

NHMRC Webinar

Join Us!

The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC) will host a webinar entitled, **“Developing Partnerships with the Military to Serve National Guard Members and their Families”** on **Thursday, July 29, 2010, from 1:00 – 2:30pm (Eastern Daylight Time).**

Data shows that more than half of National Guard and Reserve members are married, and more than 40 percent are engaged in overseas military operations. These individuals face unique challenges to their marriages, such as deployment and combat stress. Perhaps as a result of this, servicemen and women appear to have one of the highest divorce rates of any group in the nation. Speakers at this webinar will describe the marriage and relationship education services currently provided by the National Guard to its members and discuss how Marriage and Relationship Education Program providers across the country can reach out to their state National Guard chapters to form partnerships to provide MRE to National Guard members and their families.

- **Rico Figueroa, Colorado Healthy Marriage Project**, will discuss how his program is working with National Guard families, how the partnership was fostered, and offer advice for MRE programs across the country on how to reach out to the National Guard. Mr. Figueroa has worked for non-profits and taught relationship workshops for more than 15 years. He joined the Colorado Healthy Marriage Project in 2007 where he manages facilitators, plans events, and engages in outreach to businesses, community organizations, and the military.
- **Col. Robert Hicks, Alabama National Guard Joint Force State Support Chaplain**, will describe the services his program provides to National Guard families, as well as the benefits of a partnership that was established between the Alabama National Guard and the Alabama Community Healthy Marriage Initiative. Col. Hicks administers all chaplain services for 14,000 Army and Air National Guardsmen. His 31- year career includes deployments to Desert Storm, Panama, the Mediterranean and Middle-East. More recently he served as Task Force Chaplain for Plaquemine Parish, Louisiana during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Colonel Hicks holds academic degrees in Psychology (Bachelor of Arts, Emporia State University) Theology (Masters and Doctorate, Dallas Theological Seminary) and National Security Studies (Masters, Public Administration, Troy University). He is adjunct professor of History at Belhaven College, and is considered a subject matter expert in Religious Extremism and Traumatic Crisis Response.
- **Patricia Randich-Dumas, Military Family Life Consultant, Alabama National Guard Joint Family Assistance Program**, will describe how the partnership between the Alabama Community Healthy Marriage Initiative and the state National Guard chapter was initiated, current successes and challenges with the relationship, and how MRE programs across the country can best reach out to local National Guard chapters. Ms. Dumas has been a social worker for 15 years, and has worked for the past three years with military families through the Joint Family Support Assistance Program as a Military Family Life Consultant at the Alabama National Guard. Her experience also spans trauma

recovery, hospice and bereavement care and chronic mental illness issues for patients and caregivers. Her volunteer service includes the NASW, serving as the President-Elect of the Alabama Chapter, VistaCare Hospice and the Church of the Holy Spirit. Ms. Dumas holds a Bachelors degree in Women's' Studies and Sociology from University of Massachusetts at Boston and a Masters degree in Clinical Social Work from Boston College.

- **Rich Batten, Program Manager, National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (NHMRC)**, will moderate this session. Mr. Batten has more than 20 years of experience as a collaborative and strategic leader committed to improving the well being of marriages, families and communities. Most recently, he served as a Family and Fatherhood Specialist with the Colorado Department of Human Services. In this role, he developed collaborative relationships between healthy marriage programs, domestic violence programs, fatherhood programs, child welfare, child support enforcement, and the Department of Corrections. Batten has been a Certified Family Life Educator since 1998 and is an experienced instructor of numerous marriage and parenting curriculums. He earned a Master of Theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a Master of Education from Loyola University in Chicago.

Participating in the Webinar

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