

# C PERATORS

Bob & Barbara Zielinski, Executive Co-Directors

## GREAT GRANT NEWS!

The Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance (TVC/FVA) has awarded Marriage Management a grant for the fiscal year July 2013 to June 2014. We will offer FREE marriage programs to 200 veteran and military couples (400 participants)!

This grant will allow us to schedule and staff programs all over the state reaching our to active, retired, veterans and reserve military families.

With the draw down of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, Texas expects 100,000 military to settle in North Texas and another 100,000 in the San Antonio area. This grant is part of how Texas offers supplemental and support services to honor and thank veterans and wounded warriors for their service. As part of our outreach, MMC has signed cooperating agreements with two new partners: Patriot Kids Ministries in Salado, Texas (15 minutes from Ft. Hood) and the Tarrant County Spiritual Leadership Network (Fort Worth). These partners will allow us to offer programs in non-military settings, making them more accessible to veterans. Our plans include working with the large, regional Veteran Centers in DFW, Waco, Denton, Houston and El Paso as the year progresses.

## Military Marriage Enrichment Schedule

All Veteran and Military Couples Welcome!

### Fall 2013

**Sept 28**

Patriot Retreat Center, Salado TX

**Oct 5**

Lena Pope Trng. Center, Ft. Worth

**Oct 27**

Patriot Retreat Center, Salado TX

**Nov 2**

NAS-JRB, Ft. Worth

**Nov 15-17**

Camp Cope, Hunt, TX

**Dec 14**

Patriot Retreat Center, Salado TX

### 2014

**Jan 18**

NAS-JRB, Fort Worth

**Jan 25**

Patriot Retreat Center, Salado TX

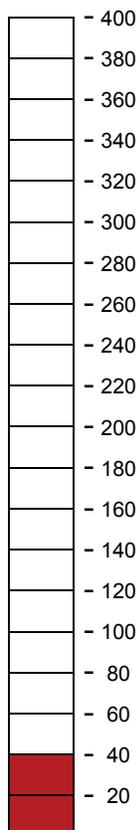
Two programs under this grant are already completed: July 17 at Ft. Hood and Aug 31 at NAS-JRB.

Thirty six people have attended; 21 military and 15 spouses. Several of the couples were both military. Check the GOAL METER on the left.

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### TVC/FVA GRANT PARTICIPANT GOAL



## Donors

*Our special thanks* to NAS-JRB Fort Worth Robert P. Taylor Chapel Congregation, led by Chaplain Mark Tews, who sent us a donation to support our programs there on base. Our next class there is November 2, 2013.

We also received a donation from Bob and Barbara Lovelace, who have been consistent supporters and advisors for over six year! Thank you!



**Important  
Charity Codes**



**Combined Federal  
Campaign  
CFC#17228**



**State Employees  
Charitable Campaign  
SECC#283522**

If you are a Federal or State Employee in Texas, please consider pledging to Marriage Management in this year's campaign!

**HELP US HELP  
THOSE WHO  
SERVE OUR  
COUNTRY**

You can donate directly on our website to help support our mission:

**[www.marriagemanagement.org/donate.html](http://www.marriagemanagement.org/donate.html)**



**CFC/SECC Campaign Time**

MMC, Inc. has been approved for 4 Campaigns among government workers in the state:

- 1) Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) North Texas
- 2) State Employee Charitable Campaign (SECC) Statewide
- 3) Dallas County Employees Campaign (DCEC) Dallas Employees
- 4) Fort Hood Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

In the past five years the campaigns associated with the CFC/SECC have provided more than half of our operating budget so these donations are very important.

Kick-offs begin in mid-September. Pledges to the 2013 campaign will be open from September to December. These donations are sent to directly MMC on a quarterly basis. We often schedule and present programs in anticipation of funds we will receive from CFC.

We are especially proud to be approved for these campaigns since they have stringent criteria to make sure donated money is spent on programs rather than overhead or administrative costs.

MMC also spent time rebutting the recent OPM rule changes that would essentially eliminate small non-profits like MMC from competing for these donations.

**If you are or have friends who are state or federal employees (including military) We suggest pledging to Marriage Management!**

Please note our agency codes in the margin to the left.

**Better Marriages Premier  
Military Outreach**

Our new national partner, Better Marriages, formerly ACME, sponsored it's first ever Military Marriage Class as part of it bi-annual conference in Raleigh, North Carolina July 13. Military couples attending were invited to attend the 4 days conference free of charge.

Seventeen couples, mostly from nearby Ft. Bragg and Camp LeJeune attended the all day Saturday class led by the Zielinskis.

The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. Many couples asked for additional time. For most, it was their first time attending a marriage enrichment event. One veteran Better Marriages couple and a pastor from the area were among the attendees.

Better Marriages is starting a MEG (Marriage Enrichment Group) near Ft. Bragg as a monthly refresher. We are very excited about working with Better Marriages, a long standing nationwide Marriage Education organization.

Priscilla Hunt, better Marriages Executive Director, is very excited about this new outreach for their organization. We are hoping to do classes in Tampa and St. Louis when funds become available.

*(www.BetterMarriages.org)*

**IF YOU OWN A BUSINESS,  
PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING  
THE MILITARY MARRIAGE  
ENRICHMENT PROJECT  
YOUR PATRIOTIC PARTNER.**



## New Evaluation Answers

Thoughtful comments from new post session question given to participants in the Military Marriage Enrichment

### What challenges did you face prior to participating in this program?

- ◆ Communication”
- ◆ “Communication Essential Skills”
- ◆ “Divorce”
- ◆ “Not so confident that we both were over our past relationships.”
- ◆ “Small arguments.”
- ◆ “We had minor issues, wanted to take this class so we could build our relationship.”
- ◆ “Not understanding why my wife gets mad and not understanding why she is upset.”
- ◆ “Time to communicate.”
- ◆ “Working through our money issue.”
- ◆ “Communicating with my husband and being criticized by my husband on almost daily basis.”
- ◆ “Disagreements with constant arguing.”
- ◆ “Admitting my mistakes.”
- ◆ “The fact that I felt I might have to open-up about things I did not want to.”

### How did this program help you overcome these challenges?

- ◆ “Found out that I need to communicate better with my wife due to our professional field.”
- ◆ “Communication skills were presented with interactive knee to knee posture to reinforce skills.”
- ◆ “My current relationship will be enriched with the lessons me and my partner learned.”
- ◆ “We openly & positively discussed the issues and brought us together.”
- ◆ “See both sides”
- ◆ “It helped understand to think about extrovert & introverts and to think about how my hubby feels.”
- ◆ “It made me more understanding why I need to listen to her more and understand why I need to compromise.”

- ◆ “Gave us a minute to talk to each other.”
- ◆ “We’ve agreed to sit down & analyze our spending habits.”
- ◆ “My timing. When it’s the best time to bring up my concerns to my husband.”
- ◆ “It opened my eyes to some unhealthy behaviors being committed on my behalf.”
- ◆ “Talking about our problems in a mature and fashionable manner”
- ◆ “Gave some new insights and fun.”
- ◆ “Showed me how to listen to my spouse without giving negative feedback.”

### Where would you be if this program did not exist?

- ◆ “At a dead end.”
- ◆ “Lacking communication essential skills.”
- ◆ “Divorced again? But I don’t plan on another bad marriage.”
- ◆ “Today– at the TCU & LSU tailgate party. In the relationships- still debating on how to make the next step.”
- ◆ “Still with small arguments.”
- ◆ “Still have small arguments & not think about how I’m very outspoken & he is to himself.”
- ◆ “Probably less understanding on what my wife feels and made our marriage harder.”
- ◆ “We keep slipping back & forth with communication. This program helped us get back on track. Without this tool, we would be awful.”
- ◆ “Our marriage would be moving but programs like this help the marriage to move in a positive direction.”
- ◆ “Probably at home defending myself.”
- ◆ “We would be lost and back at square one.”
- ◆ “Ignorant of behaviors & ways to resolve conflict.”
- ◆ “At home doing absolutely nothing.”





### OUR PARTNERS

These Organizations Are Supporting  
The Military Marriage Enrichment Project



### PATRIOT KIDS MINISTRIES



### Better Marriages

Educating Couples - Building Relationships



### MARRIAGE MANAGEMENT

CONSULTANTS, INC. SINCE 1981



Fleet and Family Support Center  
Robert P. Taylor Chapel



# WE ARE GROWING!



### Impact: Participants’ Comments and Suggestions:

#### What I liked best about the class was:

- ◆ “Different exercises to reinforce communication skills.”
- ◆ “Very helpful”
- ◆ “The experience that was shared. The environment. The advice and good will care of the host. The people that came.”
- ◆ “The interaction & hearing what others had to say.”
- ◆ “The SMART Card was the one I thought would be good to use to compromise and understand why my wife is going through.”
- ◆ “Being able to discuss issues with my spouse.”
- ◆ “Spending time together & exploring ways to improve our marriage.”
- ◆ “It was realistic and fun.”
- ◆ “Openness & practical exercises.”
- ◆ “Positive instructors and the stories they shared.”
- ◆ “The interactions with our peers and directors.”
- ◆ “Was the hands on approach, not just sitting, listening to a lecture.”
- ◆ “All of the partner and group activities were very helpful. The skits and scenarios were a real life situation that I could understand.”
- ◆ “It opened my eyes to real-life situations that occur in relationships. It was taught by an experienced couple.”
- ◆ “That the instructors are married. They have real life lessons. Sometimes they used situations that were recent that they worked through on the spot. It really helped me think that “I can do this.” They are doing it!”
- ◆ “An actual married couple, who are not out trying to promote a book, web site or something of that nature. They had good exercises and examples.”
- ◆ “Even though my husband wasn’t able to be here with me, I was still able to gain something from this class. I was able to open-up and be able to learn some of the issues I brought to my marriage. All the information taught today was presented with solutions!”

Editor’s Note: 

#### Bring on the “MEGs”

An 8 hour marriage class is a great eye opener and 20,000 mile tune-up for a relationship, but we know long term behavior changes take time and practice. Evaluations from participants consistently ask for more time or follow-up. So, we want to introduce you to MEGs — Marriage Enrichment groups, developed by Better Marriages more than 40 years ago.

**What is a MEG?** It is a once a monthly meeting with other couples to practice positive communication skills. It normally lasts 2 hours. It has a short lesson, an exercise to complete privately, knee to knee time with your spouse and group discussion on how to build better communication. Refreshments are often served. Bob & Barbara have been involved with support groups since 1972. “They have helped us build and practice good communication skills with other couples who are also working to build their marriages.”

MEGs and need for a relationship with a nationwide organization are the main reason for the partnership between MMC and Better Marriages. The military class at the Better Marriages conference was a kick off for that group to reach out to military couples around the country.

With leadership from a local, trained Better Marriages leader couple, a MEG has been established in the area near Ft. Bragg. We are exploring establishing groups in both the Waco and Ft. Hood area. The Texas chapter of Better Marriages has a grant and has already established a group in Ft. Worth. We hope to grow a branch of it into a military MEG.

We hope to establish groups in the St. Louis, Washington D.C., and Camp Pendleton CA areas.

*(www.BetterMarriages.org)*





## **MARRIAGE SHOULD NOT BE A HIDDEN CASUALTY OF WAR!**

### **THE MILITARY MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM—WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?**

- ◆ It's an 8 hour class or longer retreat;
- ◆ Presented by a veteran married couple;
- ◆ A safe, relaxed, fun atmosphere;
- ◆ A chance to reconnect with your spouse or loved one;
- ◆ Voluntary group activities, private dialogue time and shared wisdom;
- ◆ Time to develop better relationship and resiliency skills;
- ◆ Manage triggers and destructive behaviors;
- ◆ Tips on communication styles & conflict resolution;
- ◆ Hints for staying in love and supporting each other;
- ◆ Participants receive a 200 page participant manual, a Certificate of Completion and a special commemorative challenge coin.

*Please tell every Vet you know  
about these free classes!*

*Register at: [www.MarriageManagement.org](http://www.MarriageManagement.org)*



## **MARRIAGE MANAGEMENT**

CONSULTANTS, INC. SINCE 1981



**Serving those who serve our country**

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