a web-based survey in December 2009 titled Status of Forces Survey of Reserve Component Members: Reunion and Reintegration (briefing dated June 2010). This survey solicited input from 86,000 Reserve Component members (31,815 respondents) between November 23, 2009 and January 8, 2010.

DMDC findings show respondents felt YRRP to be very effective compared with other DoD programs with which they were familiar in the following areas:

- Overall effectiveness of reunion and reintegration support
- Helpfulness of support services for members dealing with deployment related stress
- Overall satisfaction with reunion and reintegration support
- Helpfulness of support services for spouse or significant other dealing with deployment related stress
- Overall assessment of readjustment

“We as Commanders, First Sergeants, Command Chiefs, we’re here to help you. That is our job. To make sure we kick down those doors to get you and your Families and loved ones the help that you need.”

*Col Jay Flournoy,
349th Air Mobility Wing,
Travis Air Force Base, CA*



Yellow Ribbon Program

Successes and Challenges of the National Guard and Reserve Programs

1. Program Successes and Event Feedback

The success of YRRP is largely predicated on the success of its events. It is for that reason Yellow Ribbon Event Planners are required to submit an After Action Report (AAR) following every Yellow Ribbon Event. These AARs allow the National Guard and Reserve Program Leadership and the YRRP Office to identify the needs and gauge the effectiveness of the Program. Based on the reports from the Services, it is evident that YRRP is meeting the needs of its Service and family members and community partners. One Service identified 92 percent of attendees felt the event provided them with information and resources to help with deployment and reintegration.

The majority of feedback received in AARs by the Services found Commanders believe Yellow Ribbon Events positively impact readiness by helping to improve communication skills, improve stress management techniques, and provide Service members and families the knowledge of how to budget to plan for the future. Additionally, through the presence of Military Family Life Consultants, other mental health counselors and clergy, many at-risk Service and family members have been identified for stress-related challenges (e.g. depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, divorce, substance abuse, etc.) and been given the immediate attention they need.

2. Challenges and Resolutions

The National Guard and Reserve have done a remarkable job growing and executing YRRP since its inception in 2008. During FY 10, the number of events conducted, and Service and Family members served, has increased 55, 80, and 94 percent respectively from FY 09 (see Appendix 1). There have been policy and legislation changes made to help facilitate the execution of the Program such as the change to the Joint Federal Travel Regulation and Joint Travel Regulation (JFTR/JTR) and a memo distributed to clarify the use of appropriated funds for meals, childcare and training. The YRRP Office has taken steps as follows to provide the Reserve and National Guard the ability to conduct effective and meaningful events for Service members and their Families:

■ Family and Single Service Member Attendance:

Service members often consider people who may be outside of the traditional family structure as being best suited to support them during the deployment cycle. The challenge of enabling the appropriate support person to attend Yellow Ribbon Events has been addressed through a change to the JFTR/JTR. The change to these regulations was

enacted as part of National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) FY 11 and will expand the meaning of family by using the term “designated representative” to allow the person best able to support the Service member to attend the event. In addition to the changes to the JFTR/JTR, efforts are being made to provide more family oriented activities to encourage family member attendance, such as more extensive youth curriculum.

Single Service members represent a large portion of the Reserve and National Guard population and it is important that their needs are addressed as well. YRRP Event Planners have begun to offer breakout sessions and information for single Service members to meet their needs and interests. This effort is still being refined across the National Guard and Reserve, but has already yielded positive feedback and more participation from single Service members at Yellow Ribbon Events.

■ Use of Appropriated Funds:

In July 2010, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness signed a memorandum reiterating guidance on the permitted use of appropriated funds. This memorandum was distributed to help address perceived limitations by the Services regarding the purchase of meals, educational materials, and child and youth curriculum for Yellow Ribbon Events.

■ Uniformity of Events and Materials:

The Reserve and National Guard Programs have identified a need to move towards more Service neutral and uniform information without losing touch with unit integrity and individual Service cultures. The effort to develop uniform information and materials across the Services through increased Service collaboration is underway. Once the YRRP Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) is published, the overall YRRP curriculum will be consistent regardless of Service affiliation. The YRRP Conference (described under YRRP Outreach below) helped address this challenge by bringing together over 500 Event Planners from across the National Guard and Reserve to collaborate and share information. At the YRRP Conference, representatives were able to learn “best practices” from sister Services and form regional and national networks that will help the National Guard and Reserve Programs work together to create a more Joint environment and higher quality events for the benefit of Service members and their families.

“I think Yellow Ribbon is one of the best things that has ever happened to us as Reservists because it gives so much information that otherwise we’d probably go without.”

*SSgt Michael Dunn,
United States Air Force Reserve*



Yellow Ribbon Program

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program Outreach

Outreach serves as a critical component of the Program. It effectively connects Event Planners, Commanders, Service and family members, and YRRP Office staff in support of the Program's mission. In May 2010, YRRP hired its first Outreach Director who has developed ways to better market the program, conduct more dynamic and engaging events, and facilitate Joint efforts highlighting the best of all the Services' programs. These efforts, combined with various attendance policies, have increased attendance by 50 percent from last year (see YRRP CfE section for details) illustrating the increase of awareness about the Program.

1. Conference

The inaugural YRRP Conference "Good to GREAT" was held in September 2010. The conference's target audience was Yellow Ribbon Event Planners with senior military policy makers, National Guard and Reserve Component Flag and General Officers, Senior Executive Service leadership, Service Yellow Ribbon Program Managers, service provider representatives, and the YRRP Office staff also participating for a total attendance of 621. Post-conference surveys and data indicate that all conference objectives were met, and participants gained significant knowledge, information, and resources to improve the delivery of YRRP across the country.

"Our main focus is to get them the help that they need... We have everything from marriage enrichment, financial advice, and we provide child care activities."

Holly Brauer, CPT, Arizona National Guard Yellow Ribbon Program

The purpose of the conference was to improve the Services' Programs by enabling Yellow Ribbon Event Planners and Program Managers to improve inter-service cooperation, communicate a consistent message, strengthen working relationships that could be greatly enhanced by a Joint conference environment, and raise awareness of resources available to Event Planners.

The strategic objectives (Table 2 below) of the conference were to set the conditions for an enduring, high impact program that is adaptable to change in the current DoD fiscal and operational environment.



Conference Objectives	Intended Outcomes
•Modeling of interactive training / presentations	•More efficient and effective use of human and capital resources
•Exposure to a cadre of professional quality speakers	•Increase in Reserve Component (RC) retention and readiness as reported by the Services
•Exchange of best practices on a state, regional and Service-wide basis	•Increase in joint multi-service hosted YR Events
•Present concepts that lead to efficient use of resources	•More efficient use of YR support organizations
•Present tools and resources for use in YRRP event	•100% RC participation in the Event Planner/ Joint Service Support planning and feedback systems
	•Relevant and enduring program post-Overseas Contingency Operations

Table 2 - Conference objectives and the intended outcomes

Table 3 illustrates the percentage met for each objective in the general and breakout sessions during the conference:

Objectives	Model Interactive Behavior	Exposure to high quality speakers	Exchange of best practices	Present concepts that lead to efficient use of resources	Showcase tools and resources for YRP events
Percentage met	83%	86%	84%	88%	100%

Table 3 - Findings based on attendee feedback through post-conference survey results and after action reports.





Yellow Ribbon Program

Key Takeaways from the Conference:

1. According to participants the event was a success and should be repeated annually
2. The YRRP Office conference objectives were achieved; participants were motivated to return and improve upon their Programs
3. Joint Yellow Ribbon Events are both desired and necessary
4. Most Services capitalized on having their personnel in one location by adding on Service-specific sessions immediately following the YRRP Conference

Please refer to Appendix 2 – Conference AAR Executive Summary for more detailed information regarding the conference and its outcomes.

2. Web site

The Yellow Ribbon Web site serves as a source for information about the Program. It also provides a link to the Event Planning Tool, which allows users to find events and Event Planners to access the resources they need to plan them. The Event Planning Tool is also the main reporting tool used by the Yellow Ribbon CfE to collect AARs from Yellow Ribbon Events as well as other Program metrics.

YRRP staff conducted a usability study using YRRP stakeholders to gain perspective on what its target audience desires in a Web site. This study provided the basis for the redesign of www.yellowribbon.mil into a more user-friendly, dynamic, and interactive site.

The YRRP Web site averages 3,504 visitors (total number of visitors) and 3,123 unique visitors (different individual visitors, not repeat visitors) a month (Figure 1 below) and provides information broken down by key stakeholder groups: Service and family members; Event Planners; Service Providers; and Commanders. This breakdown was developed based on the primary audience of YRRP and each section provides information relevant to that group.



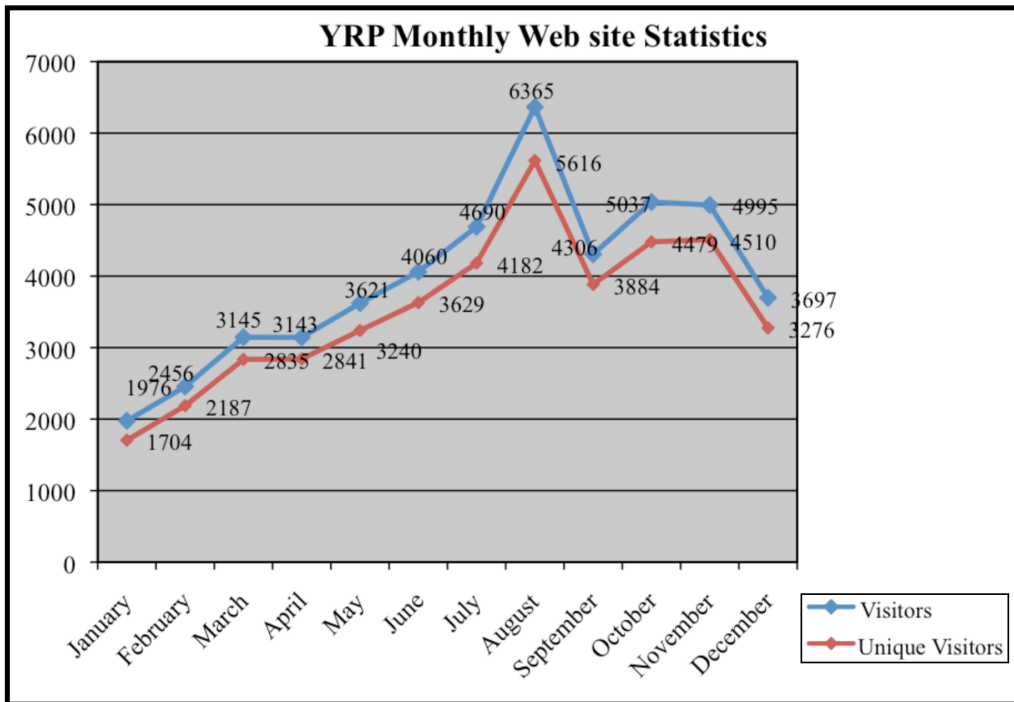


Figure 1

3. Deployment Cycle Support Teams – Program Specialist Program

The Program Specialist Program began in 2009 as a pilot in 10 states to establish deployment cycle support teams at the state level. This program has yielded many benefits for YRRP and, more importantly, Service and family members. The Program Specialists have helped to develop programs, committees, and the facilitation of Service collaboration in their area, in an effort to better support the Service and family members. They have developed relationships in their areas with relevant service providers such as Veterans Affairs’ (VA’s) Women Veterans in New England and Citizenship and Immigration Services in California. Additionally, Program Specialists helped groups like Women Warrior to improve services to women and assisted in adding a breakout session specifically for teens of deployed Service members at Yellow Ribbon Events.

The Program Specialists have also become a valuable resource in the field by supporting key interactions with local government and non-government resources. These relationships have helped facilitate Joint Yellow

“I think it’s really important to come to these events. It’s just nice to get in a big group and tell each other stories and listen to everybody else; what they’re going through, and it takes you out of feeling like you’re the only one that does it.”

*Nina Bice,
Sister of Texas
Army National Guard
Member*



Yellow Ribbon Program

“Yellow Ribbon is a huge step in the right direction of getting those people the services they need that they might not know they need.”

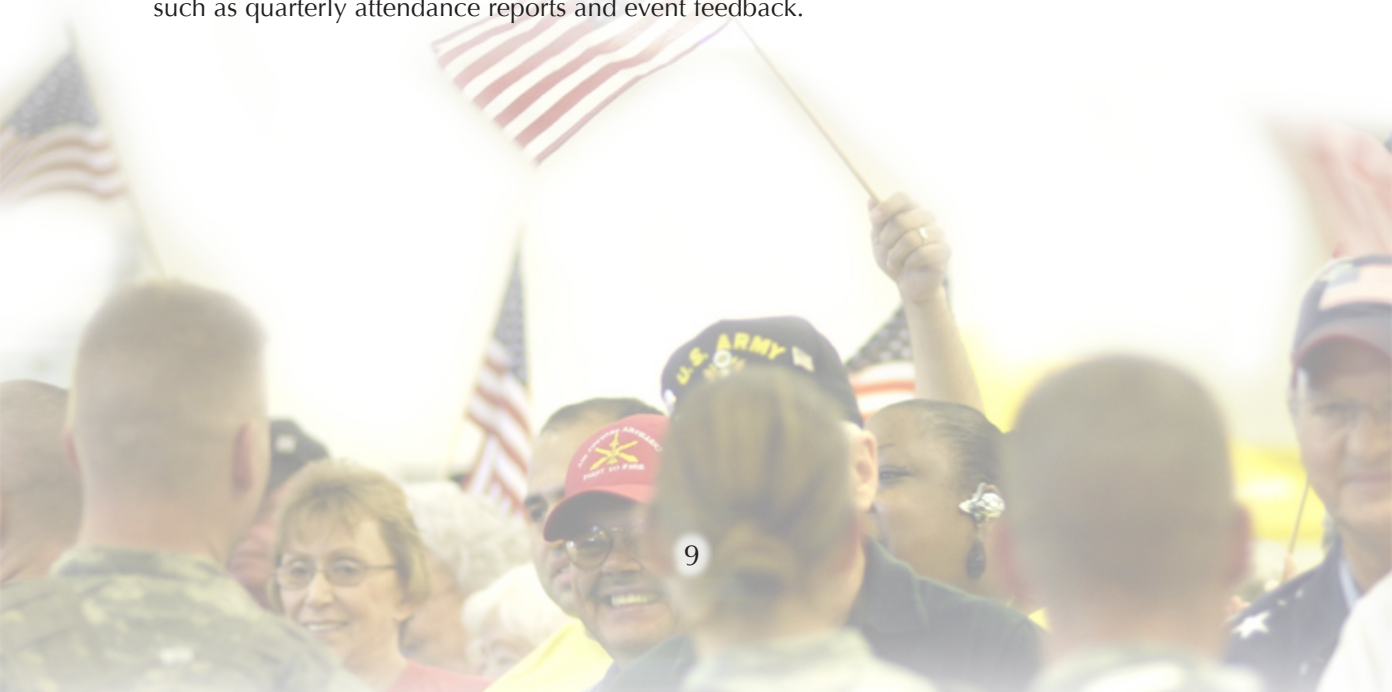
*Jeff Sursley, SMSgt,
United States Air Force Reserve*

Ribbon Events, and support Commanders and Event Planners in the execution of YRRP. As a result of these efforts and their importance to YRRP’s mission, the YRRP Office will continue and expand the program. This expansion will increase the Program’s ability to provide information on relevant local, State, and Federal Programs and benefits available to Service members and their families during the deployment cycle.

The Program Specialist Program grew from 10 to 27 full time Specialists in early FY 11. Placement of the Program Specialists around the country is based on Reserve and National Guard population density. The goal of the expansion is to provide additional support to the Service members and families across the nation and facilitate Service collaboration through a regional concept. The Program Specialists also work closely with State ESGR Offices to further existing connections and provide additional support to Event Planners, Service members, and families in terms of employment resources.

4. Yellow Ribbon Coordinators

A need for Yellow Ribbon Coordinators was identified by the Services’ Yellow Ribbon Program Managers as a way to assist with managing the volume of information requests from the YRRP Office. The YRRP Office provided these individuals to each Service to help Program Managers execute YRRP and acquire information from the field. This information is used to update our stakeholders, the Advisory Board, and Congress. The Yellow Ribbon Coordinators help streamline the information gathering and submission process, allowing Program Managers to focus on enhancing their Program and still meet suspense dates for key information requests such as quarterly attendance reports and event feedback.



5. Cadre of Speakers

The difference between a good Yellow Ribbon Event and a great experience for Service members and their families, more often than not, depends on the quality of presenters. In November 2010, the YRRP Office unveiled the Cadre of Speakers and made them available to Event Planners across the country. The Cadre of Speakers is a pool of highly effective and qualified, presenters and facilitators capable of delivering dynamic presentations on a wide range of subjects. This initiative addresses the objective to enhance and improve the quality of Yellow Ribbon Events for Service and family members by creating an interactive and engaging environment.

The Cadre currently consists of 40 speakers and facilitators. Each Cadre member is an expert in presenting information in a way that is dynamic, engaging, and tailored toward the audience's needs. This enables Event Planners to request speakers that relate directly to their events' attendees. Members of the Cadre all undergo post-event evaluations for each session presented through feedback from Service and family members, Event Planners and Program Managers in order to ensure only the most capable and dynamic speakers are used.

6. Videos

During FY 10, the YRRP Office hired a professional video team to capture the essence and experience of Yellow Ribbon Events and increase awareness of the Program among our target audiences through video products. The team attended Yellow Ribbon Events held by each Service for each deployment cycle phase and captured the various elements of the Program (e.g. breakout sessions, general sessions, service providers, and interviews with staff and attendees). This footage was edited into more than 50 individual vignettes that communicate in a unique way the personal impact of this Program. An YRRP Overview video is available for use by the Services to help promote the Program in their Service, region, and state. Select videos are available via download from www.yellowribbon.mil and posted to YouTube (www.youtube.com/dodyellowribbon). The videos are also available on disc by request to the YRRP Office.



“Something like [Yellow Ribbon] is extremely important for families who are transitioning into deployment.”

*Heidi Kelley
Spouse of
New Hampshire
Air National Guard
Member*



Yellow Ribbon Program

7. Newsletter

The Yellow Ribbon Newsletter, *The Ribbon*, is a quarterly newsletter focused on reaching Unit Commanders and Senior Enlisted Leaders, Event Planners, and other Yellow Ribbon stakeholders. The first issue of *The Ribbon* was published in May 2010, and three issues have since followed at the beginning of each subsequent quarter. *The Ribbon* is distributed electronically by the YRRP Office to over 600 subscribers that include the offices of each Reserve Component Chief and their Public Affairs Officers, Senior Enlisted Advisors, Yellow Ribbon Program Managers, Event Planners, and other Yellow Ribbon stakeholders.

"I've been in the military for 28 years and I didn't know all the things we're eligible for."

Ed Beck, LTC, USAR

The newsletter serves as another communication channel for the YRRP Office to keep the Yellow Ribbon stakeholders informed of important Program news and information (e.g. new funding guidance, new resources available for Event Planners, or the Cadre of Speakers). It also contains a "Program Spotlight" so readers can be aware of the programs working with YRRP and if those resources could benefit the Service members and families in their local areas as well.

Yellow Ribbon Center for Excellence

The Yellow Ribbon CfE is the analytical element of the YRRP Office and is actively engaged in the development of data collection, analysis and distribution systems to provide best practices and measures of performance and effectiveness to YRRP. This data is gathered through AARs, participant feedback, lessons learned, and other mechanisms to enhance the Program (see Figure 2 for Program Improvement Methodology). This information will allow the CfE to distribute best practices and help create improved events. The CfE is committed to developing a rigorous process that will measure the effectiveness of the YRRP to ensure resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible and that YRRP will have a demonstrated impact on Service members and their families.

The CfE has begun to maintain a repository of presentations and materials that provide high quality results-oriented programs and information. In addition, the CfE will assist the Services in the development of training aids, briefing materials, and required reports.

In 2010, the CfE produced two main products in the area of lessons learned for the Service Programs:

- **The Office of the Secretary of Defense Yellow Ribbon Conference After Action Report:** This report contains over 40 pages of information that detailed how to make the Services' Programs stronger and more vibrant.
- **Office of the Secretary of Defense Yellow Ribbon Promising Practices and Lessons Learned Summary:** This document highlights the Services' best practices as discussed at the OSD Yellow Ribbon Conference held in Orlando September 2010.

Yellow Ribbon Center for Excellence - Program Improvement Methodology



Figure 2

1. Center for Excellence Way Ahead

■ Performance metrics:

The CfE is developing a system that will allow the Services to verify Yellow Ribbon Event attendance and compare that to mobilization data stored at the DMDC. This data will be used to ascertain accurate Yellow Ribbon attendance percentages compared to total mobilizations for all of the Services.

■ Service After Action Reports:

Services to report post-event observations using a standard reporting format for all Services. This report will be uploaded electronically using the Event Planning Tool; an already established web based application used by the Event Planners and YRRP.

■ Yellow Ribbon Event attendee questionnaires:

The CfE has developed a series of questionnaires designed to determine the attendees' perception of the effectiveness of each session and the event as a whole. The questionnaires will be administered by each Service near the conclusion of every event. The aggregate data will be provided to the YRRP Office in order to establish national trends and will aid in the development and distribution of lessons learned.

"It is important to measure the effectiveness of a program as well as its performance. I want to know: What's the yield? What are we getting? Have we helped Service members and Family members?"

Dr. Clifford L. Stanley, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness



Yellow Ribbon Program

■ Commitment to Measures of Effectiveness:

The recently passed National Defense Authorization Act for 2011 (NDAA-11) requires that the CfE “shall develop and implement a process for evaluating the effectiveness of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program in supporting the health and well-being of members of the Armed Forces and their families throughout the deployment cycle...” The CfE is committed to developing a rigorous process that will measure the effectiveness of YRRP to ensure resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible and that YRRP will have a demonstrated impact on Service members and their families.

2. Center for Excellence Program Analysis and Distribution Program

The CfE is establishing a relationship with a consortium of Land Grant Universities through consultation with Military Community & Family Policy and the Department of Agriculture that will collect, analyze, and post to www.yellowribbon.mil, the best practices and training materials from the Services. The group of Land Grant Universities, called the Service Member & Family Readiness Promising Practices Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse), began the process of reviewing YRRP Service presentations and will provide detailed and evidence based summaries on each item submitted. The Clearinghouse will also provide lessons learned and data analysis based on information provided through the CfE. Lastly, the Clearinghouse will be required to develop presentations and materials to address any identified gaps in YRRP for use by the Services at Yellow Ribbon Events.

The CfE has developed a test Web site for an YRRP best practice library that will be populated with superlative Service presentations and event curriculum. The Services will review the proposed structure for the library site during FY 11. Proposed changes will be incorporated and vetted materials from each of the Services will be added to the library for use by Yellow Ribbon Event Planners.



Suicide Prevention

Public Law 111-84, Section 595, gave the YRRP Office the responsibility for establishing a program to provide National Guard and Reserve Service members, and their families, training in suicide prevention, community healing, and response to suicide. The YRRP Office has engaged several national associations to provide ongoing assistance with the focus on coordinating with community based behavioral health providers. Additionally, the YRRP Office has conducted analysis to identify possible gaps. The initial findings indicate that all Reserve Components have existing suicide prevention programs, but they vary widely in scope. During FY 11, the YRRP Office will continue to build on these efforts.

Consulting Offices and Agencies

YRRP works closely with several organizations to provide support to Service and family members throughout the deployment cycle. It is through these relationships, both internal and external to the DoD, that YRRP is able to provide access to many of the services and resources about which deployed Service members and their families inquire. YRRP continues to seek out additional organizations to increase services and expand the information accessible through the Program and its events.

1. Inter-departmental Coordination

■ Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):

The Yellow Ribbon Office and the National Guard and Reserve have developed a strong partnership with the VA. Most Yellow Ribbon events include personnel from VA who provide briefings, information, consultations, and referrals to Guard and Reserve Service members and their families. VA personnel from the Veterans Benefits Administration, VA Medical Centers (VAMCs), and VA Vet Centers attend Yellow Ribbon events to inform Service members and their families on VA benefits, services, and programs including: compensation, education, vocational rehabilitation, insurance, loan guaranty, and VA health care to include mental health programs. VA personnel are also available at many events to provide one-on-one consultations to answer questions, provide local VA contact information, and assist with the completion of VA forms.



"It is great to come to these events because they have the resources here that can get you in contact with whoever you may need."

*Charlene Sursley,
SMSgt (Retired),
United States
Air Force Reserve*



Yellow Ribbon Program

"I learned about the amount of resources available to us; not only as a married couple, but financial support and emotional support."

*Heidi Kelley
Spouse of New Hampshire
Air National Guard*

A growing number of National Guard and Reserve units are working directly with VA personnel to conduct the required 90-day post-deployment Yellow Ribbon events at VAMCs in various states. Conducting these events in VAMCs increases Service members' access to the broad range of health care related services across DoD and the VA. The focus of the 90-day event is the Service member's Post Deployment Health Re-Assessment and is a vital tool for identifying deployment related physical or emotional health issues. By conducting events directly at VAMCs, the Service member is introduced directly to VA health care providers at no cost, resulting in greater efficiencies and the strengthening of VA-DoD partnership at the local level.

The VA has provided a full time Liaison Officer (LNO) who provides technical expertise and guidance on VA benefits and services. The VA LNO also assists VA personnel who provide vital VA support at Yellow Ribbon events nationwide. The relationship with the VA has been identified by the National Guard and Reserve to be an invaluable asset and resource to YRRP. This relationship will continue to grow and have a positive impact on our Service members.

■ Department of Labor (DOL):

The YRRP Office works with DOL in an effort to address the needs and concerns of the Reserve and National Guard with respect to employment initiatives. YRRP's focus on helping Service members with employment falls in line with many of DOL's programs for veterans. The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) is a DOL agency that helps Veterans, Reservists, and National Guard members in securing employment and the rights and benefits associated with such, through existing programs, the coordination and merger of programs, and the implementation of new programs. Services provided reflect the changing needs of employers and the eligible Veterans' population. There are several programs that make up VETS, many of which participate in Yellow Ribbon Events to help Service members with employment concerns and issues. The YRRP Office also has a link to the DOL Web site to promote its other services and programs that apply to Service members.

■ United States Department of Agriculture (USDA):

The CfE is establishing a relationship with a consortium of Land Grant Universities through a Memorandum of Understanding with USDA. Once established, the consortium will collect, and analyze, the best practices and training materials from the Services. Additionally, the consortium will identify gaps within Yellow Ribbon curricu-

lum and develop materials to ensure required subjects are adequately covered. This consortium will also provide lessons learned and data analysis based on information obtained through the CfE.

■ Small Business Administration (SBA):

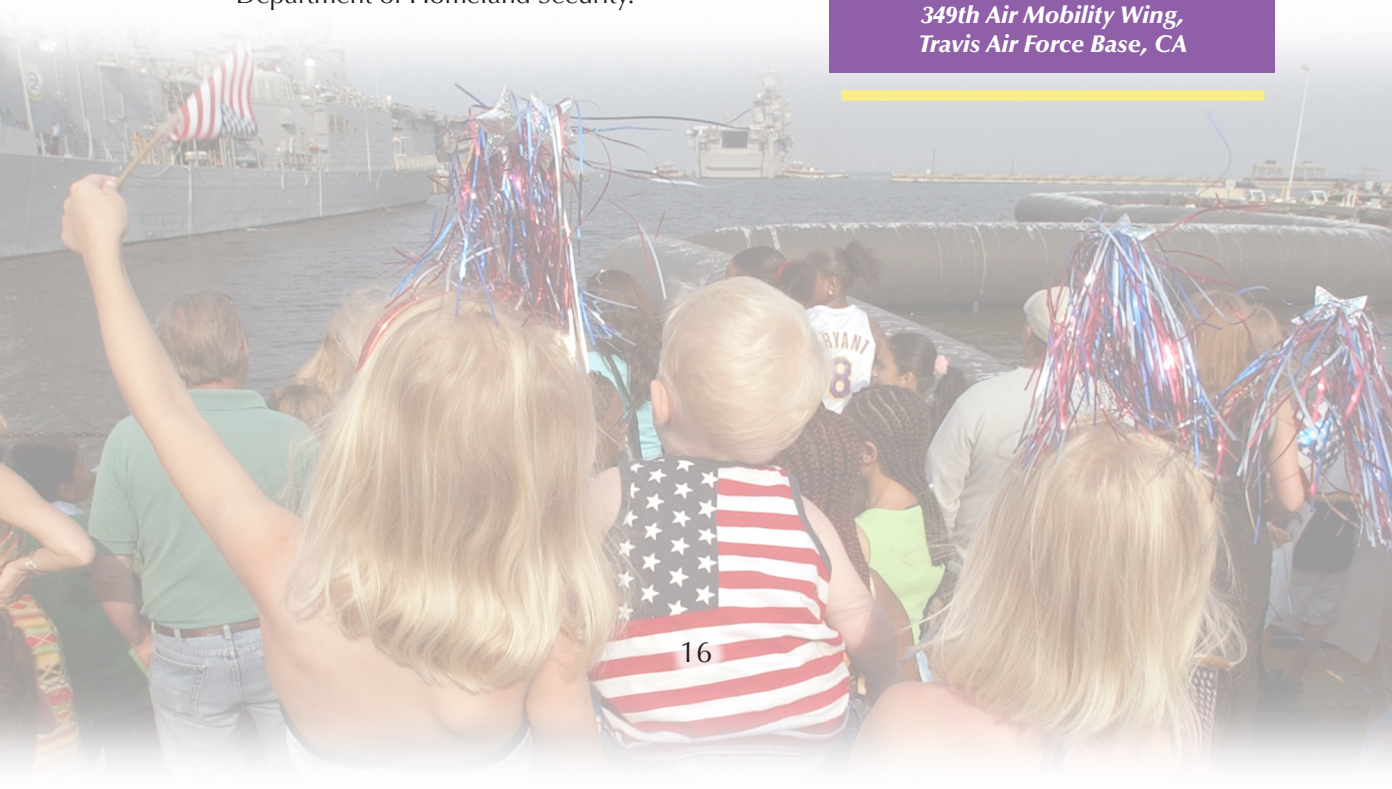
The YRRP Office, in conjunction with SBA, is executing the American Corporate Partners Program. The program matches employees from some of the largest corporations and universities in the country with Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM veterans to mentor, network and provide career counseling and entrepreneurial training through the Entrepreneurship Boot Camp for Veterans with Disabilities (EBV) program. In addition, SBA has recently entered into cooperative agreements with Syracuse University for the establishment of two new Entrepreneurial training programs specifically for Women Veterans (V-WISE), and for Reserve Component members and their families (Operation ENDURE AND GROW). SBA anticipates working with YRRP to help promote availability of these programs for Reserve Component members and their families. SBA also participates in individual Yellow Ribbon Events as requested to provide information to those Service members who may have a small business or an interest in starting one.

■ United States Coast Guard:

In October 2010, the Coast Guard assigned a Commissioned Officer to serve at the Pentagon as their LNO for YRRP. The LNO focuses on the needs of deploying, deployed, and returning Coast Guard Reservists and their families and assists with implementation of YRRP within the Coast Guard. This relationship highlights the increased interoperability between DoD and Department of Homeland Security.

"The bottom line is we're taking care of Families and we're taking care of the [Service] member."

*Col Jay Flournoy,
349th Air Mobility Wing,
Travis Air Force Base, CA*





Yellow Ribbon Program

2. Intra-departmental Coordination

■ Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR):

The YRRP Office, now aligned with ESGR, works with the National Guard and Reserve (through YRRP Service Liaisons) to ensure the ESGR message is presented at Yellow Ribbon Events. ESGR informs by educating Service members about their rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and conducts employer support programs, including informational briefings, mediation, and recognition of employers whose policies support or encourage participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

■ Military Community and Family Policy (MC&FP):

YRRP coordinates and collaborates with MC&FP to develop policy, coordinate resources and enhance services. MC&FP Joint Family Support Assistance Program staffs have teams at National Guard Joint Force Headquarters in each of the 54 states and territories that also help support YRRP efforts. The teams provide support to geographically dispersed members and families to enhance their readiness and ability to effectively cope with the nuances of a military lifestyle. MC&FP also provides its Military Family Life Consultants to lead sessions at Yellow Ribbon Events and provide one-on-one counseling to those who want it. In addition to these collaborations, MC&FP is working with the YRRP CfE to establish a relationship with Land Grant Universities to conduct analysis for YRRP. Other MC&FP resources that help support Yellow Ribbon Events include: financial and personal life counseling; specialized briefings and trainings; and Military OneSource resources.

■ Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE):

The YRRP Office consults with DCoE to collaborate and coordinate on suicide prevention and resilience as well as with their Suicide Prevention and Risk Reduction Committee. Representatives from the National Guard and Reserve also participate in these efforts, resulting in a shared knowledge of available resources.



Funding

1. Assessment of Resource Requirements and Sustainment of Yellow Ribbon Attendance

YRRP currently remains adequately resourced to carry out the mission as mandated by law. The YRRP Office continues to work with the Service YRRP Managers, Liaisons, General Counsel, OSD Comptroller, and other OSD Offices to resolve issues that impact the ability to execute funds in support of Service members and their families.

During 2010, YRRP underwent significant leadership and programmatic changes. In January, a new Executive Director was hired, followed by a Director for the CfE in April and Outreach Director in May. In July 2010, YRRP was aligned with ESGR and Individual Family Support under the new Family and Employer Programs & Policy (FEPP) Directorate as described on Page 1 of this report. Further, in FY 10 the State Program Specialist initiative that was originally designed to place a Yellow Ribbon field representative in each of the 54 states and territories was scaled back as a ten-state pilot project in order to evaluate its effectiveness prior to full implementation (this program has since been expanded to 27 locations for FY 11 as described beginning on page 3). As a result of these major changes, and the Program's short operational history, unexpended funds were returned. A new strategic vision and follow on initiatives for the Program were developed by the newly appointed YRRP leadership. The Program is in the process of developing a strategic plan which will layout a roadmap to support investment in infrastructure, systems, and initiatives for the next three to five years. This will support the long-term efficacy and viability of the Program.

Based on recent changes in law and policy developed by the YRRP Headquarters staff, it is highly possible that resource requirements along with event attendance will increase for YRRP in the near term. Specifically, due to the aforementioned passage of the "designated representative" legislation as part of NDAA 11, and the completion of the Appropriated Funding Memorandum, an increase of attendance at events is expected to occur for many of the Services. This will be particularly true for single Service members as the Program will now accommodate those supporting loved ones who are not designated as dependents. Additionally, as child care and meals become more available at events nationwide, attendance is also expected to increase. This in turn will require funding at the Service level to be maintained or increased as YRRP expands the number of Service members, family members and designated representatives who attend events.

In addition to law and policy changes, advances in the Program during FY 10 will also help to sustain or increase attendance at YRRP events. The marketing of the Program has increased both Service members and family members' attendance at events as shown in Appendix 1. Additionally, Commanders in each of the Services are now more aware of the Program and its benefits and are more apt to encourage attendance.

"The bottom line is we're taking care of Families and we're taking care of the [Service] member."

*Col Jay Flournoy, 349th
Air Mobility Wing,
Travis Air Force Base, CA*



Yellow Ribbon Program

2. Assessment of Spending Toward Joint Robust Programs

As previously mentioned, YRRP conducted the first National Conference in September 2010. This training conference brought together Service YRRP Managers, Senior Leaders, and Event Planners from across the Services. One of the results of the conference was developing more robust Joint programs throughout DoD through networking, the exchange of lessons learned, and the presentation and modeling of best practices throughout the entire Yellow Ribbon community. The lessons learned and regional networking lessons presented at the conference have already been used to increase event effectiveness.

In addition to the conference, the Program Specialist Program has also assisted in the creation of a more robust program throughout the DoD Yellow Ribbon Community. Program Specialists connect Event Planners from the National Guard and Reserve Components with available resources in their state and local areas. The Specialist Program has helped to connect Event Planners from different Services in the execution of Joint events, minimizing impact of scarce resources, and maximizing opportunities to support Service members and their families across DoD.

The YRRP CfE used FY 10 funds to develop a post-event questionnaire and AAR system that should be operational during 2011. These systems should help increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the YRRP for all of the Services through post- event lessons learned reports and post-event questionnaire metrics

3. List of Accounts

Table 1 below details the FY 10 expenditures and FY 11 planned resources for National Guard and Reserve YRRPs as resourced with Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds in the Reserve Component Military Personnel and Operations and Maintenance accounts. The YRRP Office, at the headquarters level, is resourced with baseline Operations and Maintenance, Defense-Wide funding.



Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (\$ Millions)	FY2010 Actual	FY2011 Budget Requested
MILPERS-Army National Guard	\$39,299	\$50,232
MILPERS-Army Reserve	\$20,831	\$20,964
MILPERS-Air National Guard	\$5,651	\$21,060
MILPERS-Air Force Reserve	\$7,857	\$16,949
MILPERS-Navy Reserve	\$1,053	\$4,200
MILPERS-Marine Corps Reserve	\$1,000	\$9,722
Total MILPERS Support-funding or pay costs, travel for military members to attend the pre and post deployment sessions.	\$75,691	\$123,127
O&M-Army National Guard	\$20,672	\$28,500
O&M-Army Reserve	\$28,544	\$25,000
O&M-Air National Guard	\$14,097	\$37,500
O&M-Air Force Reserve	\$2,677	\$11,700
O&M-Navy Reserve	\$2,499	\$3,137
O&M-Marine Corps Reserve	\$0.499	\$6,114
Total O&M, Guard and Reserve Support- funding for conference space, facility rentals, advertising/communication, military spouse/ dependent travel.	\$68,988	\$111,951
Total O&M, Defense-wide support-funding to support state specialist coordination, outreach services through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs regarding deployment cycle and reintegration events at 30-60-90 days, Center for Excellence assessment of Reserve and National Guard best practices throughout regions and States. (1)	\$12,960	\$24,557
TOTAL SUPPORT	\$157,639	\$259,635

MILPERS=Military Personal Appropriation-used to fund military personnel expenses.

Q&M=Operation and Maintenance Appropriation-used to fund YRP administration and events.

(1) Does not include Joint Family Assistance Support Program funding.



Yellow Ribbon Program

FY 11 Goals and Objectives

In FY 11, YRRP will continue to build on its successes by pursuing a number of objectives including publishing the Department of Defense Instruction and developing a plan to execute Joint events. These objectives and others will allow for the most efficient use of resources when conducting events.

1. The Department of Defense Instruction

The DoDI is currently going through final review. Once this review is complete, the DoDI will be signed, published, and provided to the Services. The DoDI provides guidance to the Services on what they “shall provide”, but does not specify “how” it should be done. Once published, the DoDI will create uniformity of Program delivery through the core curriculum and will formalize policy for all organizational entities within DoD. The DoDI will also enable YRRP’s supporting agencies to more readily tailor their information to support Service members and their families.

2. Joint Events

For FY 11, approximately 1,700 Yellow Ribbon Events are scheduled across the country. This level of commitment, in terms of fiscal resources and service provider support being spread thin, appears unsustainable based on feedback from YRRP Advisory Board, YRRP Conference attendees, and service providers. In addition, an increased emphasis on the role YRRP will play in terms of decreasing unemployment/underemployment must be addressed.

The YRRP Advisory Board recommended the YRRP Office develop a course of action that would: 1) define DoD’s role in planning and supporting Joint events; 2) work with the Services to develop an approach to increase the execution of Joint Yellow Ribbon Events; 3) increase access to state specific resources; and 4) review the impact of mandatory participation and report results to the Advisory Board. Additionally, this course of action will also provide a path that will meet the goals required as part of the FEPP Employment Initiative as it relates to YRRP.

Conclusion

YRRP continues to work diligently to enhance and improve the Program by finding new and innovative ways to communicate and deliver information to Service members and their families. In addition, the Program has also placed more emphasis on Service collaboration to better serve Service members and their families. These efforts provide the foundation for the Program’s growth and achieving its mission to help, support, and ultimately increase the readiness of Service and family members throughout the deployment cycle.

YRRP has made a difference in the lives of thousands of our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and their families. Continuing support from Congress, the Military Departments, the National Guard and Reserve, Federal agencies, non-governmental agencies, and state and local partners will ensure our National Guard and Reserve Service members and their families will remain strong and ready!

DoD YRRP Advisory Board Composition

The USD(P&R) serves as the Chair of the Board and according to Section 582 (e) of NDAA FY 08 Public Law 110-181, the membership includes the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs(ASD(RA)), the Director of the Army National Guard, the Director of the Air National Guard, Chief of the Army Reserve, Chief of the Navy Reserve, Commander, Marine Forces Reserve, Chief of the Air Force Reserve, an Adjutant General (Under Title 10 of USC) on a rotational basis as determined by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the ASD(RA). Additional members are the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs; the Chief, National Guard Bureau; the Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor; the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military and Community Family Policy; Assistant Secretaries of the Military Departments for Manpower and Reserve Affairs; Assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff for Guard and Reserve Matters; the Executive Director, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve; and the Associate Administrator for Veterans Business Development, U.S. Small Business Administration.

Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs

Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program Advisory Board

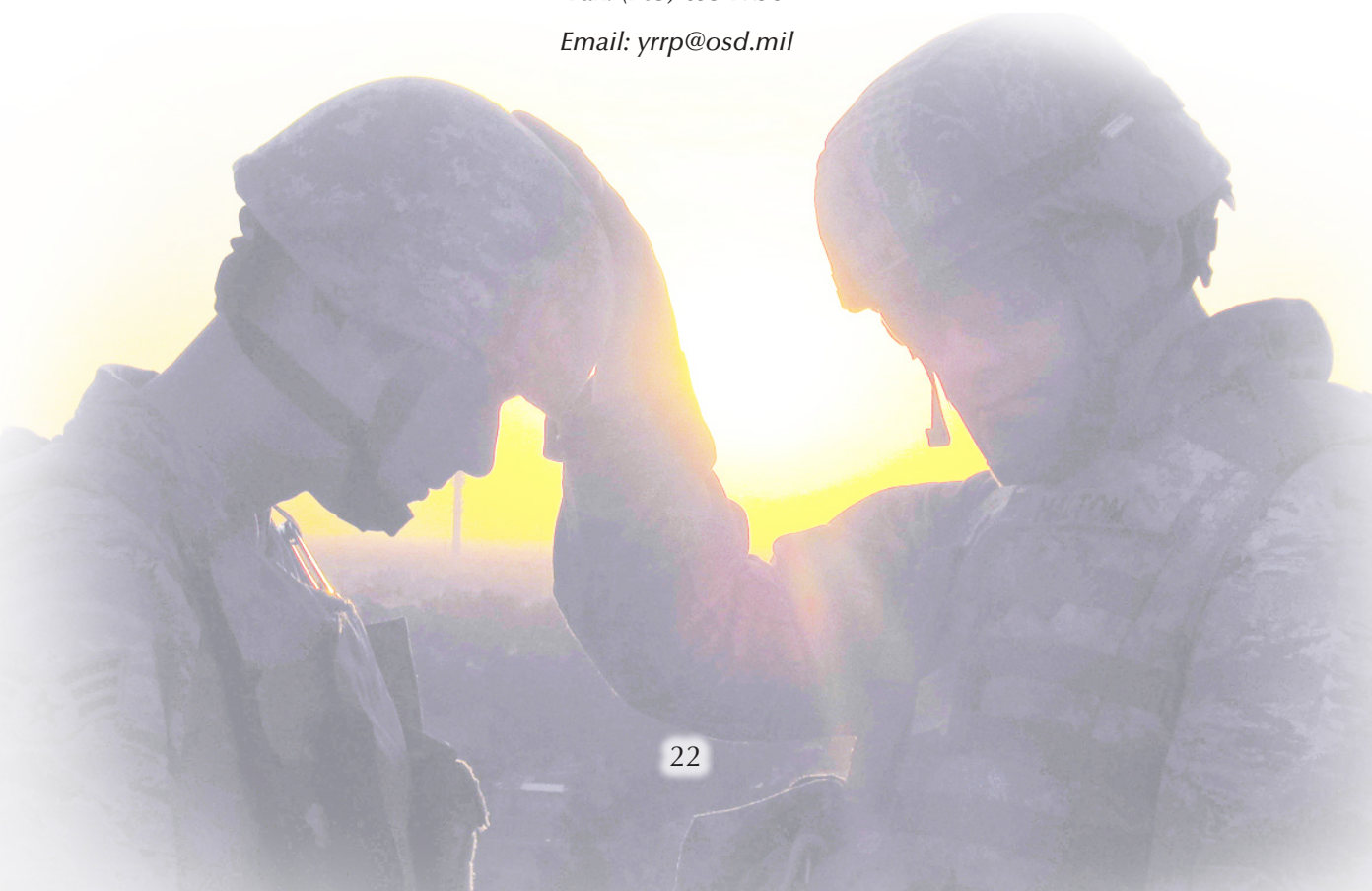
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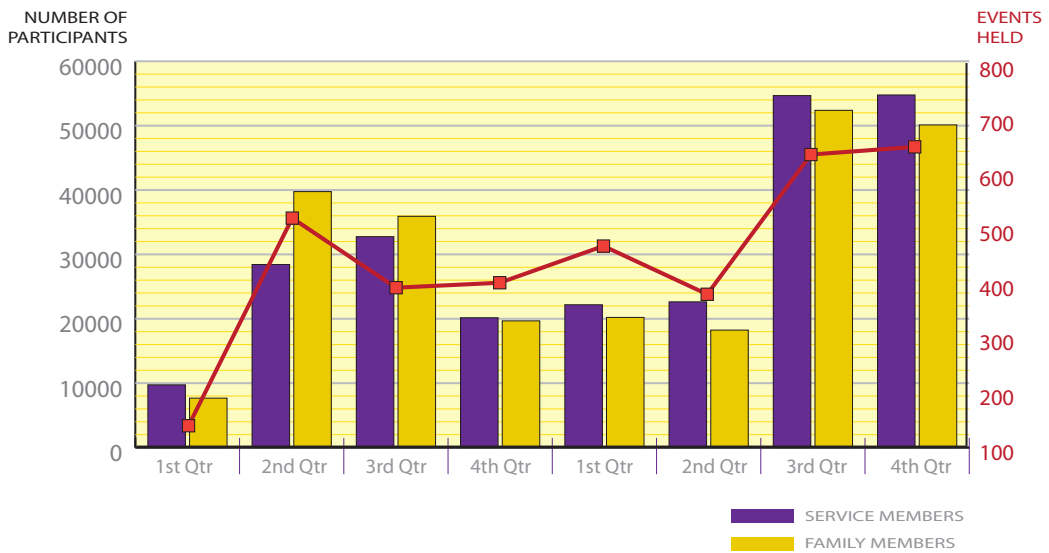
Yellow Ribbon Program

Appendix 1 – YRRP Participation Charts

Reserve Active Population versus Yellow Ribbon Participation

	2009		2010	
Individuals	Active Population	Yellow Ribbon Participants	Active Population	Yellow Ribbon Participants
Service Members	149,683	103,021	89,427	186,000
Family Members	N/A	91,101	N/A	176,666
Total	149,683	194,122	89,427	362,666

Yellow Ribbon Program Events and Participation



Appendix 2

Yellow Ribbon Program Conference

After Action Report Executive Summary

The Yellow Ribbon (YR) Program Conference, supporting the requirement of Public Law 110-181, was planned and conducted with input from each of the Reserve Components. The theme of the conference was “Good to GREAT” and was held September 14-16, 2010 in Florida at the Orlando World Center Marriott.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE CONFERENCE:

1. Conference objectives were achieved based on survey results
2. Regional and Service specific networking and collaboration was accomplished
3. Based on post survey comments, the event was well received by the participants - They expressed a desire to hold events yearly

1.1 BUDGET

The YRP staff budgeted \$1.6 million for the conference. The actual cost was 64% of the estimated cost, with the breakout as follows:

Item	Estimate	Actual Cost
Sleeping Rooms	\$302,400	\$254,664
Facility Charge	\$286,046	\$191,015
Supplies, Materials and Services	\$311,554	\$315,620
Travel/Pier Diem (AFR travel/ per diem not included in actual costs)	\$700,000	\$261,330
TOTALs	\$1,600,000	\$1,022,630



Yellow Ribbon Program

1.2 PARTICIPANTS

Conference participants included senior military policy makers, Guard and Reserve Component General and Flag Officers, Senior Executive Service leadership, Service YR Program Managers, Event Planners, service provider representatives, and the YRP staff. The total attendance at the conference was 621 as follows:

National Guard: 110	Navy Reserve: 146	OSD RA Staff: 25
Army Reserve: 101	Air Force Reserve: 10	Resource Fair Providers: 34
Marine Corps Reserve: 88	Coast Guard Reserve: 3	Support Staff: 11

1.3 CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

Five objectives were established for the YR conference as follows:

- Model interactive training and presentations
- Exposure to a cadre of professional quality speakers
- Exchange of best practices on a state, regional and Service-wide basis
- Present concepts that lead to efficient use of resources
- Present tools and resources for use in YR Events

CONFERENCE SESSIONS THAT MET OBJECTIVES

Through the general and breakout sessions, the conference met the established objectives as indicated in the table below:

Objectives	Model Interactive Behavior	Exposure to high quality speakers	Exchange of best practices	Present concepts that lead to efficient use of resources	Showcase tools and resources for YRP events
Percentage met	83%	86%	84%	88%	100%

*Findings based on attendee feedback

AREAS THAT WENT WELL

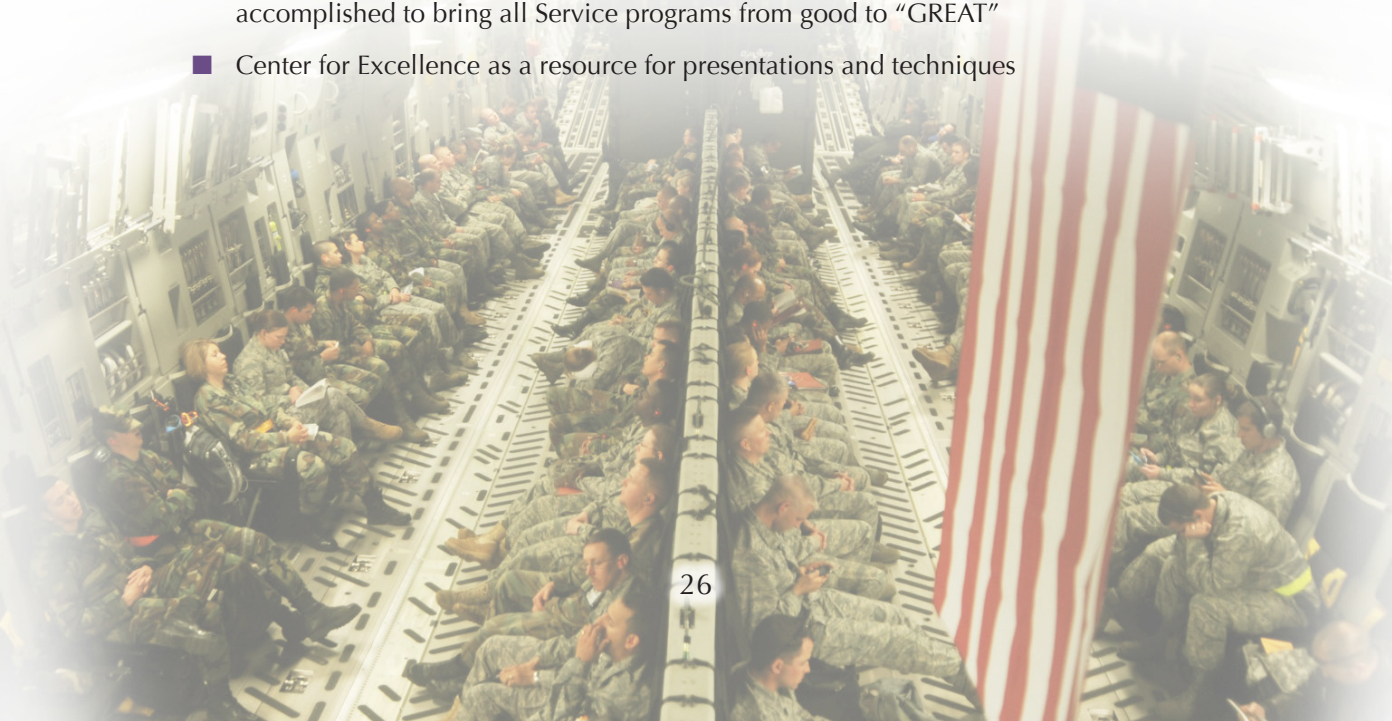
- Feedback received from event planners and speakers was overwhelmingly positive
- Event was seen as well organized
- Networking at regional level was accomplished
- Best practices and lessons learned were captured for distribution
- Conference attendees stated their individual objectives were largely met

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Ensure all speakers are engaging and dynamic
- Coordinate meal service to not interfere with speaker
- Daily schedule too long
- Final conference questionnaire too lengthy
- Attendees wanted the opportunity to participate in additional breakout sessions
- Attendees desired to have more time collaborating in regional breakout sessions

1.4 MAJOR DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Appropriated funding (APF) limitations
- Joint YR Events are desired
- Commanders' support at the unit level is critical for attendance at YR Events
- Training on how to fund and host Joint Events should be part of the next conference
- Regional connections, collaboration, training, and resource sharing must be accomplished to bring all Service programs from good to "GREAT"
- Center for Excellence as a resource for presentations and techniques





Yellow Ribbon Program

POST-CONFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE QUICKLOOK

- Total Event Planner Respondents: 342
- Overall conference questions:
 - Venue: most attendees responded facilities were “very good”
 - Length of Conference: most were satisfied; some felt it was too long
- Topics the audience would have liked additional information on:
 - Service-specific and region specific information
 - Outreach (marketing and communications)
- As a result of the conference respondents had better knowledge of the following:
 - Center for Excellence
 - Event Planning Tool
- As a result of the conference attendees felt they would be better able to:
 - Build working relationships with other Event Planners
 - Be more effective as an Event Planner
 - Find and use interactive material for YR Events
 - Create relationships with service providers to support YR Events
- As a result of the conference attendees in general did not feel more confident in:
 - Ability to conduct Joint multi-service events
 - Conduct interactive events with required resources for each participant
- Attendees overall felt that:
 - Material presented will help in their job as an Event Planner
 - Conference was interactive and engaging
 - They desire to attend future conferences

1.5 OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

- YRP Office must continue to monitor and champion the appropriated funding legislative change
- Regions should collaborate to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their YR programs
- DoD should rapidly deploy YRP Center for Excellence resource library
- YRP Office must continue discussions regarding post-OCO funding and Joint Events
- Future conferences should highlight the Service's best practices and turn-key materials
- Conduct national conference on annual basis





