

February 26, 2013



MFLC Successes. Highlighting the importance of the MFLC program and our availability and ease of access, an MFLC counselor tells of a military spouse whose husband is active duty Air Force. She went into premature labor and delivered their first child before her husband could get home. Months later, she has returned to work. Their new infant has several health complications that will have a lifelong impact on the child and the family. This spouse uses the MFLC program as an additional source of support, as the recent months have been overwhelming for her. Their child, despite enrollment in EFMP, has not yet been approved for the CDC due to all of the complex medical issues. However, their child does not meet criteria for a medical daycare that would be covered by other monies. The spouse is worried about the health of her child, her role as a new wife and mom, and about keeping her job as she often misses work due to all of the medical appointments needed for her child.

She said, "If it weren't for you (the MFLC program), I don't know what I would do!" She is aware that she needs outside support, but has no time outside of her work hours to access it. Because of our proximity to her work environment, the spouse is now able to use the program over her lunch hour without

Meet Southeast Regional Director Speight Smith, LCSW, LPC, LISAC



Speight serves as the regional director of the Magellan MFLC program with operations at over 50 military installations throughout the Southeast. Speight is an LCSW and substance abuse counselor with more than 27 years' experience assisting service members and their families.

Speight started by helping soldiers meet their educational needs and provided counseling in private practice. During the first Gulf War she was asked to develop and supervise a pilot program focusing on the mental health needs of the spouses and children of deployed service members. As she traveled with her active-duty husband, she sought an opportunity to serve, providing substance abuse counseling in Europe for soldiers returning from the war in Iraq. Back in the U.S., Speight supported the Military Severely Injured Program for North Carolina, launched from Womack Army Medical Center.

Speight then pursued an opportunity to be a military and family life consultant for the Joint Family Support Assistance Program. She served on the team that founded the program in Alabama – one of the first 14 states to incorporate JFSAP services. She also has experience as an MFLC counselor, completing on-demand, rotational, and embedded assignments.

"As the spouse of an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran and the mother of two children who have attended DoDEA schools, I have seen firsthand the effects of deployments on soldiers and their families, and I know the importance of the MFLC work that we do every day," Speight said. "I am honored to have this opportunity to continue my support of the military as Magellan's southeast regional director."

missing time from her job. As a result of her experience with the MFLC program, she has not only felt personal support but has referred several other coworkers and neighbors to our program.

Importance of Key Relationships. It is difficult to imagine any work environment where relationships are more important than in the MFLC program. Relationships with our customers (both internal and external) are of particular importance at the installation level. The rapport and interpersonal dynamics between regional supervisors and MFLC personnel and the commanding officers, POCs, CDC directors, SLOs and school principals at the local level govern our customer's perception of the program. We want to create and maintain a positive perception of the services and program components that we provide. While we work closely with these individuals and have a sense of informality, we must always remember that these individuals are our customers, and maintaining a professional collaborative relationship with them is crucial to the success of the program. Sharing schedules and providing timely feedback as well as returning calls and emails promptly go a long way toward creating a positive professional image of the MFLC program.

We must maintain healthy boundaries with these individuals. We are "guests" on their installations, and as such we must be sensitive to the expectations of their culture and respect their traditions and structure. The military culture places an extremely high value on the chain of command, proper protocol and deference to rank and/or position within the civilian employment structure as well as within the active duty personnel component. Proper titles of address should be used at all times. It is never appropriate to address key base personnel (civilian or military) by their first names. POCs, SLOs and key civilian personnel should be addressed as Mr. or Ms./Mrs. and their last name. Active duty members should be addressed by their rank and last name, such as Major Jones or Captain Smith or simply Major or Captain. Many of you have worked very hard to establish great relationships with your POCs, principals and other key staff. We commend you on your efforts and attention to the details, subtleties and nuances of the military culture and lifestyle. We encourage you to meet with your key counterparts on a regular basis and follow their lead in terms of how often they would like to have face-to-face contact with you. Honesty, transparency and all the key ingredients that make a counseling relationship healthy and productive are the same traits that will create a healthy collaborative relationship and an effective, productive MFLC program!

MFLC Program Accomplishments. In the day-to-day work at each installation by the individual MFLC counselor, it may be difficult to grasp the overall scope of the services that we are providing. Briefly reflecting on the extensive volume of services that we are delivering each month helps illustrate the impact that we are having. According to the data submitted in January, we provided 22,162 MFLC adult face-to-face counseling encounters to a total of 82,911 service and family members. In addition, there were 84,051 face-to-face counseling contacts provided by our CYB counselors, impacting 326,609 children and youth and service/ family members. This represents a total of 106,213 contacts made to 409,520 service and family members.

In addition, we provided 3,406 MFLC adult briefing and presentation services to 57,834 service and family members. The number of CYB briefings and presentation services totaled 3,858 provided to 35,359 service and family members; this represents a total of 7,264 presentations and briefings made to 93,193 persons.

These numbers are very impressive, and represent thousands of hours of direct services provided by a committed and dedicated staff. Every face-to-face encounter, presentation or

briefing impacts the lives of our service members and their families, improves their readiness, and enhances their resiliency. In a recent interview, Russ Dean, field operations director, recognized the work of our MFLC and CYB counselors and stated, "I would like to personally thank each and every one of our counselors. When you look at the totality of the services provided each month, it becomes clear that these accomplishments are the sum of a huge amount of hard work, commitment and creativity exhibited by our counselors. I want to offer my sincere thanks for a job well done!"

Summer Camp and Enrichment Programs. We are gearing up for a very busy summer with camps and summer enrichment programs. In the next few days, we will be sending out to our counselors a survey to gauge your interest and past experience in providing camping and enrichment services. When you receive the survey, please let us know if you would like to participate in the MFLC summer camping experience. We hope to have the requests for camps and enrichment programs by mid-March and begin the scheduling of events during March and April.

Thank you.

Dan McCarthy
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