

Engaging the Military Student Community in the K-State Academic Culture
Report of Progress

By

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I Discussion of Year 2 Activities (for a chronological list of events, see *Appendix A*)

During the first year of our grant, we had held two visioning workshops facilitated by Terrie McCants where participants from campus and post communities spawned ideas for productive interaction. The need for better communication and information was a key theme that emerged, yet simply establishing a weblog did nothing to stimulate a sustained conversation among those who attended. Our counterpart at Educational Services on post was replaced. However, we learned that the outgoing General was highly enthusiastic about the aims of this project, and the K-State World Bank project in Afghanistan provided us with a new platform to strengthen our relationship with the post by interacting with Transition Team trainers at Camp Funston. Delivery of books to Kabul facilitated by Ft. Riley personnel and two receptions (one at Hale Library, the other at Camp Funston) mixing Afghan National Army members with K-State faculty, librarians, and students were well-attended events that generated much enthusiasm on all sides.

We have sought in the second year of our grant to firm up relationships between K-State faculty and students with organizational units at Ft. Riley. A natural pairing occurs between Student Governing Association (SGA) and Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers (BOSS), a sub-division of Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) on post. Lydia Peele, SGA President, attended with K-State officials the K-state Appreciation Day at Ft. Riley, and encouraged visits by the 2007 BOSS president, Ryan Gardner, to Student Senate. Existing relationships between BOSS and students from Apparel, Textiles, and Interior Design (ATID) were sustained by the annual spring fashion show, supported by Manhattan and Junction City merchants. And a new relationship with initiated between the K-State cycling club and MWR's recreation program, designed to increase the safe use of bicycles on post, campus, and in between.

Faculty interest in collaboration has been largely in the area of Extension. We looked for themes that students and soldiers have in common, and one that we felt had great potential was financial planning. At the 2007 *Movies on the Grass* feature "Maxed Out" concerning credit card debt, participating faculty from Human Ecology discussed with us the possibility of combining students and soldiers in a local version of the *America Saves* (www.americasaves.org) program, but that attempt was forestalled by the separate *Military Saves* (www.militarysaves.org) program, and news of a pending cooperative agreement between K-State Extension and Ft. Riley that might incorporate personal financial planning. Among library faculty, several have joined in a book reading club initiated by former Col. John Nagl, participated in cultural training exercises with Camp Funston transition teams, and a joint medical information cataloging project (Go Local) paired staff from K-State libraries and the library at Irwin Army Hospital.

Finally, to summarize opportunities for mutual engagement to a wider audience, we hired the Educational Communications Center to produce two 30-second public service announcements. We also created www.ksu.edu/takepart, updated bi-weekly, with a calendar of events and on-going opportunities for campus/post interaction.

II Summary List of Outcomes

- Greater exposure of K-State Libraries to the Ft. Riley population
 - Distribution of soldier-oriented library information brochures, *Collegian*, and *Ft. Riley Post* on both sites
- Joint partnership developing campus and military Appreciation Days
 - 4/1 K-State Appreciation Day at Ft. Riley
 - 9/6 Military Appreciation Day at K-State
- Recurring interactions based on community-wide events
 - Quarterly Community Partnership Conferences (CPCs) at Riley Conference Center
 - Afghanistan: *One Book One Community* events, October
 - Ft. Riley/K-State Libraries Professional Reading Group (see *Appendix B*)
- Collaborative projects support and promotion
 - BOSS /ATID fashion shows
 - K-State cycling, MWR recreation sharing information, opportunities
 - Global medical information cataloging
 - Afghanistan book donation delivery
- Distribution of information
 - Revised library brochures for soldiers and families
 - New website: www.ksu.edu/takepart
 - PSA's
- Joint publications
 - Cornwallis Group publication of proceedings paper "Training for War Among the People"
 - Article "Academic Libraries on the Frontlines; Academic Libraries and Military in Partnership" for *College and Undergraduate Libraries Journal*

III Addressing identified constraints to campus/post interaction

Time/scheduling Training, deployment, and academic semester schedules dominate the lives of post and campus communities, but most young people seek escape during their free time, and Aggieville offers a common meeting-ground -- not always with positive results. We brought SGA attention to BOSS (Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers) by promoting its emphasis on non-commercial and non-alcoholic events. BOSS presidents have made attended SGA meetings, sharing informal surveys of students' attitudes toward soldiers and vice versa, as well as publicizing organized collaborative projects, such as an annual BOSS/ATID fashion show.

High overturn in populations We have recommended that a formal liaison role be written into the description of an SGA executive position so that routine contact with BOSS presidents continues to be made. Re-orientation of new commanding officers to collaborative efforts was achieved through the General's CPCs, through library participation in cultural events based on campus and post efforts in Afghanistan, and by joining in a wide array of civilian community shows of support for the troops. Acquainting new K-State faculty with Ft. Riley opportunities continued to be more challenging, except in the areas of Continuing Education and in Extension, where new positions are opening.

Lack of awareness We established a permanent website for announcing special events and on-going activities that increase opportunities for interaction at little or no cost. The Office of University Publications agreed to host the site, www.ksu.edu/takepart, with K-State Libraries' making an on-going commitment to bi-weekly updates. The website serves up a selection from half a dozen regional calendars, and includes on-going collaborations, such as book-reading clubs and sports opportunities. We have yet to establish a firm liaison relationship between the K-State Recreation Complex the Ft. Riley's Recreational Services, but the K-State Cycling club president visited MWR to begin planning joint cycling events, and a business in Manhattan offered space for a bicycle equipment swap meet in Spring of 2009.

Transportation/Parking/Permission Issues Our Takepart website features instructions for both campus and post access and maps, designed to ease what can be a discouraging first visit to either site. MWR and the International Programs Council have offered seasonal van-trips into Kansas City to which they are now inviting students and soldiers alike to participate. But these cannot resolve the second prominent need that was expressed in 2007 forums, that of a shuttle service between Ft. Riley and K-State (see *Future Project*)

IV Lessons Learned on Sustaining Engagement

The frequency of events that introduce individuals from post and campus to one another plays a major role in sustaining productive interaction. Though one might hope to see such meetings occur on a large scale, our experience has demonstrated 1) the challenge of attracting busy individuals in our region to a given event among many competing commitments, but more importantly 2) the more apparent results obtained from smaller, intimate venues, once individuals' true interests have prompted their attendance. An example of this begins with *Movies on the Grass*, a September outdoor film series advertized widely to soldiers and students, to which we invited post musicians' participation (unsuccessfully) during the 2007 showing of a Brazilian band. Only rarely have we had proof that soldiers in or out of uniform attended any of the films (e.g. three invited from Terrie McCants' conflict resolution course to a post-film discussion of "Operation Dreamland"). But a smaller spinoff event from the film "King Corn", a UFM class on alternative sweeteners, was attended by one Ft. Riley soldier who had seen the film, then bicycled from Ft. Riley to Manhattan for the class, learned about the K-State cycling club, and visited the Manhattan Public Library, subsequently attending a *One Book One Community* lecture and joining the FRPG book-reading club.

Our 2008 title selected by the *One Book One Community* committee, *Three Cups of Tea*, offers many lessons for engagement among diverse communities. The author Greg Mortenson knew very little about the people of Baltistan when he descended K-12 on the trek that launched his career in school-building. His continuously repeated visits for face-to-face socializing with village councils and families were critical to the inspiration, negotiation and execution of every subsequent project he conducted. Repeated conversations with individuals allowed him to learn about the personal stories and motivations of people, and also allowed them to correct him when he made mistakes. Our project has involved two years of repeated visits with variously-ranked officers, soldiers, and civilians on post, attempting to find partners who will promote attendance and interaction. In the military culture, it only requires an order for the former, but the latter has to come voluntarily.

V Future Project

At the outset of this project, we offered to look for critical needs expressed by post and campus communities for future grant collaborations. Public transportation between K-State and Ft. Riley would offer the single most effective means of integrating the two communities. We see the time as opportune, building on our good working relationships, to address the next Presidential administration's infrastructure priority, by writing grant proposals for a sustainable shuttle service, expanding on what K-State has employed in Park & Ride, along with the current Ft. Riley to Aggieville shuttle service.

VI Recommendations to Command-level Leadership at Ft. Riley and K-State:

- 1) Celebrate military/civilian collaboration at highly publicized events, such as Military Appreciation Day ceremonies at Snyder Stadium.
 - Offer an annual award to be given to *pairs* of campus and post individuals or units that have demonstrated outstanding efforts in mutual engagement. The award can be presented during Military Appreciation Day to offer attendees concrete examples of how they can engage.
 - Endorse the air-time inclusion of our PSA advertising the *Takepart* website at regular sporting events during 2009.

- 2) Coalesce statistics so that it is easier to determine routinely how many K-State students are military (past or currently active; distance-education, on-post, or on-campus) or associated (military spouse or family member). Being able to access those numbers and their contact details would help K-State better adjust programs to meet their needs, and would profile a population with the potential for greater collaboration between the two communities.

- 3) Move beyond the "client-server" model of interaction that is found so often in communities adjacent to military posts, by developing annual joint task forces to address a selected problem that is endemic to our entire population. Find local answers to the selected problem by creatively engaging the expertise and volunteerism we have in the northern Flint Hills region on problems such as personal finance, housing, and health care affordability. Where the solution cannot be implemented so locally, lobby jointly at higher levels, reinforcing each others' claims and commitments.

- 4) Increase media exposure to often under-publicized public events where nationally-known figures are featured. An example of this is the Political, Military, and Diplomatic Lecture series which, though funded through donations, features impressive speakers that rarely get media coverage. Both K-State and Ft. Riley would do well to promote their association with experts such as former Col. John Nagl, who is now regularly seen in the national media.

- 5) Develop a protocol for handing off successful partnerships as military counterparts rotate to other assignments. Such a protocol should respect the command latitude of the incoming leader, while preserving and perpetuating the mutually beneficial aspects of the partnership.

APPENDIX A Calendar of 2008 Ft. Riley/K-State Engagement Activities

Date	Event	Contacts	Notes
1/15	Officers Book Reading Club: <i>Fiasco</i>		
1/31	Military Affairs Briefing for President's Office	Art De Groat	
2/4	Met with SGA leadership	Dalton Henry	
2/6	Manhattan Military Affairs Council Meeting		
2/7	Ft. Riley/K-State cooperative MOU signing		
2/8	Soldier of Quarter Ceremonies		
2/13	Planning meeting with Army officers		
2/20	K-State Libraries cultural awareness training for Afghan National Army (ANA) reception plans		
2/25	Planning meeting with Army officers		
2/26	PDM (Political Diplomatic Military) dinner lecture: John Nagl		
2/27	Meetings with BOSS representatives to connect with Student Senate	Ryan Gardner Pooran Kareshma	
2/29	Ft. Riley Afghan National Army reception in Hale Library		
3/6	Visit and survey of Student Senate by BOSS Pres. Gardner		
3/7	Visit to Ft. Riley		
3/26	Planning meeting with Army officers		
4/1	Officers Book Reading Club: <i>The Sling and the Stone</i>		Included conference call with author
4/1	K-State Appreciation Day at Ft. Riley	President Wefald, Deans, SGA reps	Our project influenced the creation of this event
4/2	Manhattan Military Affairs Council Meeting		
4/5	BOSS/ATID fashion show	c. 200 attendees	
4/8	Afghan Dinner joint w/Office of Int'l. Programs		
4/22	General Durbin's monthly community partners meeting		
4/24	Follow-up visit by BOSS Pres. Gardner and V/Pres Kareshma to Student Senate with return survey from BOSS		
4/25	Planning meeting with Army officers		
4/26	BOSS/K-State Baseball event		
4/30	Host Army officers at SECDEF and CIA Landon Lectures		
5/2	Soldier of Quarter Ceremonies		
5/6	Officers Book Reading Club: 1) <i>Koran, Kalashnikov and Laptop</i> 2) <i>Charlie Wilson's War</i>		

5/7	Military Relations Council Meeting		
5/9	Visit to Ft. Riley - hospital library and annex	Phyllis Whitesides	
5/9	Soldier of the Quarter Ceremony		
5/13	Visiting Scholars from Kabul Univ. Present at DCC Transition Team training		
5/16	Planning meeting with Army officers		
5/16	Medical Library	Phyllis Whiteside	
5/16	Meet to evaluate potential joint publications.	D. Youngman, LTC Landers	Journal articles accepted for publication. In-process.
5/28	Meeting on proposed public services announcement	Jim Mock	Outline of purpose, audience, central msg. produced. (Videoldeas.doc)
6/5	Distribution of "KSUL welcomes Ft. Riley" brochures on post		
6/24	Officers Book Reading Club: <i>Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife</i>		
7/1	Soldier of the Year Ceremony	Numerous	Youngman asked to present
7/8	Military Relations Council	Numerous officers.	Discussed utilizing Afghan student scholars
7/9	1 st Brigade Change of Command Ceremony	D. Youngman invited to attend	Formally introduced to new brigade leadership-COL Wesley
7/22	Book Club <i>An Ordinary Man</i>		
7/23	Introduce Afghan project manager to Ft. Riley cultural unit.	LTC Landers, M. Schlatter, Diana Farmer, D. Schenck-Hamlin, D. Youngman	Plan for DCC utilization of Afghan graduate studentsd.
7/31	Afghan/US/ K-State Mixer/Cultural Dinner @ Ft. Riley	Many	Reciprocal of February 9 event
8/6	Manhattan Military Relations Council Meeting	D. Youngman, COL Ingram, CMSG Love, et.al.	
8/19	DCC Partnership meeting in Hale Library	LTC Landers	
8/27	Ft. Riley Sr. Leader Orientation Class. Youngman presented to group.	Numerous brigade commanders and senior non-commissioned officers..	Increased interest in and use of K-State Libraries by military.
8/28	Book Club <i>The Village</i>		
9/6	Military Appreciation Day at Snyder Stadium, K-State		
9/11	CECD Recognition Event	LTC Skrabacz	LTC Skrabacz spoke about benefits to Army of CECD

			project participation
9/19	Participated in Leadership Development Class at Ft. Riley presented by former Afghan Minister of the Interior Ali Jalali	D. Youngman LTC Norwood, MAJ Johnson, Minister Jalali, Les Grau	Youngman was formally introduced, led to projects with FMSO @ Ft. Leavenworth
9/25	Host Army officers at John Esposito lecture on Islam	LTC Landers, MAJ Potter, et.al.	Officers formally introduced- interacted with speaker during Q/A
10/2	GoLocal medical information project training	Donna, Phyllis Whitesides	Collaborative review project due December
10/7	Trip to KC WWI Museum with Counterinsurgency Group	LTC Landers	Establish context for academic role in military cultural training
10/28	Book Club <i>Tell Me How This Ends</i>		Included conference call with author
10/30	One Book One Community Event: <i>Lives of Women in Afghanistan</i>		
10/14	One Book One Community Event: <i>Re-building Afghanistan</i>		
12/2	Library presentation to the Ft. Riley Community Partnership Conference	BG Wiggins COL Gibbs	
12/2	Book Club <i>The Strongest Tribe</i>		

APPENDIX B Ft. Riley/K-State Libraries Professional Reading Group

This group is an open forum for the discussion of books relating to the military and societal aspects of counterinsurgency-“war among the people”. The group serves as both an Officer Professional Development opportunity and an academic forum. Participants are encouraged to contribute both military and civilian perspectives to the discussions.

Ft. Riley/K-State Libraries Professional Reading Group Reading List 2007-2008

Defence of Duffers Drift - A Lesson in the Fundamentals of Small Unit Tactics

E.D. Swinton

FM 3-24 The U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual

Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq

Thomas E. Ricks

Charlie Wilson's War

George Crile

The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century

Thomas X. Hammes

An Ordinary Man (Rwanda Insurgency)

Paul Rusesabagina

The Village

Bing West

The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World

Rupert Smith

Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons From Malaya and

Vietnam

John Nagl

Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq

Linda Robinson

The Strongest Tribe: War, Politics, and the Endgame in Iraq

Bing West