

## COMMUNITY CORNER

# Volunteers make a difference, significant impact in the community

By Col. Kevin Brown  
GARRISON COMMANDER

Fort Riley and the 1st Infantry Division have resigned Army Community Covenants with Geary and Wabaussee counties. We've signed a covenant for the first time with Salina and Saline County. And there are five more re-signings to come.

While the covenant signings formalize our partnerships and community outreach efforts, it is the interaction between our Soldiers, Families and community members which truly showcase how well we work together and what we can accomplish when we do.

For several years now, we've partnered with community leaders for monthly Community Partnership Conferences. The CPCs focus on five main areas of interest to our Soldiers, Families and communities —

health care, education, housing, employment and recreation.

Through this avenue, Fort Riley has partnered with area real estate professionals to offer home-buying seminars to Soldiers, their Families and the general public.

We've created a calendar of recreation opportunities in the Central Flint Hills Region, which is available on the Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation website. Our hospital continues to partner with caregivers in the network of providers for our Soldiers and Families. Kansas State University has donated thousands of tickets for our Soldiers and



Col. Brown

Families to participate in Big XII athletic events. And, numerous career fairs, in conjunction with employers throughout the Central Flint Hill Region, have netted jobs and job offers for our spouses and Soldiers exiting the Army.

We rely heavily on our community partners to help us perform our missions every day. And each day, our friends in the local region step up and work with us, side-by-side, as we go about caring for our Families and preparing our Soldiers for war. Their impact on us is significant.

The Flint Hills Regional Council, a regional planning organization who has the mission of ongoing regional coordination, communication and monitoring, continues its work toward managing regional growth.

The FHRC will allow the

region to speak with one voice and better coordinate efforts in areas including: economic development; data coordination; land use planning; population forecasting; social services; education and workforce; and housing and rural development among others.

While the CPCs and FHRC focus on keeping the region's leaders in sync, initiatives such as the Adopt-A-Community and Adopt-A-School programs help keep our Soldiers in touch with the communities surrounding Fort Riley.

While these efforts have been ongoing, they were recently formalized with the release of the Fort Riley 2015 Campaign Plan.

Adopt-A-Community and Adopt-A-School programs allow Soldiers to get out into the communities to volunteer, but what about community mem-

bers who want to volunteer on post?

USO Fort Riley is always looking for volunteers to supplement its efforts.

The USO center on Custer Hill is open 365 days a year and is staffed by volunteers. Volunteers also help run all of USO Fort Riley's programs, including its No Dough Dinners.

To volunteer, stop by the center, or call 785-240-5328. The USO also supports Soldiers and their Families by sponsoring events like the recent Sesame Street Live shows.

Another non-profit organization, Cause-Helping, American Military Wounded, is looking for volunteers to staff its digital entertainment library, which provides free movies to wounded warriors. Interested volunteers can e-mail: fortliceuse@gmail.com for more information.

Volunteer opportunities abound on and off post, which touch the lives of everyone in our communities. Where do you want to make a difference?

Community outreach benefits both ways. Fort Riley, the 1st Infantry Division and the communities in the Central Flint Hills Region are a prime example of that.

We all work together to create strong communities which support each other's efforts. While the Army Community Covenant formally recognizes those efforts, it's the day-to-day interactions between our Soldiers and communities which show how much everyone is truly dedicated to our partnerships.

If you would like to comment on this article or suggest a topic for Community Corner, e-mail riley.post.newspaper@comus.army.mil.

## DoD announces changes in 2010-2011 child care fee policy

### Department of Defense

The Department of Defense announced July 30 the school year 2010-2011 child care fee policy.

The policy will adjust fee ranges in child care programs across the services, and will be implemented no later than Sept. 30.

Changes will impact Families who have children enrolled in DoD child development centers and school-age care programs.

The DoD broadened child

care fee ranges, found at: <http://www.defense.gov/news/d20100730fees2.pdf>, from six to nine categories, raised the income cap on each fee range, and established the top earning range at \$125,000 a year and above for a more equitable policy.

Previously, Families earning more than \$70,000 a year and above all paid the same fee for child care. Under the new policy, Families will see either a small decrease or increase in their fees depending on their total Family income.

Families earning \$85,000 and below will experience relatively minimal changes. Each military service will provide fee guidelines specific to their installations.

"This is the first time in six years that the Defense Department has adjusted fee ranges. The action follows an in-depth study that determined that fee ranges were no longer in sync with the total Family income for the majority of program users," said Robert L. Gordon III, deputy under secretary of defense,

military community and Family policy.

"As a result of this adjustment, we broadened and added income ranges to achieve greater equity within our military community," he said.

The fee policy represents a balanced solution to the issue of adjusting fees to pay caregiver salaries, while limiting the financial impact on the Family.

Competitive salaries help to recruit and retain quality staff.

"Ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the military

children entrusted to our care is a number one priority," Gordon said.

"We are committed to high-quality care for our military children, which includes attracting talented child care staff whose compensation is competitive with the civilian sector."

Ninety-eight percent of DoD's child development centers are nationally accredited, compared to 8 to 10 percent of community child care centers.

National accreditation means a commitment of providing high-quality services including:

a developmentally appropriate curriculum; a healthy and safe environment; sufficient number of adults per children in group sizes appropriate for children's ages; and strong communication between staff and families.

"Child care is a readiness issue. We will continue striving to provide quality care to support our working parents," Gordon said.

For more information, contact their local child development center and school-age care program.

**VICTORY KITCHEN**

**TEQUILA LIME CHICKEN**

**Ingredients:**

- 1/2 cup gold tequila
- 1 cup freshly squeezed lime juice (5 to 6 limes)
- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed orange juice (2 oranges)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh jalapeno pepper (1 pepper seeded)
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh garlic (3 cloves)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 whole (6 split) boneless chicken breasts, skin on

**Directions:**

Combine the tequila, lime juice, orange juice, chili powder, jalapeno pepper, garlic, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Simmer on the stove in a sauce pan until thickened like syrup.

Pour about a half cup olive oil in a hot skillet. Place chicken breast in the pan and brown on both sides. Place chicken in a baking dish. Brush the chicken with sauce and place in the oven.

Continue to baste chicken with the sauce throughout the baking process. Cook chicken until done, about 15 to 20 minutes, or to an internal temperature of 165 degrees.

Watch Victory Kitchen on Riley TV on the post's cable Channel 2, or watch in Manhattan, Junction City and Ogden on Cox Cable Channel 8. Become a fan on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/VictoryKitchen](http://www.facebook.com/VictoryKitchen).

## MyCAA resumes accepting applications

By Shandi Dix  
1ST INF. DIV. POST

On July 21, the Department of Defense announced the military spouse career advancement account program would resume accepting new applications. However, there is a new set of guidelines for eligible participants.

Beginning at 8 a.m. Eastern Standard Time Oct. 25, MyCAA will be available for spouses of servicemembers in the pay grades of E1 to E5, W1 to W2 and O1 to O2, and limited to associate's degrees, certifications and licenses.

"This will have a big effect

on the spouses of higher ranking soldiers and those pursuing a bachelor's or master's degree," said Monica Smith, education counselor with the Fort Riley Education Services.

Among these changes, eligible spouses will receive a total of \$4,000 in DoD-funded financial aid, with an annual cap of \$2,000 per fiscal year; funding must be used within a three-year time period from the start date of the first class; and funds must be used to obtain an associate's degree, licensure or certification.

A waiver may be granted when fees for licensure or certification require an up-front fee greater than \$2,000, and up to

the total maximum assistance of \$4,000.

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS INCLUDE:

- Spouses of junior grade personnel: Pay grades of E1 to E5, W1 to W2 and O1 to O2. Soldiers must be on active-duty status.

- Offer a maximum financial benefit of \$4,000 with a fiscal cap of \$2,000. Waivers will be available for spouses pursuing licensure or certification up to the maximum assistance of \$4,000.
- Requires the spouse to finish their program of study with-

in three years from the start date of the first course.

- Be limited to an associate's degree, certifications and licenses

Under the long-term program guidelines, career counselors will continue to work with all military spouses to help develop career and education goals and plans, and assist them in identifying.

To apply for benefits, contact a Military OneSource counselor at [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com). For more information, visit [www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/FindInformation/Category/MilitarySpouseCareerAdvancementAccounts.aspx](http://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/FindInformation/Category/MilitarySpouseCareerAdvancementAccounts.aspx).