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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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By Sgt. Balinda O'Neal

National Guard and local non-profits collaborate to support veterans

Joint-Base Elmendorf Richardson, Alaska — The Alaska National Guard Warrior and Family Services program teamed up with the Alaska-Forget Me Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families in a workshop at the BP Energy Center April 16.

The free event focused on supporting Alaska's service members, veterans and families by collaborating with service and faith-based organizations in our community. The coalition's vision is to educate, inform and link services from Alaskan communities with SFV's to ensure a healthy future by focusing on five different areas; behavioral health, faith and service, finance, legal, and child and youth.

"We are really looking forward to the possibilities this program has to offer in terms of creating a mutual appreciation and growing understanding between Alaskan communities and the military members serving here," said State Command Chaplain (Col.) Richard Koch.

The coalition's focus is on statewide collaboration, community outreach, and education to identify gaps in services, enhance service delivery, minimize duplication of programs and maximize of existing funding.

Partners in Care, a newly-formed partnership between the Alaska National Guard and several faith-based organizations, links caring communities to support more than 4,000 Guardsmen and their families who face unique challenges because of their service.

"Partners in Care has helped us grow relationships with local faith-based organizations," explained Koch.

Faith Christian Community, Grace and Truth Christian Church, and the Conflict Resolution Center all signed an agreement of partnership with the Alaska National Guard as new members of Partners in Care. The purpose of the agreement is to provide faith-based support to those members of the AKNG and their families upon request.

These non-profits already provide various services to members of our community, and the partnership will facilitate an efficient referral opportunity for chaplains to help Guardsmen receive that specific

assistance.

The Alaska-Forget me Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families is continually striving to build community partnership to support SFV's.

The next event for the coalition is scheduled for August.

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A memorandum of understanding between the Partners in Care and the Alaska National Guard was signed during a workshop at the BP Energy Center April 16. The Partners in Care program reflects the desire to link caring communities in support of more than 4,000 Guardsmen and their families who face unique challenges because of their service. In attendance were, from the left, Chaplain Ted McGovern, JP Ouellette, program administrator and family mediator for the Conflict Resolution Center, Joel Brown, family pastor at Faith Christian Community, Col. Joseph Streff, commander of the Alaska Army National Guard and Don Marson, senior pastor at Grace and Truth Community Church. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Balinda O'Neal)

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Lt. Col. Kay Spear-Budd, the state family program director, speaks with JP Ouellette, program administrator and family mediator for the Conflict Resolution Center, during an Alaska-Forget Me Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families workshop held at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage April 16. The workshop included presentations on the Partners in Care and Adverse Childhood Experiences programs and afforded participants the opportunity to network and learn more about the coalition. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Balinda O'Neal)

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Alaska National Guard Warrior and Family Services and Army OneSource join members from across the community at the Alaska-Forget Me Not Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families workshop held at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage April 16. The workshop included presentations on the Partners in Care and Adverse Childhood Experiences programs and afforded participants the opportunity to network and learn more about the coalition. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Sgt. Balinda O'Neal)