

YYROC Announcement

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Subject: Introducing our New Yellow Ribbon Regional Outreach Coordinators (UNCLASSIFIED)
To:

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Greetings Yellow Ribbon Communities.

It is with great excitement that I am writing to all of you to introduce our new Yellow Ribbon Regional Outreach Coordinators (YRROC). New Yellow Ribbon Regional Outreach Coordinators you say? Who are these YRROC people and what are they for? Let me tell you about these exciting new staff.

About a year ago I took over as the Interim director of Minnesota National Guard Family Programs. Soon after I took over, we entered into some great working group discussions with Ms. Annette Kuyper director of Military Outreach, Tiffany Kovaleski Building Healthy Military Communities, as well as several of my Family Programs lead staff, and MN Guard Leadership. The topic was our Yellow Ribbon Communities. We knew our Yellow Ribbon Communities were doing great things, but we also realized some of our communities were beginning to lose momentum after 10+ years of active support to Service members and Veterans. While some Yellow Ribbon Communities are still moving forward as strong as ever, some were requesting additional support from Annette and our Family programs Staff. We knew that we wanted to strengthen our communities, but we lacked the staff to respond to those requests for support. Minnesota is a large state with many Yellow Ribbon Communities, and we wanted to know what ways would be most beneficial to help networks sustain their efforts. After several working groups and discussions with community leaders, we held a feedback panel to see what would be most beneficial and helpful for our Networks. You responded with great feedback, and we listened! The YRROCS are a result of these requests and feedback. Some great things were identified, that the YRROCs will be working to provide the communities with including; Network leader training, providing training on how to become a 501(c)(3), techniques and best practices for fundraising, recruiting volunteers, data privacy and assisting your network with getting integrated into regional events, among many others. We hope to have

many of these trainings and best practices ready to share by JCF events in MAY of 2019. We know being a local leader in your community is a lot of work, and as a volunteer you're doing that work on donated time. Our YRROCs are there to assist you as network leaders in any way that you need. We love our community leaders, and we want to help you and your networks stay strong for years to come.

To help clarify roles, let me help ensure you, our YRROCS are not in charge of our Yellow Ribbon Communities, They are there to do everything possible to work for you as network leaders, and help you with things you need. All our communities are all independent, autonomous, and self-led, with their own goals and objectives. Our YRROCS are in no way supervisory, and they won't tell you how to run your network, but their job is to share best practices, and if a neighboring community is doing great things, their job is to share that with other communities so they don't have to reinvent the wheel for themselves. As full time employees, it's also much easier for them to keep connected with all of our key support partners, like our County Veteran Service officers, MACV, DEED, Family Programs, ETC. They can attend meetings with organizations, share initiatives, and partnership opportunities coming from these organizations with you as communities leaders. If you are looking for new ways to get involved, or want to know what ways you can share in having an impact in your larger regions, ask your YRROC, and they can help get you connected.

Our YRROCS are aligned regionally with Rachel Johnson in Northern Minnesota, Sammi Korinek in Central, and Mike Windsperger in Southern MN. You can see their contact information and regions in the attached newsletter which we hope to continue to publish monthly to share all the good things our yellow ribbon communities are doing across the state.

Many of you know the familiar faces of Annette Kuyper and Tiffany Kovaleski, have no fear Annette and Tiffany will continue to be involved in the Yellow Ribbon Circles. Annette will continue this year with a focus on building Yellow Ribbon companies, We hope to start bridging Yellow Ribbon Company volunteers with their local BTYR communities this year- if they sounds interesting to you, reach out through your YRROC we would love to connect companies to their local BTYR events.

Tiffany will continue to work with BTYR communities through her role as Building Healthy Military Communities coordinator. Her role this year will be more focused on bringing national and state level connections down to the communities. Stay tuned for more updates on this.

Myself - CPT GADES will continue as our YRROCS Full time supervisor and will

continue to ensure my Family Programs staff are working side by side with our dedicated volunteers to assist each other whenever possible.

Lastly - We want to brag about all the good work you all are doing and share the good news. If you have good news stories please forward them on to your YRROC so we share them with the rest of our BTYR Family.

If you have any questions about our new YRROCS please don't hesitate to call or ask. Thank you all so much for your work as volunteers, and know that our team is always willing to reach out and help our communities with their action plan and goals.

Respectfully,
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