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#### A Note From the Vermont State Family Program Director



On page 9 in this issue is the flyer for our upcoming annual benefit hockey game on 16 March 2019. This event started in March of 2004 and was supposed to be a one-time event. Here we are 16 years later still going strong! The beneficiary of the proceeds from this game went to the Essex Lions Club's Veterans Memorial Park project at the five corners, Essex Junction. This event was able to raise the funds needed to complete the project and the Veterans Memorial Park was created as a permanent tribute to those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in service for our country.

Later, the hockey games proceeds went to "benefit the families of deployed soldiers who are serving overseas in the global war on terrorism". Now the proceeds are divided equally to benefit the VTNG Charitable Foundation and the Vermont Police Association-two very worthwhile organizations that assist our "defenders" (VTNG members) and "enforcers" (local and state police) in many different ways.

We also put on this event for our families as a way to come together, cheer on the Green Mountain Boys and/or our first responders. We want our spectators to have fun, get a hug from CHAMP and enjoy the intermission games.

The Green Mountain Chorus, Vermont's oldest barbershop chorus, will sing the National Anthem and Gold Bless America this year. This group is a crowd pleaser whenever they perform. In addition to CHAMP, we will have the Vermont State Police K-9 team as well as our traditional bag pipers. Games, silent auction items and concessions are also a part of the festivities.

Again, this event is put

on for our families, please come out and enjoy an evening of fun and good hockey. You may purchase tickets online at www. VTNGCF.org for just \$5.00 a ticket or purchase them at the door on game day. The doors open at 5:00pm and the puck drops at 6:00pm. See our flyer for more details. Hope to see you all there!





### Airman and Family Readiness Manager



Hello from the Airman and Family Readiness Office.

Hard to believe it is March! Recently I found that March is (unofficially) National Nutrition Month. It is designed to focus attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Paying attention to eating and exercise habits, and keeping fit and healthy is all part of our goal to "Be Ready"! There are many resources out there for assistance with weight management and fitness management. Consider partnering with a Military OneSource Health and Wellness Coaching Program coach. The Health and Wellness Coaching Program is a free resource for eligible individuals who wish to improve their health and overall well-being. www.militaryonesource.mil Here's to improving our health habits this spring!

Mark your calendars...Saturday April 13 we will be having an Easter Egg hunt here on base from 10-12. The egg hunt will be separated into 3 age groups. Each child will get

a goodie bag, and there will be 2 special "Golden Eggs" per age group to find as well for a special prize. The Easter Bunny will be here so there will be photo opportunities, and a DJ will be spinning the tunes! This event is weather permitting. And, in case you didn't know.... Daylight savings starts on Sunday March 10th so "spring ahead" your clocks an hour. March 20th is the first day of spring!!

Mary Mahoney, Civ 158th FW VTANG The Green Mountain Boys Airman and Family Program Manager mary.k.mahoney13.civ@mail.mil <mailto:mary.k.mahoney13.civ@mail.mil> (802)652-8035- Office (802)238-8645-Cell



MAY

#### Kitchen Spoons & Combat Boots

March 6, 2019 at 7pm – Rock Your Tax Season

Do you understand the new tax law? Are you concerned that it will affect your 2018 return? Do you know if you are eligible to file for free or how to best prepare? Come join us on Wednesday, March 6 at 7pm to educate yourself on the 2018 tax reform. We will also be covering effective preparation for filing, tax-filing tips for 2019, and resources for tax preparation services with special guest speaker, Susan Kelley-Outten, Personal Financial Counselor.

Not sure if you can make it? Don't worry, we will be having a virtual lunch and learn: Thursday, March 14 12:00pm-1:00pm

And don't forget to join us on Wednesday, April 3 where we will be honoring April as Month of the Military Child with a webinar focus on how to Revitalize your Relationship with Youth: Bringing them closer when they are backing away. This virtual opportunity is open to all!

Check us out online at: http://www.ngfamily.vt.gov/ ks\_and\_cb\_page.html



Wednesday, May 1 TBD

KITCHEN SPOONS

To join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone: https://beaconhealthoptions.webex.com/join/MCaulfield (please utilize the "chat box" to be heard) To dial in using your phone: (877) 668-4493 // Access Code: 641528295 Questions? Call:

Candice Bryan-Broe at 802-338-3652 | Michaela LaCoss at 802-338-4317 | Marcie Caulfield at 802-338-3164

March 2019

# Military OneSource

#### Tax Season is Upon Us

It is that time of the year again, and if there is good news to be had, it is that you have access to special assistance as a member of the military community in getting your taxes in order.

Service members and their families have earned something that few others have — easy and free guidance on preparing and filing taxes through MilTax, Military OneSource tax services. MilTax provides convenient access to military tax counselors and easy-to-use tax preparation and filing software, which is guaranteed for 100% accuracy. Use these special resources to help you get an early start on your taxes.

#### Getting ahead of – and a hand on – your taxes

You need to file your taxes by April 15, unless you file for an extension. Whether you use MilTax or do it yourself, here are some steps to make tax filing simple.

- Get an early start.
- Gather the documents and items you will need for tax preparation.
- Make a list of questions to ask tax counselors.
- Understand there is free tax preparation.
- Be aware of tax scams.

Get started on your taxes now by visiting www.militaryonesource.mil or call 800-342-9647 to speak with a trained MilTax consultant for military-specific information regarding your tax questions — for free.

Marcie Caulfield Office: (802)-338-3164 Cell: (802)-233-9694 email: marcie.caulfield@militaryonesource.com





While your service member is packing their baby wipes & bug spray for JRTC, how will you be preparing you and your family

for this extended separation? There are ways that you can help prepare your family so that the time at JRTC will be less stressful.

#### Make sure your

service member has informed their employer about the extended military training. "Your SM has the right to be reemployed in their civilian job if they leave that job to perform service in the uniformed service"...but they must ensure that their employer is given advanced written or verbal notice of this service.

#### • Talk to your family

about Operations Security (OPSEC). OPSEC is basically those things that we do to prevent or limit the ability of an adversary to gather information on us. Children should also be aware of OPSEC. Here is a YouTube video that may help https://youtu.be/ nQZyHOXkogU

### Family Readiness Support Assistant

• Set up auto-pay for any recurring bills or make sure you have access to paying your service member's bill (ie. Banking passwords, checkbooks, etc.) This is the easiest way to make sure that you bills will be paid while your soldier is at JRTC. There is a budgeting worksheet that you can find www.MilitaryOneSource.mil

#### • Review and update

contact info and important documents. Yes, yes, this is super boring, but trust me if there is an emergency you will be very happy that you did this. Store all original documents in one SECURE location and make copies to have easily on hand. In my experience having an Emergency Binder is your best friend. Keep your copies in a 1.5 or 2 inch binder and have them sectioned by dependent (one section for the service member, a second for the spouse, and a section for each kiddo). Things you may want to consider keeping copies of in this binder: birth certificates, social security cards, info about your home, vehicles, pets and medical records.

**Remember,** your local Family Assistance Specialist, Family Readiness Group Leadership and the Family Programs Office will also have access to resource materials that you may find useful during this time. Not sure who to contact? Visit http://www.ngfamily. vt.gov/ for more contact info. Good Luck during JRTC!

Candice Bryan-Broe Office: (802)-338-3652 Cell: (802)-316-6342 email: candice.e.broe.ctr@msail.mil





Record your volunteer hours in JSS or email them to candice.e.broe.ctr@mail. mil. Send them in by the last day of each month.

Check us out on Facebook! https://www.facebook.com/ FamilyReadinessVTARNG

# Thoughts From Our State Youth Coordinator



Did you know that in Vermont there are approximately 0.2145 military dependent youth per square mile. This makes it likely that they are the only military kid in their class, if not in their entire grade (for our larger towns & cities), or school. Combine this with the fact that we live in a very rural state, and some of these kids are often not understood, undervalued, and misrepresented.

The Vermont community at large has an integral role to the success of our military kiddos. Organizations, schools & educators, medical professionals, private & public enterprises, and individuals alike are critical in supporting the positive growth of the military dependent youth of VT. Remember the child did not make the choice to be in the military. Are they proud to be a military child–YES! And they should be. Their mother, father, or both are protecting our freedoms as a citizen of VT and the United States of America. Community partners throughout VT and beyond take part in giving discounts and free offerings for service members and their families.

It would be remiss to not highlight one of these organizations; ECHO Leahy Center. Through their Open Door Program, and a VERY generous & anonymous donor, have provided Vermont National Guard (VTNG) families the opportunity of having a FREE family membership. These memberships are valid for 12 months and have some terrific benefits. Beyond the superbly fun & educational exhibits, discounts on camps & other specialized activities happening at ECHO being a member gains you free, or discounted entry to over 325 science museums across the country.

A few weeks ago VTNG Family Programs was invited down to the ECHO Leahy Center, on the waterfront, in downtown Burlington to receive more than two-hundred (200) ECHO passes which will be helping VTNG Families with much needed family time and great educational exhibits. A big shout out to ECHO Leahy Center and the community member that funds access for VTNG families. \*\*To request an ECHO Leahy Center Membership see the flyer inside this newsletter. April is Month of the Military Child (MOMC) nationwide. This is especially so in Vermont.

There are several opportunities to show your support for the military youth: I) MOMC Poetry Contest via Military Kids Vermont (MKVT). This is happening now, leading up to April and convenes at the VT Statehouse on Tuesday 2 April 2019 where winners are announaced. (See attached flyer for more details) **2)** Tuesday 2 April 2019 from 0915-1200 (9:15a-Noon) Month of the Military Child Celebration at the VT Statehouse in Montpelier. This is a terrific event; where we join our state legislators on the house floor for the passing of a House Concurrent Resolution and then join Governor Scott for the signing of a Governor's Proclamation; both honoring the military kids of VT.

 Friday 12 April 2019 is Purple Up Day! Join me on this day in celebrating our Military Kids and wear purple, then take a photo and put up on social media with the #MOMC #MilitaryBRAT #GuardKidsRock
 MKVT Partner Day Camp 22-25 April 2019. Free for all Military Youth of Vermont.

\*For additional information or to register for any of the above contact: Brian Stoudnour-contact information is in the signature block



# **Upcoming Programs & Events:**

• 2 April 2019 (0915-1200hrs): Month of the Military Child VT Statehouse Event

• 22-25 April 2019: Spring Break Partner Day Camp-30 Spots available-Registration Opens 4 March 2019

Brian Stoudnour Lead Child & Youth Program Coordinator- Contractor O: 802-338-3369 | M: 802-310-6745 | brian.r.stoudnour.ctr@mail.mil

Download the "ARNG CYS" Mobile App for Apple & Android!



Check us out on Facebook! https://www.facebook.com/VTNGCYP/

# Citizen Soldier For Life - Career Readiness



Dear Vermont National Guard Members and Families, We are deep into winter now but before you know it the spring hiring push will be here. I hope all of our VTNG family members that are looking for work are having some success. This month, I want to bring to you a suggestion

for your resume that will help with getting your resume noticed and through some of the automated systems out there:

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Leadership: Supervisory Time Management, Planning
- Administrative Support
- Reports Management
- Cross Training &
- Mentoring
- Records Management
- Vendor Management
  Scheduling & Tracking

Investigations

Research &

 Inventory & Quality Control

Customer Focused

Budgeting

- Employee Time Cards
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Conflict Resolution
- Compliance & Policy Implementation
- Maintenance/ Technical Skill
- Marketing

The above "Professional Skills" section is useful in two major ways. It gives you an opportunity to tailor the resume to the job description. Taking the 15 to 20 minutes to do this will not only get you through automated systems, but also allow for a clean list in a "fast-to-scan" format for anyone reviewing your resume. Something to be cognizant of is that HR specialists and managers often do not have time to fully read the resume front to back when selecting candidates if the pool of candidates is a large one. Simplifying your skills into a list such as this provides quick access to what makes you stand apart. Having trouble coming up with some skills? Look for action verbs (ed- es words) in the job listing such as managed or performed, these will lead you to the desired skills to pull from, as the duties come directly after these words. Here is an example:

• Managed and Scheduled employee shifts based on projects or workflow.

Nicholas A. Thomas ~ Citizen Soldier for Life ~ Career Readiness Counselor Office: (802) 338-3709 | Cell: (802) 310-5391 | Nicholas.a.thomas71.ctr@mail.mil

# Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)



**March 2019 Reminders** from Vermont Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and the National Guard Employment Support Program

**Notice to your employer.** While Annual Training may still be a few months away, you MUST notify your employer of all of your known training dates. In addition to being sure you are protected by the law, it's just a professional courtesy to keep your boss informed, since he or she has to figure out how get your job done while you are away.

Northeast Kingdom Veterans Summit. To be held on Saturday, 9 March 2019, at Northern Vermont University at Johnson. More information and free registration at: https://www.northernvermont.edu/ about/news-events/events/veterans-summit

- **Job Fair Season** is here! The following are known dates for Spring Career Fairs:
- 6 Mar Vermont Tech Spring Internship and Career Fair 10-2 SHAPE Gym
- 18 Mar Castleton Univ. Spring Job & Graduate School Fair 11:30 2:00 Spartan Athl. Complex
- 20 Mar UVM Career & Intern Fair 12:00-4:00 Davis Center
- 25 Mar Champlain College 1:30-4:30 Argosy Gym
- 27 Mar Norwich University 10:00-3:00 Plumley Armory
- VT Department of Labor Rutland Job Fair Actual date and location TBD

If you are searching for a job, or trying to find a better job, and want some help with any part of the process, contact us at 802-338-4190. (You may also contact Nick Thomas, Citizen Soldier For Life (CSFL) Counselor at Camp Johnson at: 802-310-5391.)

The nomination season for the Freedom Awards is now closed, however, the starting point to consider your boss for a Freedom Award is by nominating your boss for an ESGR Patriot Award. It only takes two minutes online and is a great way to say "thanks" for the support you get from your boss, even if its just not giving you a hassle about your service time. (And don't forget that spouses can also request one for their employer!) Go to: https://esgr.mil/Service-Members-Family/ Nominate-your-Employer

Need help with your employer, looking for work, or have another question? As always, call us with any employmentrelated question at 802-338-4187 or 802-338-4190.



# Family Assistance Center



**Annual Training** is quickly approaching, now would be a good time to start preparing as this year's training will be longer. As always there are a few things that should be completed prior to your departure as far as not only preparing yourselves, but also your families.

1. **Financial:** Make sure that if you are a single Soldier that you have a family member mother, father, sister brother who is going to assist in your financial responsibilities; i.e. making sure that your bills are paid or that your automatic payments are coming out at the appropriate time. If you are a married Soldier make sure that you, and your spouse talk about the finances and that your approace has access to all accounts to answer payments.



talk about the finances and that your spouse has access to all accounts to ensure payments can be made on your behalf. Also, knowing that training is coming now would be a good time to start setting money aside to cover any incidentals that might come up upon your return. Please remember that we do have Personal Financial Counselor Susan Kelley-Outten on staff if you would like to speak to her in regards to budget planning.

2. **Pet Care:** If you have pets that will need care during your absence make sure that you have someone that is dependable, and willing to care for your beloved pet. Make sure the sitter has plenty of food, and has the emergency contact for the vet who cares for your pet in case of an emergency, and of course knows where all their favorite toys are! If you are not able to find someone to watch your pet begin looking into having them boarded at your local vet. If that is the case then make sure that you get an estimate of how much the boarding costs will be.

3. **Emergency Contact information:** This task should have been completed at your recent SRC. If it was not completed please make sure that you contact Senior Family Readiness Support Assistant Candice Bryan – Broe to ensure that they have a POC on file for you. Please remember that all Soldiers are required to have an Emergency POC and cannot opt out. When wellness calls are made during training only your POC can inform the FRG that they do not wish to be contacted for the remainder of the training.

This can be a hectic time for all but by completing these simple tasks prior to departure can help relieve the stress of the training not only on you, but your families as well.

Kamryn Heidtmann ~ Office: (802)-338-4320 ~ Cell: (802)-338-0588 ~ email: kamryn.l.heidtmann.ctr@mail.mil

#### Vermont Veterans Outreach



Vermont Veteran Earns Successful Outcome

Vermont Veterans Outreach (VVO) has been working with US Army veteran, Odale Cress for nearly 4 years. Odale first made contact with Vermont Veterans Outreach in June of 2015. The veteran and her 13 year old son, Milo, were living in a tent at a local campground. Former Vermont Veterans Outreach specialist, Fran Wolford, began to work with her after receiving a referral from Pathways - an invaluable community partner who assist Homeless veterans struggling with mental illness or other life challenges. Odale was able to secure housing but



needed help with first and last month's rental deposit, in addition to a security deposit. Veteran Service Organizations such as Blue Star Mothers, Friends of Veterans and War Veterans Assistance Group, provided much needed assistance to the Army veteran. After finding a place to live for her family of two, VVO helped Odale start to connect to other services, such as the Office of Veterans Affairs, and VA's Vocational Rehabilitation programs which gave her the ability to pursue her Master's Degree at Goddard College, Vermont. The Care Package Story Project (pictures below) was created as part of her graduate thesis. When I recently spoke to Odale she said, "I feel very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to go back to school. I've had help from a lot of terrific people in getting here – help from both individuals and organizations alike."

If you or someone you know needs help with issues mentioned above, please call our VT Military & Family Support Center at (888)-607-8773.

Rick Daigle Vermont Veteran Outreach Specialist Office: (802)-338-4313 Cell: (802)-881-6680 email: richard.j.daigle10.ctr@mail.mil



# **Personal Financial Services**



Being able to handle an unexpected financial expense is an important component of financial wellbeing. A car repair, furnace break down, family health emergency, or sudden job loss can cause serious financial damage if we are not prepared for it. Being able to save for life's unexpected events is important because while we don't know what will happen, we can be sure that something will.

These are lots of ways to create an emergency or rainy day fund. Here are just a few ideas:

• **High Yield Savings Accounts** are a great place to park your cash. It's easy to access your money but pays much better rates of return than regular savings accounts. The current national average for regular savings accounts is just .09% while high yield savings ac-

counts are paying up to 2.4%.

• A Digital Savings App may be a perfect solution for you, if you are comfortable using app technology. You can use this type of account even if you are only able to save very small amounts at a time. Some apps will let you round up your debit card purchases and deposit the difference into a savings account, others move a few dollars a week into an account. Balances grow slowly but you may not even notice it's happening.

• If you are deployed to an eligible combat zone and serve there for more than 30 consecutive days or at least one day a month for three consecutive months, you are eligible to participate in the Savings Deposit Program. You can save up to \$10,000 with a guaranteed rate of return of 10%! Interest continues to accrue while you are in a combat zone and for 90 days after you leave.

How much should you put into a savings account? If you currently have no savings, start with a small goal, like \$500, then move up to \$1000. Over time, accumulating 3-6 months worth of expenses is ideal. If you need to use some of your money, replenish it so that it is there for the next time you need it.

If you are interested in any of these options, check out the links at: http://www.ngfamily.vt.gov/financial-services.html or call Susan Kelley-Outten at 802-318-2507 or email at susan.kelley-outten.ctr@mail.mil.

#### VTARNG State Chaplain



I Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV) "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

I had the opportunity to attend the Strong Bonds Instructor Training course in Nashville, TN from Feb 4-8. While I am certified in a number of Strong Bonds materials, "Created for Connection" in my opinion is the best one because the research stresses the importance of connection. The research reveals that the first and foremost instinct of humans is neither sex nor aggression. It is to seek contact and comforting connection.

The drive to bond is innate, not learned. When a mother and father hold their newborn daughter or son for the first time, there is an instant bond and connection that lasts a lifetime. When a person holds a newborn close, the baby experiences peace, security, love, and connection. As the child grows, the parents continue to connect with the child in different ways, and the child continues to experience the same peace, security, and love as when she or he was an infant.

As adults, we still experience peace, security, and love through connection and when that connection is broken through arguments abuse trauma and separation and etc. then the relationship between two

arguments, abuse, trauma, and separation and etc., then the relationship between two people begins to weaken. If the connection is not repaired, then the couple continues to drift away from each other, till the connection is completely lost.

Once this happens, people go their own ways.

Therefore, let us continue to seek ways to connect with our spouses, significant others and children. Let us use texts, emails, cards, phone calls, kindness, patience, humility, and lots of others ways to connect with each other and remain connected despite the problems. If you are struggling to connect because of issues, please seek help. Remember the words of Mother Teresa, "If you want to change the world, go home and love your family."

CH (LTC) Brett Charsky C: 315-481-0419 brett.e.charsky.mil@mail.mil

If you want to change the world, go home and love your family.



# "This is Our Land" Poetry Contest

April is the Month of the Military Child. Military Kids Vermont (MKVT) invites you to participate in the "This is Our Land" Poetry Contest.

\*\*All poetry must incorporate the meaning of patriotism and the beauty of America.\*\*

Entry Rules:

-Open to ALL youth 5-18yo **\*\*no military affiliation required \*\*** -One submission only per youth -Must incorporate "This is Our Land" -the meaning of patriotism and the beauty of America **Deadline for submission:** Entries must be postmarked by March 22nd, 2019 **Send or email your Poetry to:** MILITARY KIDS VERMONT, ATTN: MOMC Poetry Contest C/O The YMCA - Katelyn Irwin 266 College Street Burlington, VT 05401

Or email to: kirwin@gbymca.org

# Prizes & recognition

-Prizes will be awarded to 1<sup>st</sup> place winners in the following school grade/equivalent groupings: K-2, 3-5, 6-8 & 9-12

-All participants are invited to join us on April 2nd, 2019 from 9:30am-12:00pm at the Vermont Statehouse to recognize and honor the April as Month of the Military Child



Tuesday 2 April 2019 from 0915-1200 Vermont Statehouse 115 Statehouse St., Montpelier





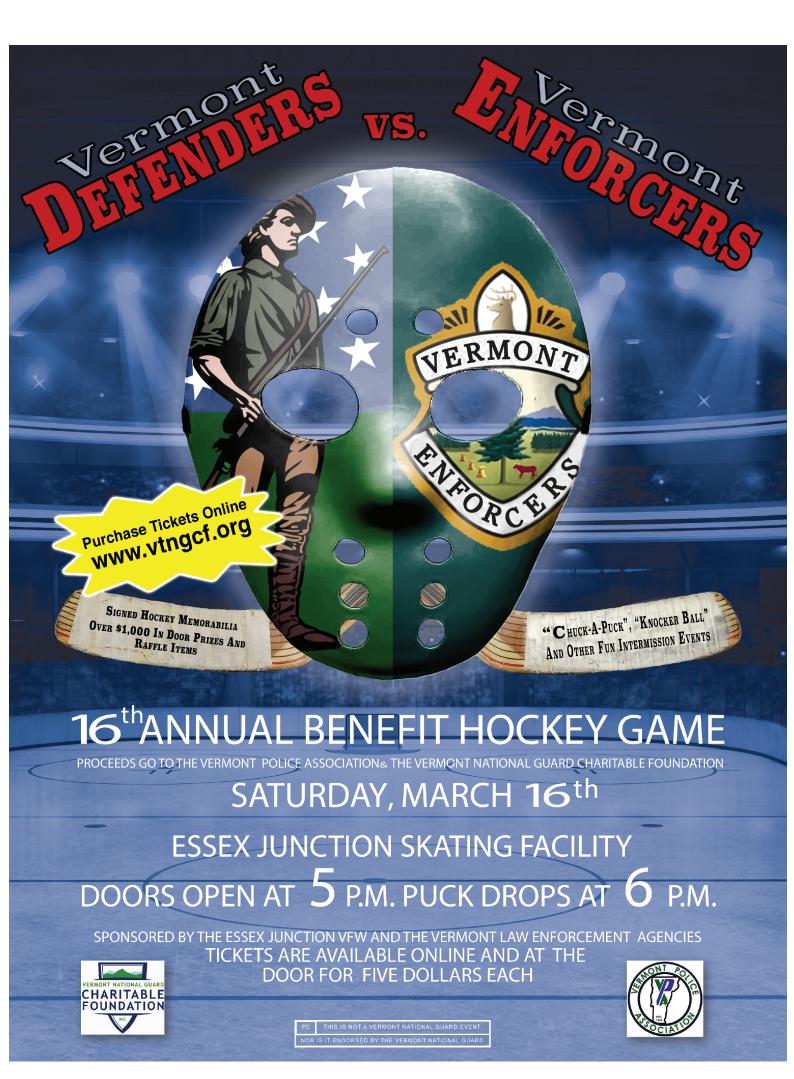
# 2019 Memberships for VTNG Families have arrived!

ECHO Leahy Center for Lake Champlain has invited VTNG Service Members and their immediate Families to participate in their Open Door Program. This amazing program provides <u>FREE</u> Memberships, and \$2 Admission Vouchers. Need more reasons? Free access to over 325 museums across the country!

Your membership can be requested through the VTNG Child & Youth Program by following the link or QR code below:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ECHO2019









Online



7тн ANNUAL VETERANS SUMMIT Johnson, VT



16TH ANNUAL BENEFIT HOCKEY GAME Essex Junction, VT



STATE HOUSE EVENT Montpelier, VT



KS&CB WEBINAR Online

# **Contact Information**

### AIRMAN & FAMILY PROGRAM MANAGER

Mary Mahoney mary.k.mahoney13.civ@mail.mil cell: 802-598-0202

#### SENIOR FAMILY READINESS SUPPORT ASST

Candice Bryan-Broe candice.e.broe.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-316-6342

#### FAMILY READINESS SUPPORT ASST: 86 IBCT

Michaela LaCoss michaela.m.lacoss.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-318-0692

#### VT VETERANS MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR

Charlene Caiano charlene.a.caiano.ctr@mail.mil Ph 802-338-3445

#### CITIZEN SOLDIER FOR LIFE CAREER READINESS COUNSELOR

Nick Thomas nicholas.a.thomas71.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-310-5391

MKVT PARTNER CAMP TBD

ARMY DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH Office: 338-3494

# FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTER COORDINATOR

Sherri Prouty sherri.l.prouty.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-338-0563

#### TRANSITION ASSISTANCE ADVISOR

Ronnie LaBounty ronnie.m.labounty.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-399-6401

#### AIR WING INTEGRATOR, YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM

Kelli Langlois kelli.j.langlois.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-751-5856

#### AIR DIRECTOR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

Trish Dempsey, LICSW trish.a.dempsey.civ@mail.mil cell 802-557-7368

#### DIRECTOR, FAMILY PROGRAMS Dave Leonard

david.c.leonard3.civ@mail.mil cell: 802-598-0140

#### VERMONT VETERANS OUTREACH

Andre Wing andre.d.wing.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-881-5057

### LEAD CHILD AND YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Brian Stoudnour brian.r.stoudnour.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-310-6745

# SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES

Tammie Conner tammie.l.conner.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-881-6632

#### VT VETERANS PERSONAL FINANCIAL COUNSELOR

Susan Kelley-Outten susan.kelley-outten.ctr@mail.mil cell: 802-338-3446