

# Life in the Weeds: Helping Communities to Help Military Families

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Military Family Research Institute  
Purdue University  
December 8, 2010



# My Mission Today

- Introduction to the Military Family Research Institute and its community role
- Tell you about how we have been working to improve the quality of life for military families
- Consider possible implications for families affected by polytrauma

# Introduction to the Military Family Research Institute



# ***What is the Military Family Research Institute?***

- **A research and outreach organization at Purdue University, the public land grant institution in Indiana**
- **Created in 2000 with funding from the Office of Military Community and Family Policy; now funded by a variety of sources**

## ***Who am I?***

- **Professor of Child Development and Family Studies**
- **Fellow of the National Council on Family Relations**
- **Former co-chair, DoD Task Force on Mental Health**
- **Member, Psychological Health External Advisory Committee of the Defense Health Board**
- **Member, Institute of Medicine Committee on Returning Veterans**

## **Strategic Goals**

- **Support military communities**
- **Strengthen civilian communities**
- **Generate important new knowledge**
- **Influence programs, policies and practices**
- **Grow and sustain a vibrant learning organization**

# MFRI Research Themes

- Family processes of reintegration
- The experiences of military children
- ‘Families on the Fringe’
- Family adjustment to wounds and injuries
- Interaction with the health care system

## ***Interaction with the Health Care System***

- Goal: To assess the accuracy of the TRICARE provider list in our state. To the extent that the list is inaccurate, care is less accessible
- Called every TRICARE mental health provider
- 75% were unreachable, duplicate records (offices), no longer accepting TRICARE, or not accepting new patients

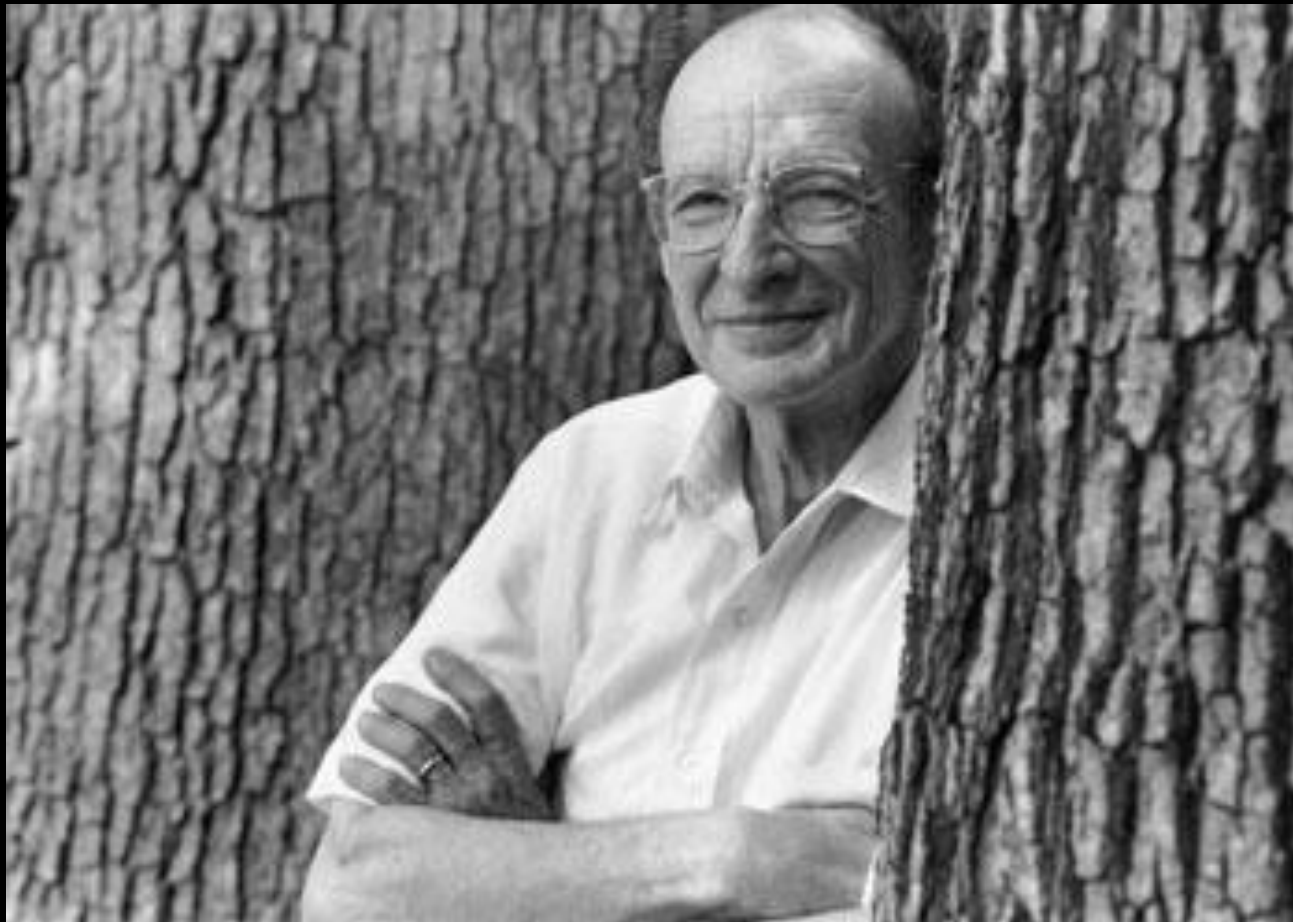
- A joint effort between the Center for Deployment Psychology and MFRI
- All proceeds go to the National Military Family Association

Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth  
David Riggs  
*Editors*

# Risk and Resilience in U.S. Military Families



# Theoretical Perspective



# Bioecological Theory

## Humans develop in MICROSYSTEMS:

- Specific settings, such as homes, schools, workplaces, that include
- Activities, social roles, and interpersonal relationships, and provide
- Opportunities for increasingly complex interactions and learning

(Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006)

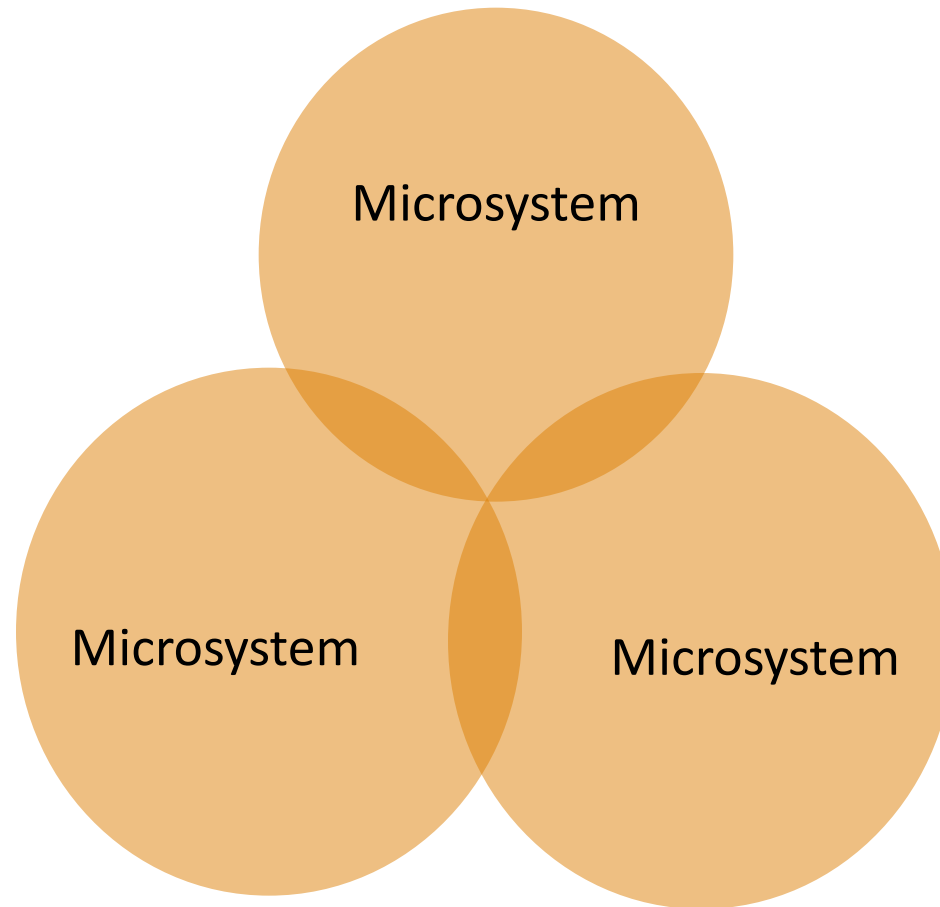


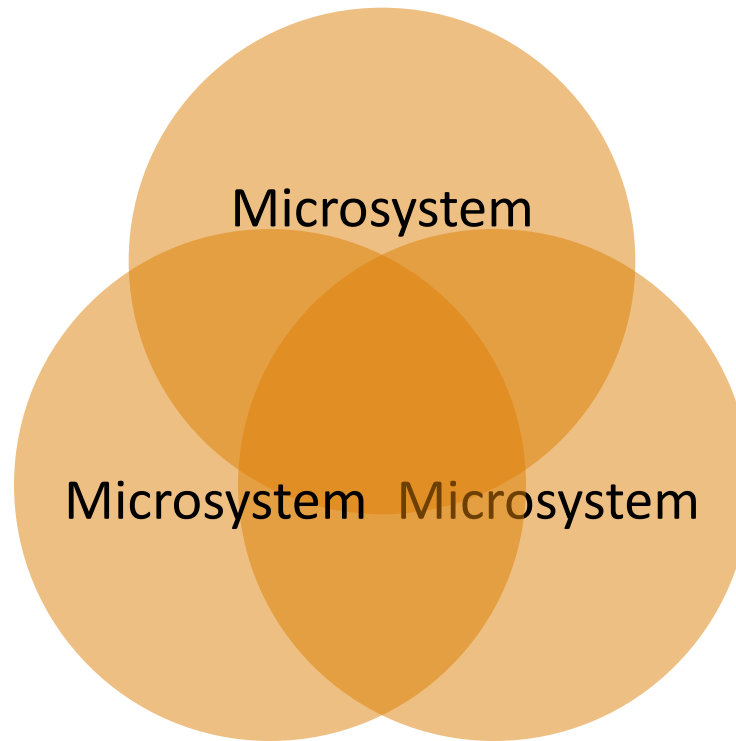
# Microsystem

# Microsystems are Connected by Mesosystems

- The stronger, more positive and more diverse the links between settings, the more powerful and beneficial the resulting MESOSYSTEM will be as an influence on ... development.
- Strongly positive: many connections and mutual support,
- Weak and negative: conflicts of values, style, and interest.

(Garbarino, 1992, p. 45)





# Example Mesosystem Threats Related to Polytrauma

(Brenner, Vanderploeg, & Terrio, 2009)

- Overlapping and delayed symptoms
- Mental health comorbidities
- Mis-information about TBI
- Lack of a holistic approach
- Poor coordination among helpers
- Stigma – feared or actual negative consequences of help-seeking

How we have been working to  
improve the quality of life for  
military families





# Models of Collaboration



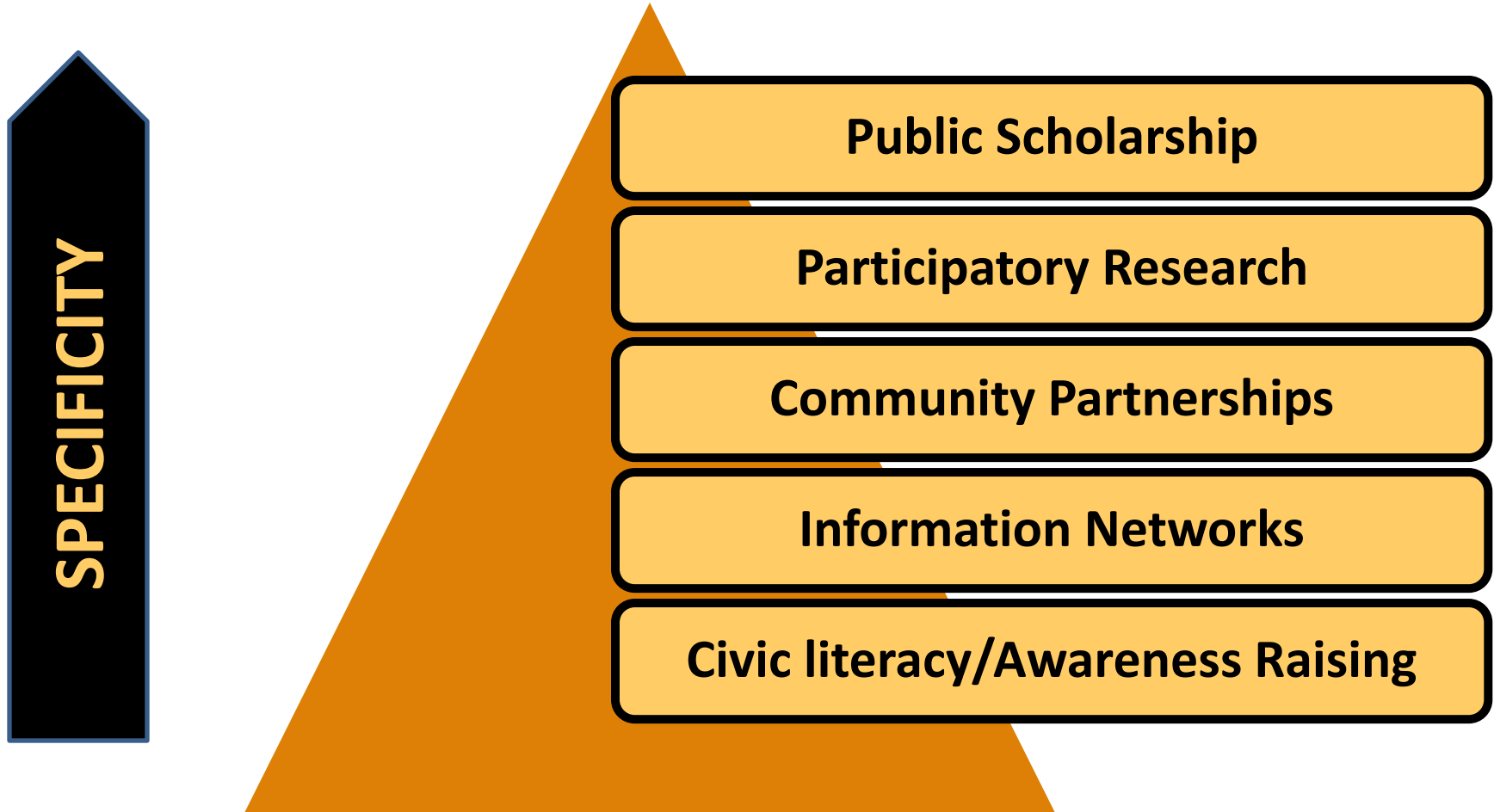
# Engaged Scholarship

- ...engaged scholars share a common conviction that the civic renewal of higher education can be broadened to include research and deepened to provide a greater sense of intellectual rigor and of working with the public in genuinely collaborative fashion (Barker, 2004, p. 127)

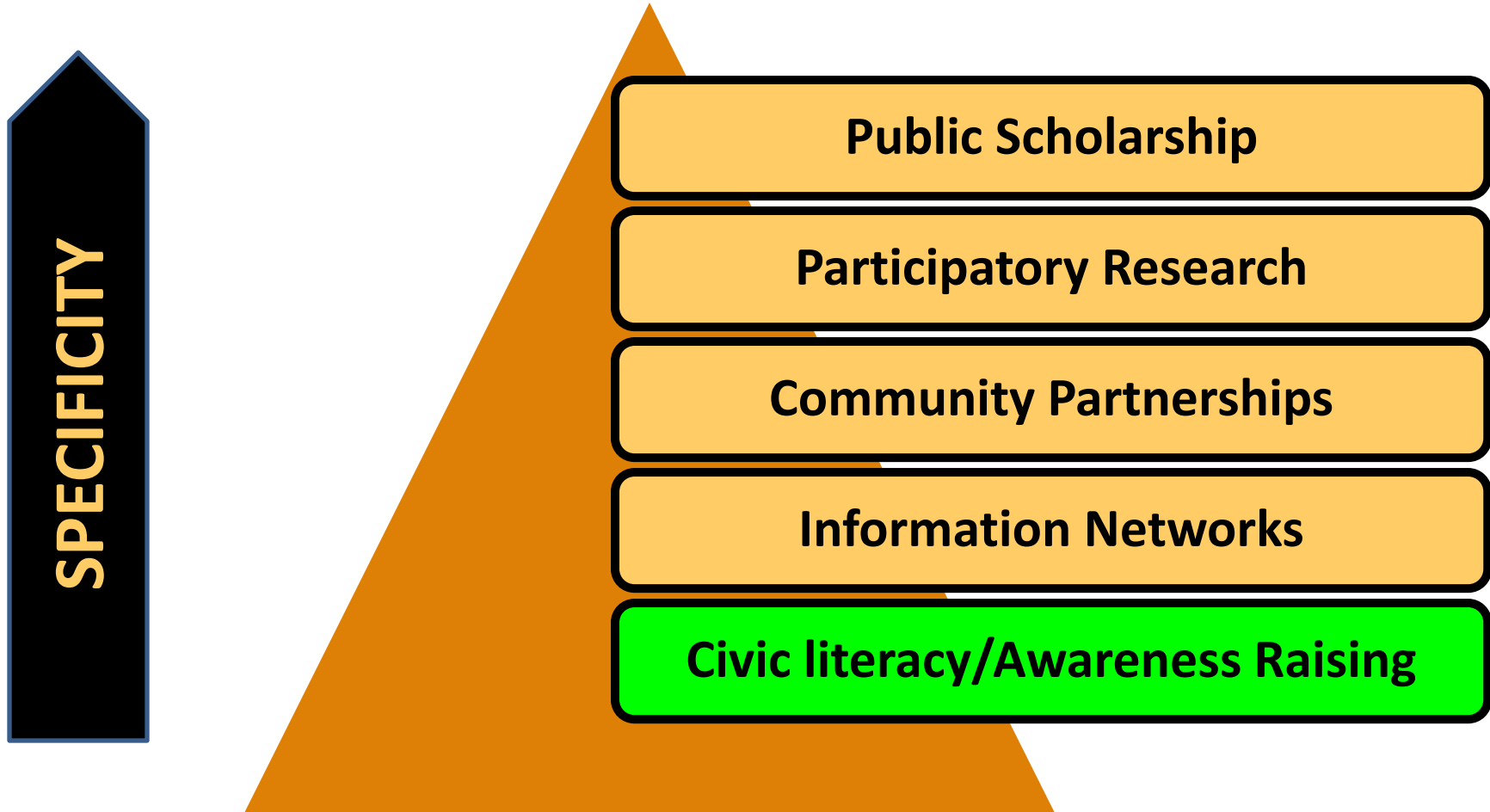
# Anderson-Butcher et al., 2008

- NOT 'walled-in', but 'beyond the walls'

# A Taxonomy of Engaged Scholarship



# A Taxonomy of Engaged Scholarship



With many adults as veterans, the United States has a long tradition of patriotism. As citizens, we honor the service, commitment, and sometimes the ultimate sacrifice of the men and women who serve our country. We recognize the significance of the selfless service of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

The *Our Heroes' Tree*<sup>SM</sup> program provides a forum for libraries to erect heroes' trees to recognize citizens who have served our nation in and times of peace and conflict.

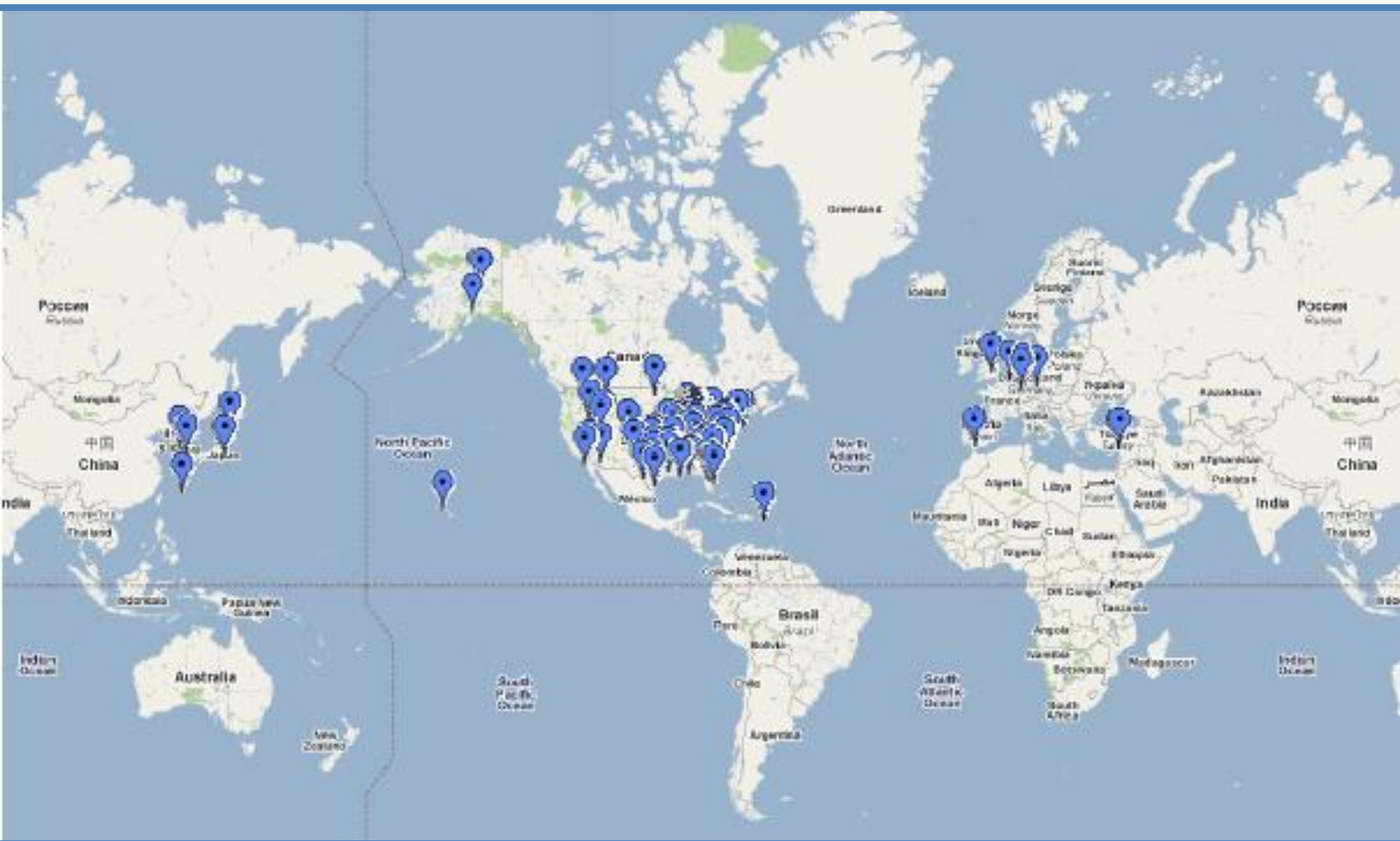


# OUR Heroes' Tree

A Community Outreach Program for Libraries

Sponsored by THE MILITARY FAMILY RESEARCH INSTITUTE at Purdue University

*Created by Marlene Lee and Stephanie Pickup*



## Did you know?

- Over 17,000 children in the State of Indiana have a parent serving in the National Guard or Reserves and could be impacted by a military deployment.
- Children have not only parents, but siblings, aunts and uncles, and grandparents who are impacted when a parent is deployed.
- Every county in our state is impacted by military deployment. You may have a child in your child care center who has a parent in the military.

# HOW to HELP

## Military Families as a Day Care Provider

### Introduction

Military deployments are a challenge for the entire family. Based on their experiences and developmental needs, children respond to the deployment of their military parent in a variety of ways. Working with very young children during this time can have unique challenges.

## Did you know?

- Of the 1.5 million U.S. soldiers who have served in Middle East conflicts, 25% are National Guard or Reservist service members and will return to the civilian workforce following deployment.
- Service members often bring a different skill set and values to the job market.
- The Department of Defense estimates that 92% of service members use college degrees.
- 98% are high school graduates.
- Employment of a veteran can qualify for an employer tax incentive.

### Introduction

After completing their service, military members return to the civilian workforce with job skills and experiences that are often appealing for employers.

# HOW to HELP

## Military Families as an Employer

## Did you know?

- With more than 4,000 National Guard and Reserve soldiers currently deployed from Indiana, you are likely to encounter families impacted by deployment in your faith community. These families often rely heavily on the support of their congregations and other faith-based organizations.
- In Indiana, every county is currently affected by deployment.
- The transition from civilian life to military service and back again takes both a physical and emotional toll on soldiers and their families. Support during this time is critical.

### Introduction

One of the factors that shapes a community is the connection between the local faith organizations and the social support they offer during times of crisis and peace. With the country involved in a global conflict, the need for support is greater than ever.

# HOW to HELP

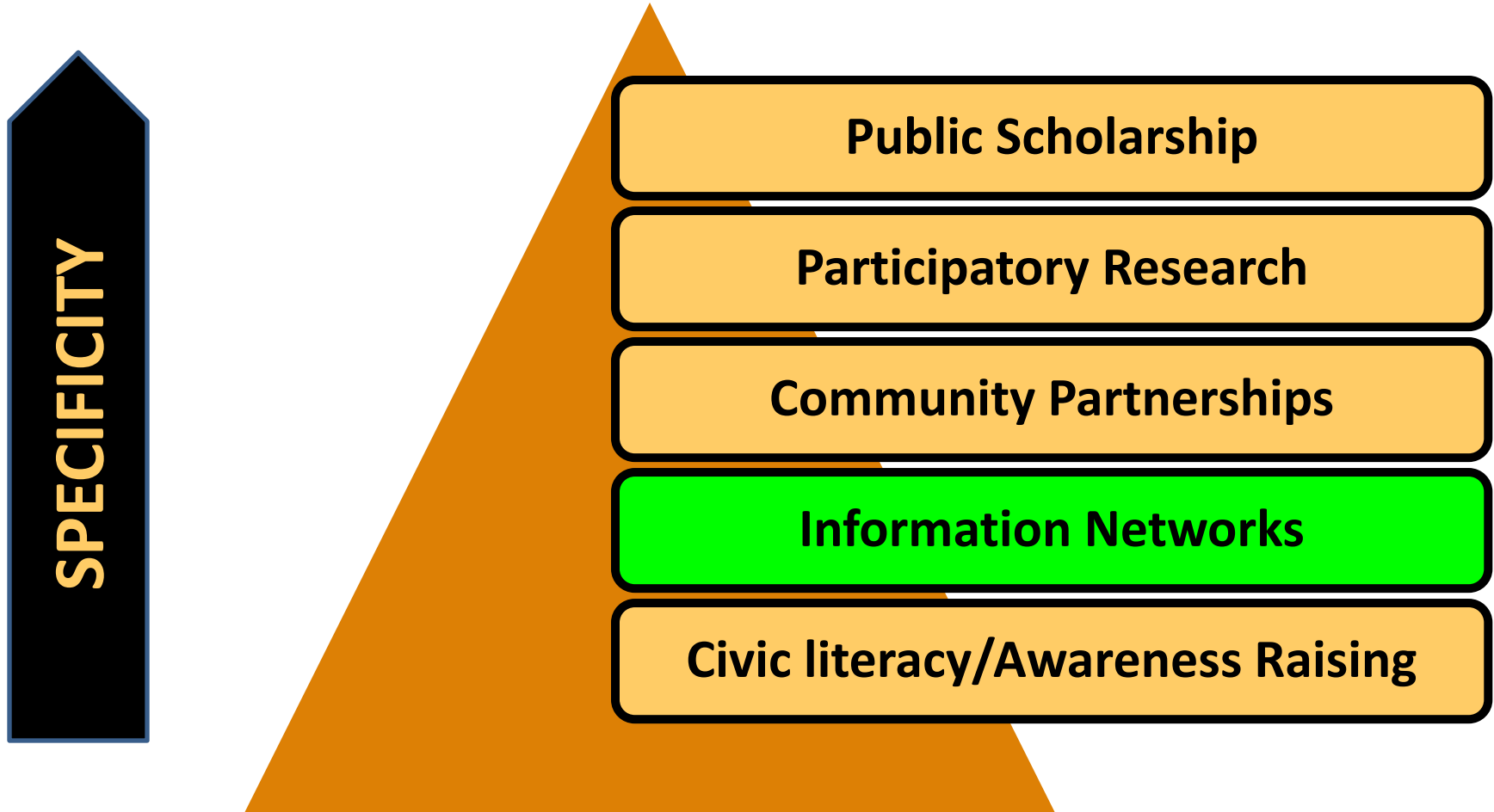
## Military Families as a Faith-Based Organization

### Practical Applications

- Learn about the local military families in your community. Focus on who are they, where they live and what their needs are.
- Identify what other religious-based organizations are doing to support military members and their families within the community.
- If there is a large concentration of military families in your community, consider starting support groups for spouses, parents of single military members, and children and teens. Each group has unique needs and views on having a loved one in the military.
- Work with local Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) to offer child care activities or meeting space for their meetings and trainings.
- Make contact with local unit chaplains or military personnel officers to offer assistance or to learn about the needs of local families. You may be able to “adopt” single military members who don’t have local support or contact. You could also adopt a



# A Taxonomy of Engaged Scholarship



# Educating Professional Communities

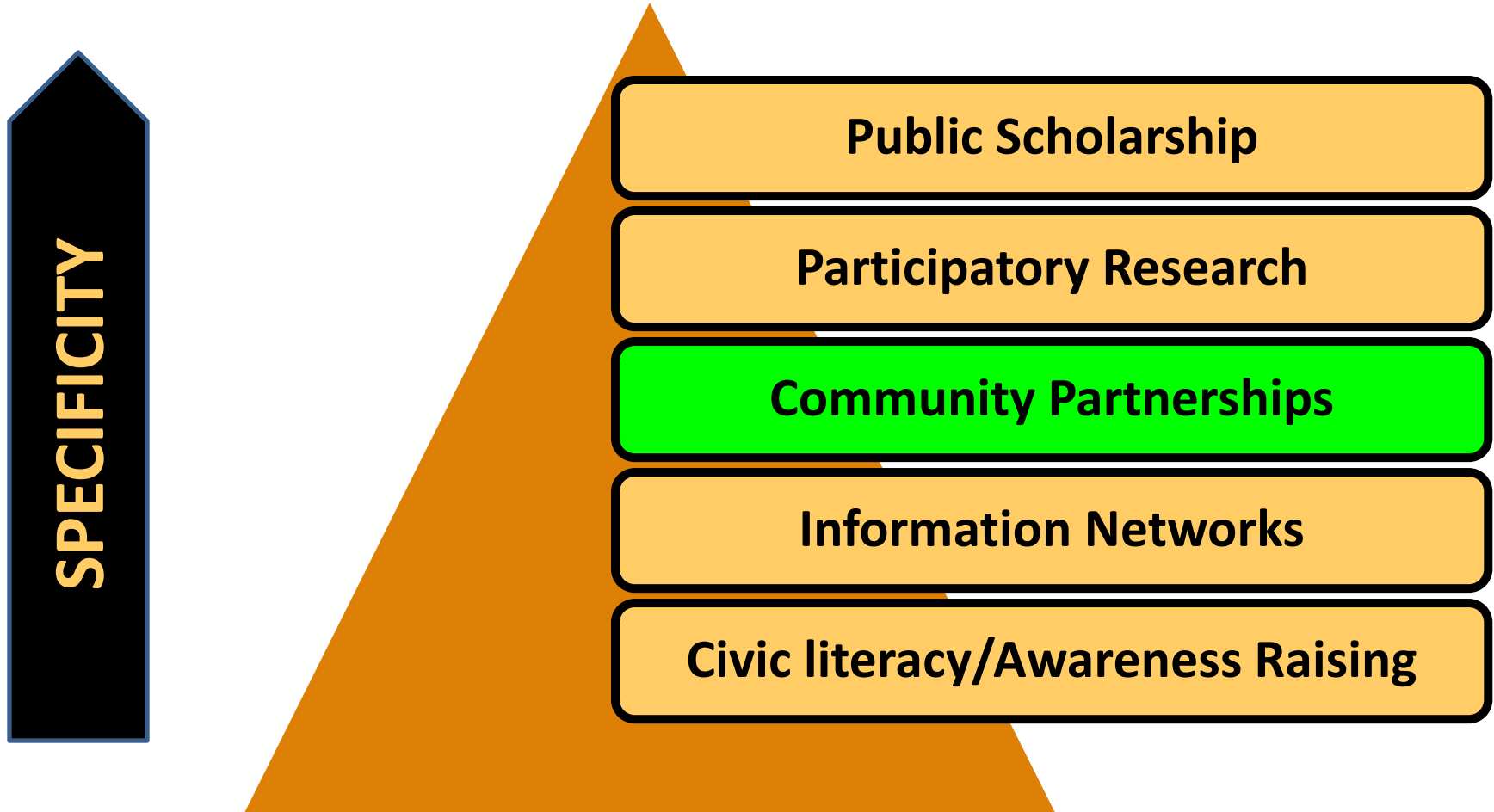
## **Center for Deployment Psychology Trainings:**

- Marriage and Family Therapists – 1 day INTRODUCTORY
- Mental Health Providers – 2 day INTERMEDIATE
- Mental Health Providers – 2 and 4 day training INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED

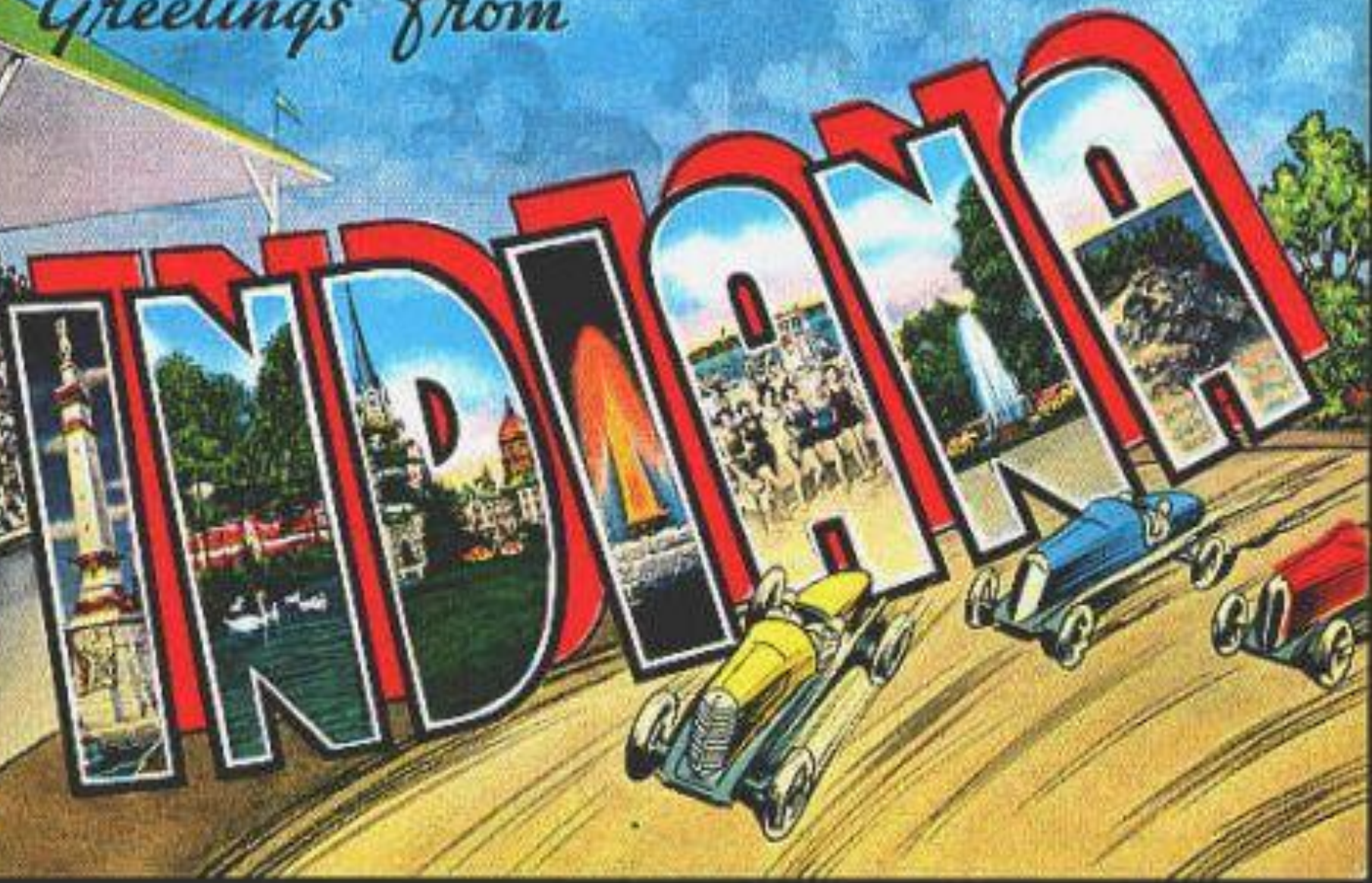
## **Educating Other Professional Communities:**

- Indiana Counseling Association – Military track for annual conference – April 2010
- Central Indiana Association of Orthopedic Nurses – Feb 2010 – Deployment and the Military Family
- Early Childhood Professionals (mental health and general care)
- Social Workers
- School Counselors and Teachers
- Primary Care Physicians – PTSD screening kits to 1300 primary care physicians in Indiana

# A Taxonomy of Engaged Scholarship

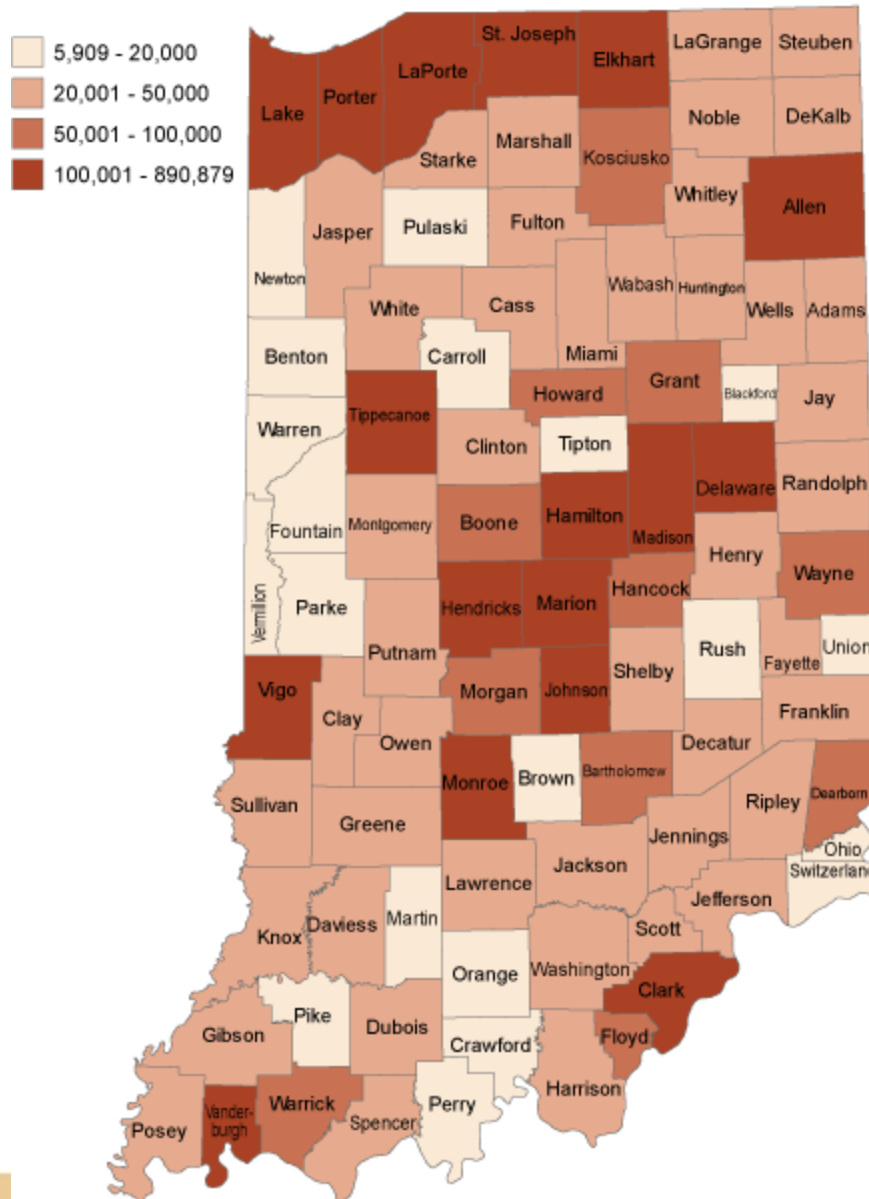


*Greetings from*





# Total Population, July 2009

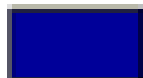


Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
Indiana Business Research Center, March 2010

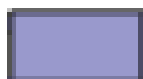
# Urban and Rural Areas, 2000

## Percent Rural

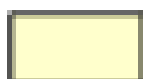
Less than 20%



20 to 50%



50 to 80%



More than 80%



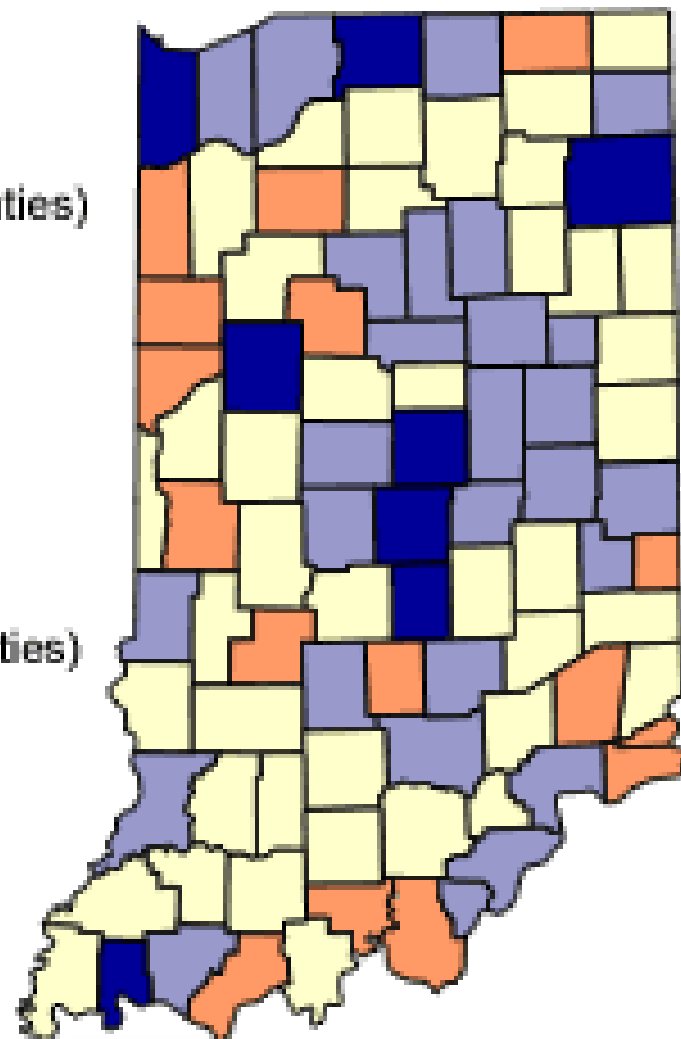
## Percent Urban

More than 80% (8 counties)

50 to 80% (27 counties)

20 to 50% (41 counties)

Less than 20% (16 counties)



Indiana Business Research Center  
Kelley School of Business, Indiana University  
Data source: U.S. Census Bureau



# FRAGO 15 20 Feb 2009

## LEGEND

- Red - FA
- Orange - MP
- Tan - CAV
- Blue - Infantry
- Green - Eng
- Black - CS/CSS

## FUTURE STRUCTURE Readiness Centers

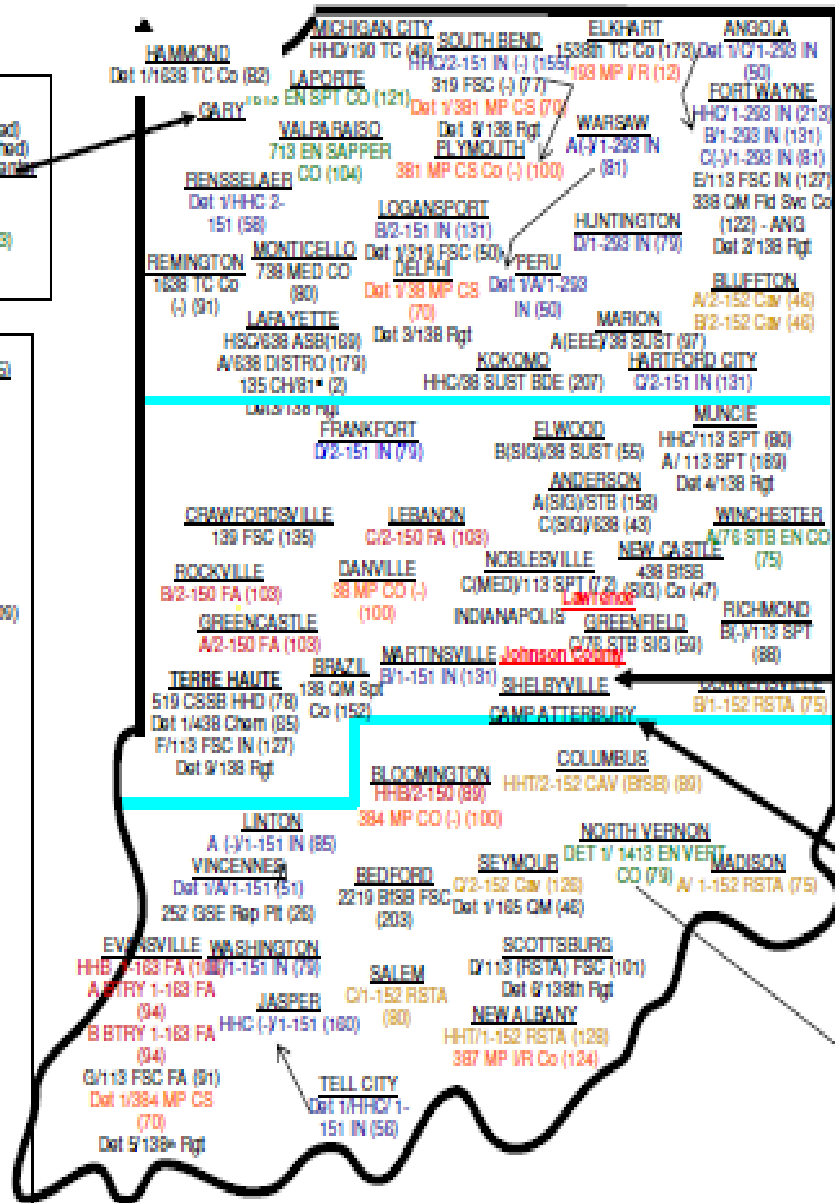
(2 total):  
Lawrence RC, Johnson County RC

## SHELBYVILLE

- HHC/88-AVN BDE (125)
- 1-137 AVN (70)
- Det 2<sup>nd</sup> B<sup>n</sup> 638 MAINT (20)

## CAMP ATTERBURY

- HHD 16U (220)
- HQ 138th Rgt (Cbt Arms) (13)
- 1-138 (Cbt Arms) (48)
- Det 2<sup>nd</sup> B<sup>n</sup> HQ (SARTS) (3)
- Flightline Dets (18)
- ATTERBURY ARMORY
- 219 BSB BDE HQ (162)
- INARNG MD Det (57)
- F13-238 ATS (45)
- 215 MED (80)
- 1438 TC Co (177)
- 252 CD Auto Rep/Arm Rep (58)
- 1413 EN VERT (-) (61)
- 1313 EN HORZ Co (180)
- Det 1<sup>st</sup> 138<sup>th</sup> Rgt



**GARY LASSE**  
Det 1/1638 TC Co (82)  
D/2-238 GSAB (8) (Attached)  
C/2-238 GSAB (19) (Attached)  
NEW GARY Readiness Center  
A/2-151 IN (731)  
388 MP Det (45)  
GARY Armon  
113 EN BR FSC/FSC (173)  
14143 EN (22) (Attached)  
RSD

**INDIANAPOLIS**  
STOUD FIELD (81 + 2,3,5)  
HHD JFHQ (257)  
Contract Teams (8)  
  
Bld 4  
120 PAD (8)  
Bld 7  
5200 CST (22)  
Bld 9  
E (IA) 3-139 FA (90)  
138 AG HQ (27)  
433 AG HQ (47)  
828 AG HQ (47)  
138 AG TM (R5) (10) (FY09)  
339 MP Det (45)  
438 Chem (-) (83)  
Bld 15  
252 CRC CD Co (-) (137)

Raytheon Hanger Indpls  
DET 1<sup>st</sup> OSACOM (8)  
DET 3<sup>rd</sup> CD 126 AV (9)

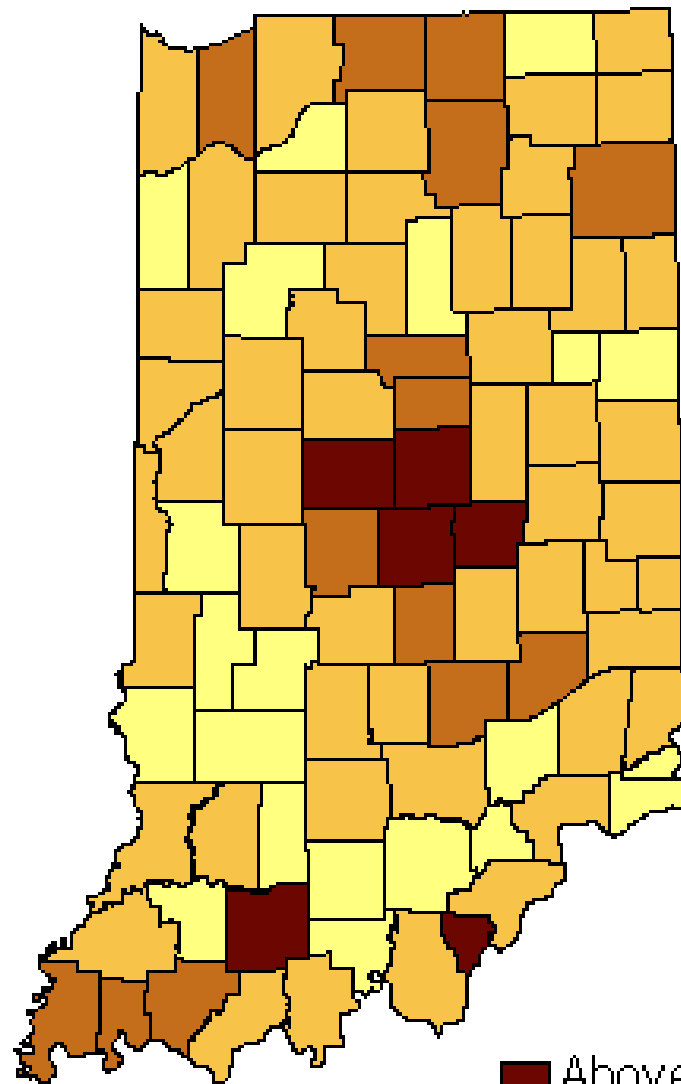
**DIVISION ARMORY**  
38 ID HHC (313)  
38 ID TAC C/Ps (174)  
38 STB HHC (204)  
81\* TC HHD (32)  
135 CH Det (2)  
C/1-151 IN (131)  
Det 7/138 Rgt

**TYNDALL ARMORY**  
HHC/88 BCT (1154)  
B/76 STB MICO (72)  
76 STB HHC (190)

**FORT BEN HARRISON**  
Det 18 F & R (147)  
Band (40)  
138 FI HQ (27)  
176 FI DET (26)  
177 FI DET (26)  
178 FI DET (26)

**NAVAL ARMORY**  
DET 1 (33) JFHQ

# Per Capita Personal Income : 2004

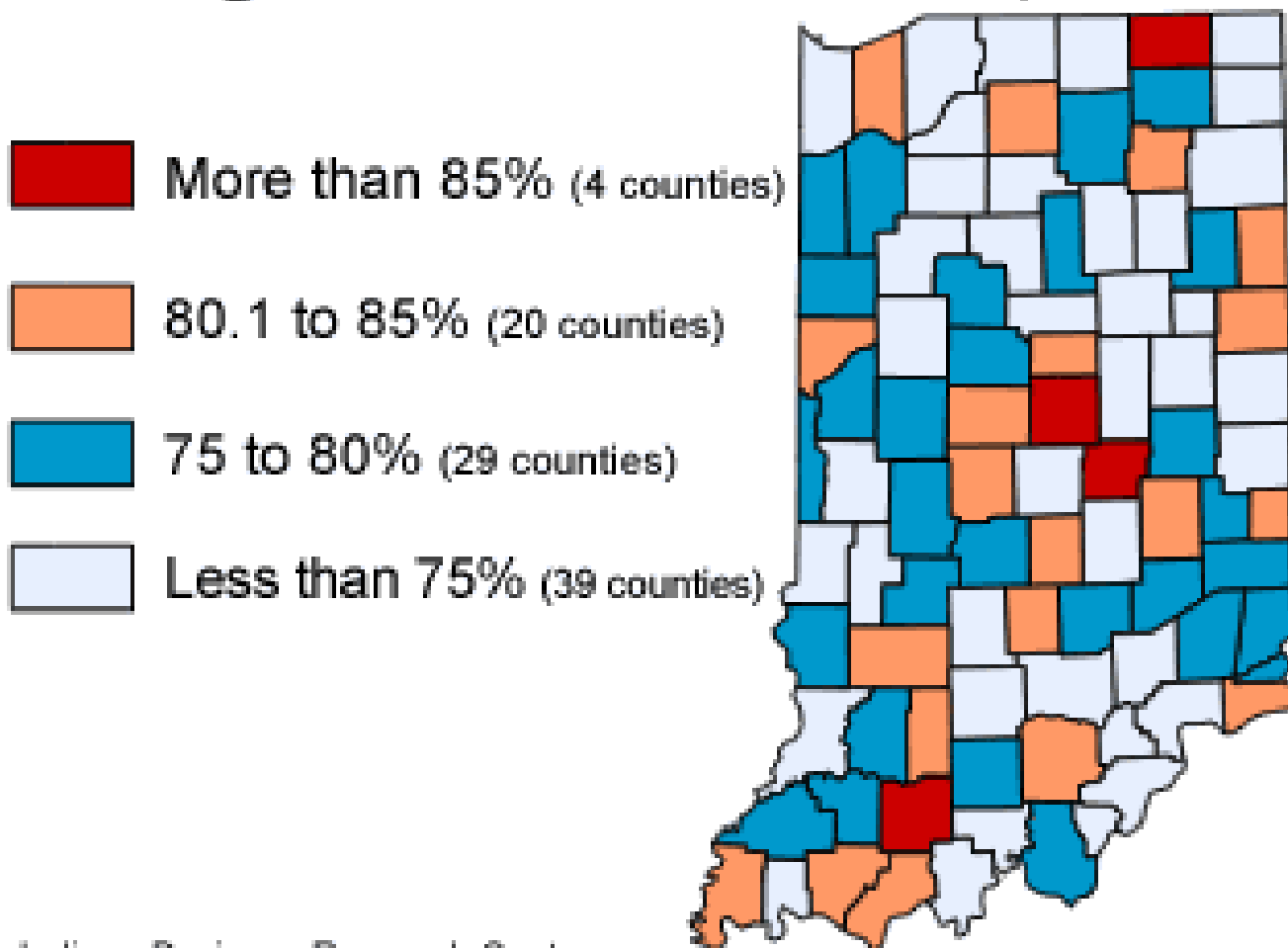


Source: County Business Patterns,  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Map: Indiana Business Research  
Center, March 2007

- Above 34,000
- 30,000 to 34,000
- 25,000 to 30,000
- Below 25,000

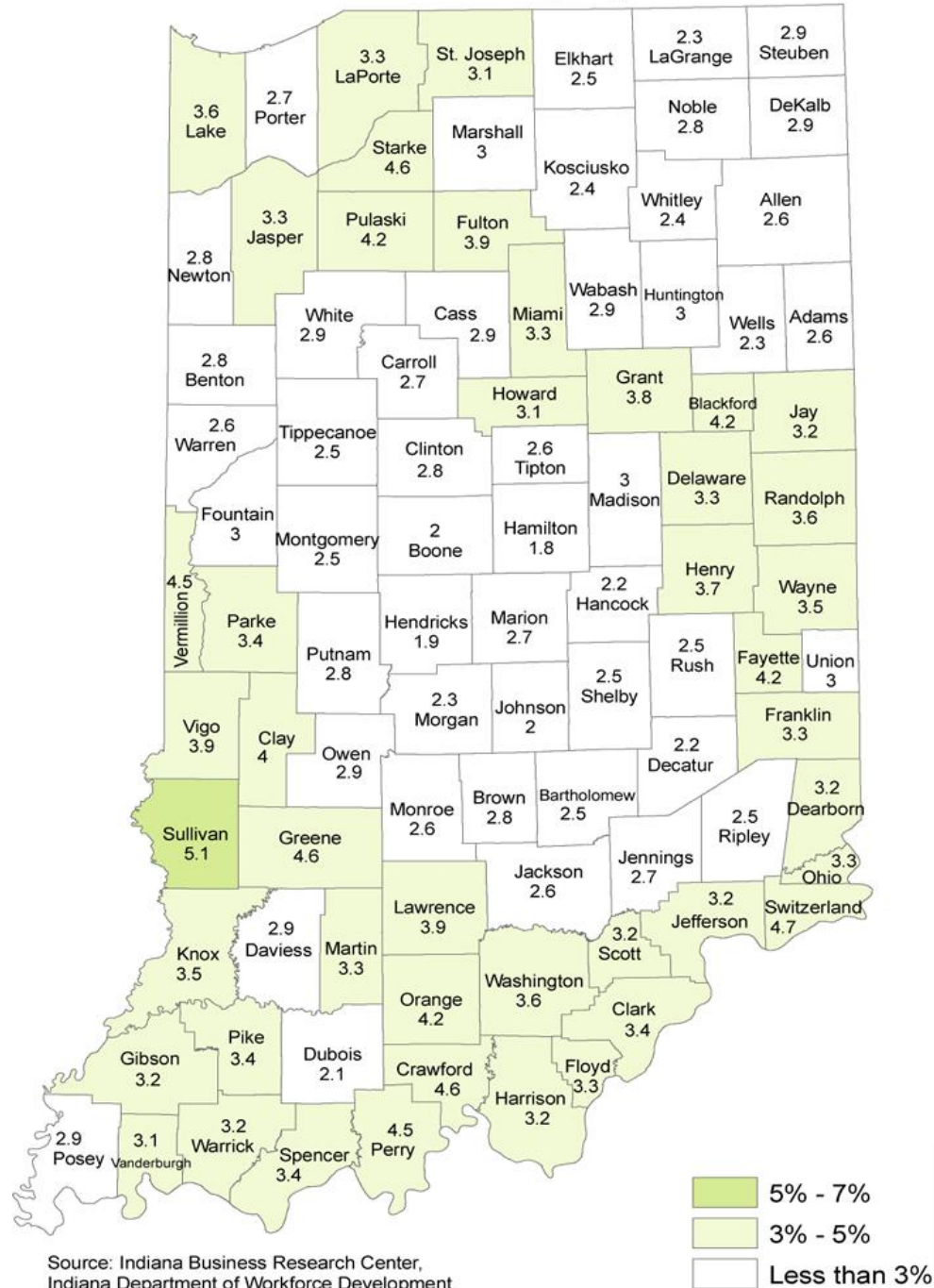


# Percent of Children Under 6 Living with Both Parents, 2000



Indiana Business Research Center  
Kelley School of Business, Indiana University  
Data source: U.S. Census Bureau

# 2000 Annual Unemployment Rates



Source: Indiana Business Research Center,  
Indiana Department of Workforce Development



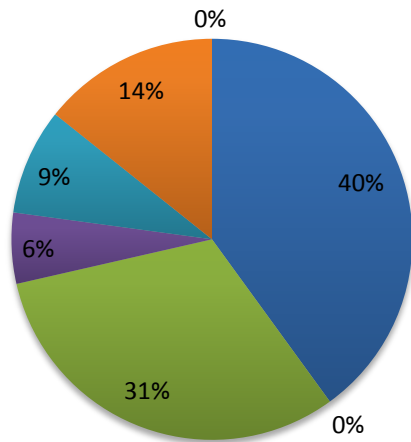


# Supportive Communities

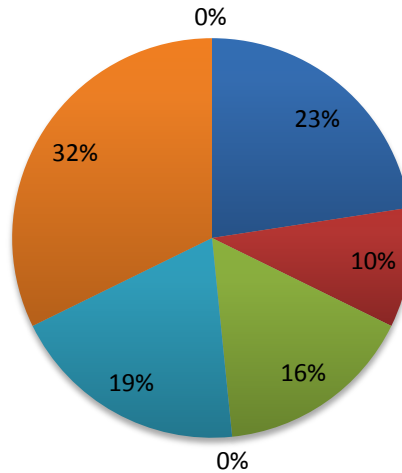
- Availability of **mental health** facilities, services, providers, programs, and support
- Availability of **employment** placement, training, support, and transition assistance
- Availability of programs and services for **veterans**; coordination of services; involvement of community leaders
- Availability of **financial** information, resources, and education
- Awareness of **school** personnel, supportive policies, and communication with military families
- Involvement of military personnel in **community organizations**
- Availability of **programming for families** of service members, off-hours childcare, connections between family readiness group and community agencies, resources for homeless veterans
- Access to **interactions with other military families**; availability of timely referrals to community resources and programming; encouragement from military leaders to use programming; involvement in community programming

# 390 Involved Organizations

## Tippecanoe County

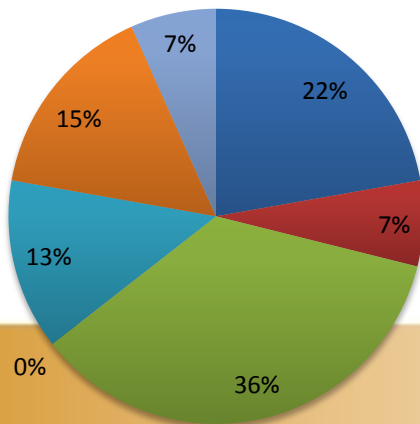


## Vigo County

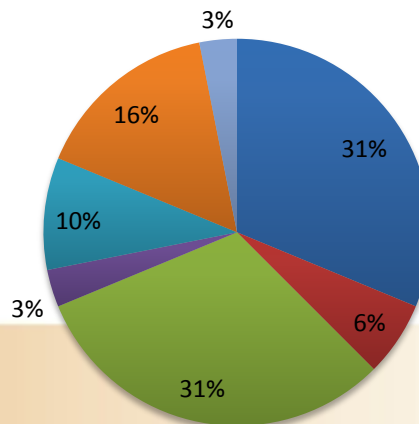


- Marriage/Family/Mental Health/Therapy
- Schools/Education/ Extension
- Community Programs
- Policy Makers/Officials
- Vet Service Organizations
- Military Programs
- Businesses

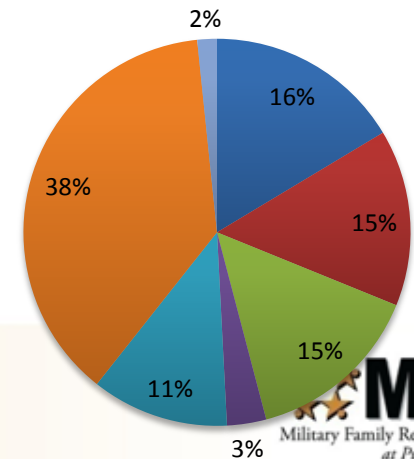
## Allen County



## Vanderburgh County



## Bartholomew County































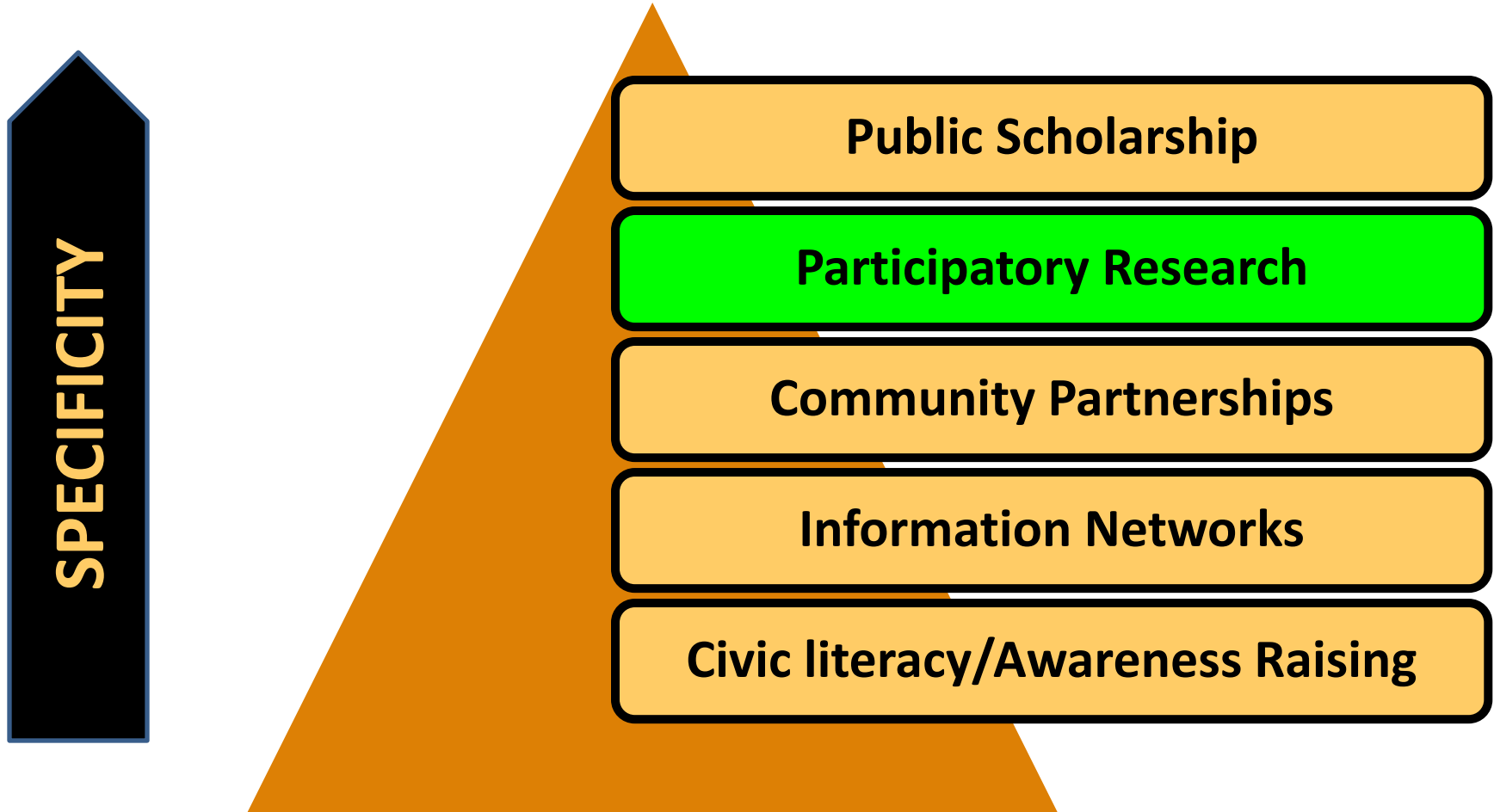


# SOON TO COME...

## Community Blueprint



# A Taxonomy of Engaged Scholarship



# PASSPORT



toward success

Helping Military Kids and Families Connect

# Design Parameters

- Tailored to reintegration structure
- Theory-based
- Flexible
- Key Features



# Key Features

- *Yellow Ribbon Program specific* –
  - coordinating with Yellow Ribbon Program Staff
  - meant to address issues during reintegration
    - Connection
    - Communication
    - Stress
  - during the course of one day (short duration)
  - programming for children of different ages and families

# Key Features





- *Flexible*
  - Site flexible – can be armory, hotel, tent, etc..
  - Participant flexible – can accommodate different ages and numbers of children
  - Time flexible – can be implemented in 2, 3 or 4 hour blocks of time depending on unit

# Key Features

- *Use of community volunteers*
  - Online training for staff
  - Reduces cost of program
  - Does not rely on use of military volunteers who should be going through seamless transition
  - Creates knowledgeable members in community about military issues and stressors

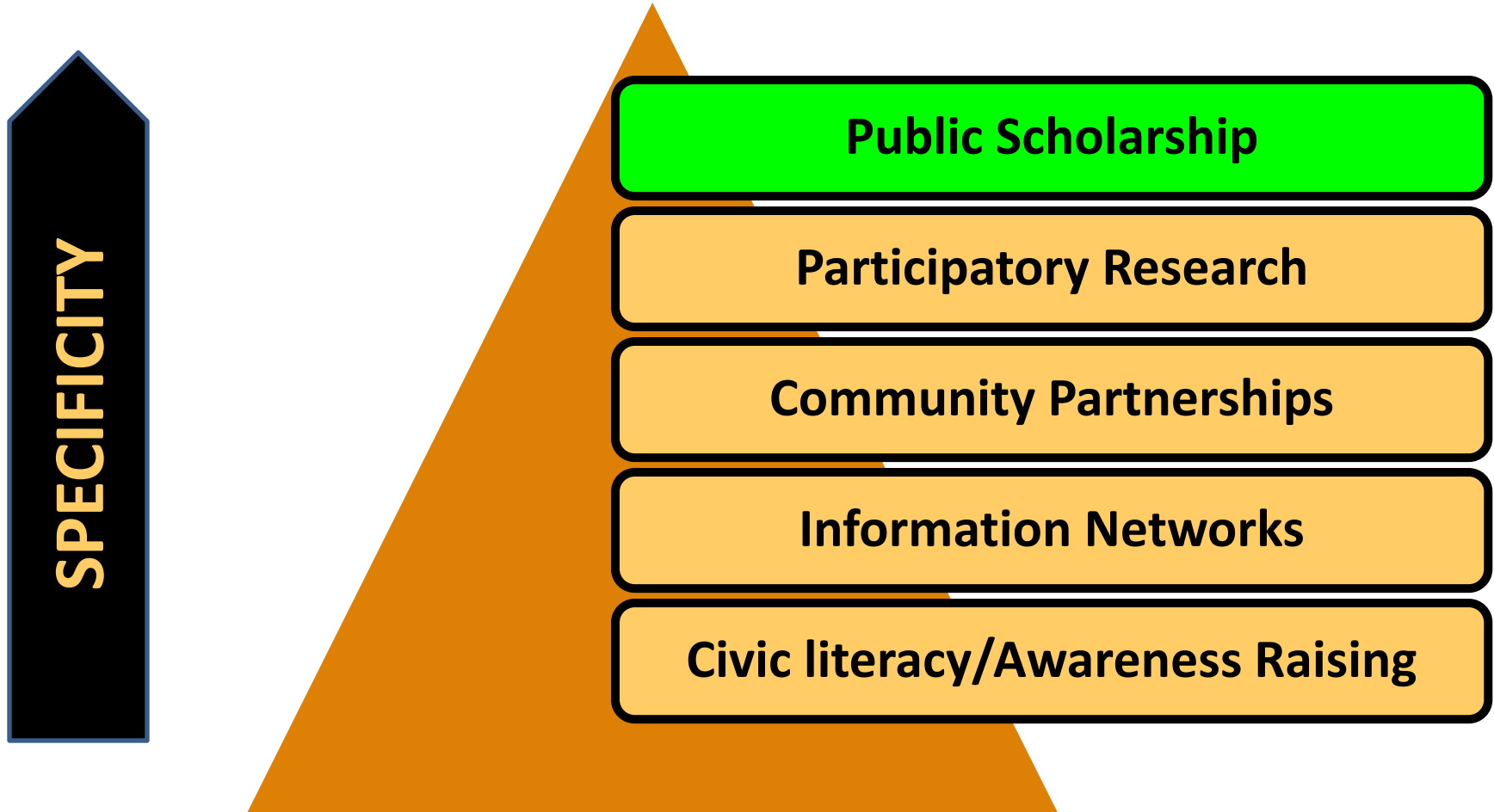
## Objectives

## Outcomes

- Increase capacity to share and respond to feelings, foster closer ties to family, friends and community.  Improved sense of connection among family members
- Increase capacity to share and respond to feelings, foster closer ties to family, friends and community.  Increase understanding about benefits of appropriate communication
- Promote strategies to attend to physical, mental and emotional needs.  Increase use of coping skills among family members
- Increase capacity to share and respond to feelings.  Increased awareness of emotional needs



# A Taxonomy of Engaged Scholarship

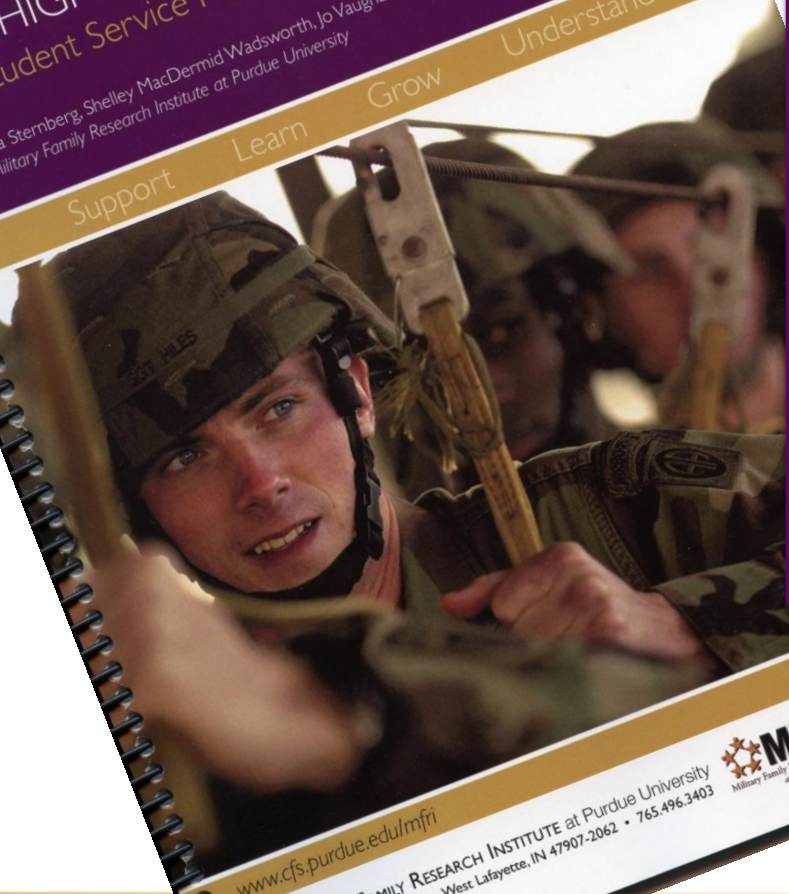


April 2009

# THE HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE for Student Service Members and Veterans in Indiana

Martina Sternberg, Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Jo Vaughan, and Ryan Carlson  
The Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University

Support Learn Grow Understand



[www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri](http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri)  
THE MILITARY FAMILY RESEARCH INSTITUTE at Purdue University  
1402 West State Street, PWF • West Lafayette, IN 47907-2062 • 765.496.3403



# OPERATION Diploma

*An initiative of the Military Family Research Institute  
at Purdue University*

Many service members and veterans are students in institutions of higher education, and GI Bill benefits make it possible for them to enter or re-enter college or university. Federal statutes and military enlistment incentives have created significant funding structures to assist these students in paying for higher education, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill and forgiveness of student loans.

Enrollment in top schools increased  
82% to 133%







**Challenges of  
Engaged  
Scholarship –  
The Weeds  
Have Thorns!**

# Contextual Community Prevention

- Necessary ingredients
  - Mobilization of the targeted community
  - A sense of ownership
  - Methods for long-term sustainability

(Morales, 2009)

# Dilemmas of Community Partnerships

(Faubert, 2009)

- **The Process-Product Dilemma:** How to take the time to let collaborative processes play out – but generate the product on time (aka “It’s faster to do it myself”)
- **The Insider-Outsider Dilemma:** Insiders rule!
- **The Bottom Up/Top Down Dilemma:** How to serve the needs of the community – and find a funder who approves.

# Specific Thorns

- Uneven interest in military issues
- Power struggles
- Capacity for work
- Shifting from awareness to mobilization
- Documenting meaningful impact
- Maintaining engagement and motivation
- The 'center of the universe' problem



# Allen County Fort Wayne

# Bartholomew County/Columbus

# Tippecanoe County/West Lafayette

# Vanderburgh County Evansville

# Vigo County Terre Haute

Mean	Status	Mean	Status
2.43	Green	2.43	Green
2.33	Yellow	2.10	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	1.75	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.10	Yellow
1.75	Yellow	2.33	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.56	Red
1.50	Red	1.80	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.92	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.82	Yellow
1.20	Red	1.33	Red
2.17	Yellow	1.38	Red
1.67	Yellow	1.73	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.30	Red
1.60	Red	1.90	Yellow
1.75	Yellow	1.30	Red
2.00	Yellow	1.64	Red
1.80	Yellow	1.70	Yellow
1.25	Yellow	1.55	Yellow
1.67	Red	1.67	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.25	Yellow
1.80	Yellow	1.20	Red
1.33	Red	1.00	Red
1.00	Red	1.11	Red
1.00	Red	1.50	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.45	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.50	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.30	Red
1.75	Yellow	1.44	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.10	Red
2.00	Yellow	1.67	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	1.82	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.50	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.78	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.67	Yellow
1.25	Red	1.63	Yellow

Mean	Status	Mean	Status
1.75	Yellow	1.75	Yellow
1.71	Yellow	1.50	Red
1.83	Yellow	2.33	Yellow
1.50	Yellow	2.25	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.25	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.75	Yellow
1.67	Yellow	2.25	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.33	Red
2.33	Yellow	1.33	Red
1.33	Red	1.25	Red
1.33	Red	1.33	Red
1.50	Red	1.75	Yellow
1.29	Red	1.75	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.75	Yellow
1.43	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.67	Red	1.50	Red
1.50	Red	1.75	Yellow
1.40	Red	1.50	Red
1.83	Yellow	1.50	Red
1.83	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.20	Red	1.33	Red
1.00	Red	1.00	Red
1.00	Red	1.00	Red
1.20	Red	1.00	Red
1.20	Red	1.00	Red
1.43	Red	1.50	Yellow
1.20	Red	1.67	Yellow
1.14	Red	1.25	Red
1.00	Red	1.33	Red
1.83	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.67	Yellow	1.75	Yellow
1.83	Yellow	1.67	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.50	Red
1.43	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.67	Yellow

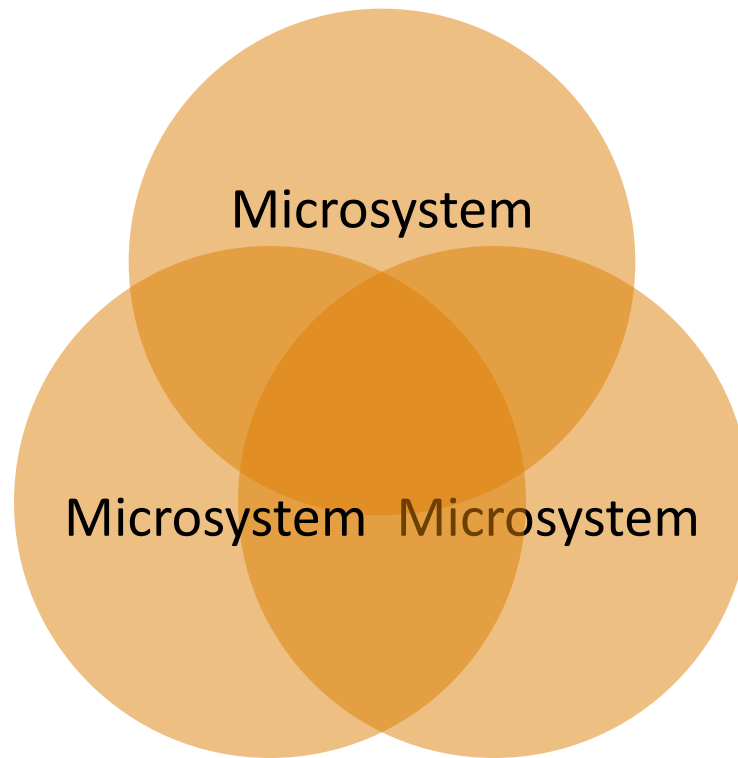
Mean	Status	Mean	Status
2.17	Yellow	1.92	Yellow
1.29	Red	1.00	Red
1.25	Yellow	1.33	Red
1.50	Red	1.14	Red
1.50	Red	1.25	Red
1.38	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.57	Red	1.67	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.57	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.57	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.40	Red
1.33	Red	1.50	Red
1.54	Red	1.58	Red
1.43	Red	1.22	Red
1.78	Yellow	1.64	Red
1.43	Red	1.10	Red
1.67	Red	1.78	Yellow
1.67	Red	1.88	Yellow
1.00	Red	1.33	Red
1.33	Red	1.38	Red
1.50	Red	1.50	Red
1.33	Red	1.20	Red
1.00	Red	1.13	Red
1.00	Red	1.00	Red
1.00	Red	1.29	Red
1.50	Red	1.63	Red
2.25	Yellow	1.60	Yellow
1.40	Red	1.13	Red
1.00	Red	1.33	Red
1.00	Red	1.00	Red
1.33	Red	1.70	Yellow
2.17	Yellow	1.67	Yellow
1.80	Yellow	1.71	Yellow
2.20	Yellow	1.56	Yellow
1.80	Yellow	1.33	Red
1.50	Red	1.33	Red

Mean	Status	Mean	Status
2.50	Green	2.14	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.60	Red
1.67	Yellow	1.71	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
2.50	Green	2.40	Green
2.00	Yellow	1.83	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.17	Yellow
1.33	Red	2.25	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	1.67	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.00	Red
1.83	Red	1.56	Red
2.17	Yellow	2.11	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	1.89	Yellow
2.25	Yellow	2.22	Yellow
2.50	Green	1.88	Yellow
2.33	Yellow	1.88	Yellow
2.33	Yellow	1.88	Yellow
2.50	Green	1.67	Yellow
2.67	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.50	Red	1.33	Red
1.67	Yellow	1.00	Red
1.00	Red	1.00	Red
1.50	Red	1.25	Red
1.00	Red	1.50	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	1.75	Yellow
2.67	Green	1.63	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	1.75	Yellow
1.67	Yellow	1.29	Red
2.80	Green	2.25	Yellow
2.75	Green	2.38	Green
2.75	Green	2.33	Green
3.00	Green	2.40	Green
2.40	Green	2.17	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.00	Yellow

Mean	Status	Mean	Status
1.71	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.60	Red	1.00	Red
1.20	Red	0.00	Red
1.25	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
2.25	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
2.00	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.50	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.60	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.00	Red
1.38	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.40	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.17	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.43	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.33	Red	0.00	Red
1.75	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.60	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.50	Red
1.40	Red	0.00	Red
1.25	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.33	Red	0.00	Red
1.00	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.00	Red	0.00	Red
1.00	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.00	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.75	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.33	Red	1.00	Red
1.00	Red	0.00	Red
1.83	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.50	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.75	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.80	Red	2.00	Yellow
1.75	Yellow	2.00	Yellow
1.50	Red	2.00	Yellow

# A Few Implications for Families Affected by Polytrauma





- ...for outcomes reflecting developmental *competence*, proximal processes are likely to have greatest impact in the most advantaged environments.
- ...the greater developmental impact of proximal processes growing up in poor environments is to be expected to occur mainly for outcomes reflecting developmental *dysfunction*

Bronfenbrenner & Morris (2006, p. 807)

# Consequences of Weak Mesosystems and Other Challenges

- Cumulative disadvantage
- Cascades of risk
- Mutual exacerbation – accelerating negative trajectories

(Brenner, Vanderploeg, & Terrio, 2009)

# Polytrauma Requires a 'Poly' Approach

- Holistic life course perspective:

- Cognitive
- Interpersonal
- Mood
- Functional skills
- Personal and family relationships

(Uomoto & Williams, 2009)

- Employment – many factors implicated in whether, when and how successfully someone can return to work

(Kissinger, 2008)

- VHA Polytrauma System of Care – postcombat integrated care teams. On-stop shopping model. NOT a hub-and-spoke model.
- Need for family support
- Importance of peer mentors

(Uomoto & Williams, 2009)

We are in a critical period



# Thank you for your kind attention, and thanks to...

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**QUESTIONS PLEASE**