

July 18, 2016

Dr. David E. Procter, Director  
Center for Engagement and Community Development  
202 Ahearn Field House  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan KS 66506

Dear Dr. Procter:

As Director of the Institute for the Health and Security of Military Families at Kansas State University, I am pleased to submit this CECD Grant Report for the project: **GratitudeAmerica MIL-SERV Retreats Program: Military Support and Educational Retreats for Veterans (MIL-SERV) – Communities Serving Our Service Members, Veterans and Their Families After War.**

The original CECD Grant amount was \$9,500, which was funded 7/1/14, with the goal of providing one retreat in Kansas. Since July 2014, we have participated in conducting research for 8 additional retreats in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, and Virginia, and we will be conducting a Kansas retreat in August 2016. To date, we have collected pre, post, and follow-up data as well as assisted with the retreat applications and evaluations for 11 retreats, serving over 180 Service Members/Veterans and their primary support persons since 2013. In 2015, our team was able to obtain funding from the Walter Reed Foundation to continue the retreats program in 2016—the August retreat will be our 3<sup>rd</sup> retreat with WRF, with an additional retreat in Connecticut planned in November 2016, and 5 retreats planned for 2017. Our goal is to continue to bring these retreats back to the original locations near Washington DC, Chicago IL, Manhattan KS, Connecticut, and add Arizona to serve the western US. Just since August 2015, we have over 95 Veterans who have applied for the Bridging the Gap Retreats from 25 states.

We presented our Bridging the Gap Retreats Model in August 2015 at a workshop at the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy annual conference in Austin TX, and we have additional presentations at the National Council on Family Relations and the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies annual conferences this fall. In addition, I am attaching a manuscript with our preliminary data that was submitted in May to *Family Process*, a premiere journal in our field. In addition, the military newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, conducted a 3-part story on the retreat model:

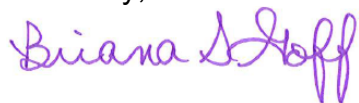
<http://www.stripes.com/news/couples-look-for-ways-to-heal-relationships-psychological-wounds-of-war-at-virginia-retreat-1.409957>

This grant has provided the Institute and our partners with an excellent opportunity for us to develop the research program for the Retreats, as well as provide staff on site to assist with the programming at many of the retreats these past 2 years. The WRF funding received last year has also allow the retreats model to be sustained and provided nationally at key locations to serve veterans and military populations in those regions. What we have achieved

through the preliminary CECD Grant funding has allowed us to continue to develop the program, secure additional funding, and establish a strong research base as we move forward in our work to serve veterans and their family members. Although our original plan was to conduct a Kansas Retreat with the CECD grant funds, I believe we have accomplished much more by being able to utilize the funds to support our research through multiple sites across the country, serving many more than the original proposed 10 veteran couples in Kansas.

Thank you for your support of our work.

Sincerely,



Briana S. Nelson Goff, Ph.D.  
Director, Institute for the Health and Security of Military Families  
Professor, School of Family Studies and Human Services  
College of Human Ecology  
Kansas State University