



## MOAA President's Currently Serving Spouse Advisory Council 2015-2016

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**Kerry Brooks Bio** is a Global Product Manager, Organization Markets at the Project Management Institute (PMI), a not-for-profit professional association for project managers. Kerry has over 18 years of strategic marketing and product management experience. In her current role, Kerry helps global businesses and government agencies improve their capabilities in project management practices, specifically around talent management and development. She is currently working on an initiative within PMI to roll out a program to help military veterans translate and package their military skills for the civilian workforce, specifically within the profession of project management.

Prior to PMI, Kerry has held marketing and communications management positions in various industries including: agile consulting, pharmaceutical, flooring manufacturing, natural gas, and coin-operated entertainment.

Kerry has her Bachelor's Degree in Communications from Marist College and her Master's in Business Administration from Wilmington University. She also has her Certified Scrum Master Certification (CSM) from the Scrum Alliance. Her passions include spending time with her husband, son and extended family, reading, traveling around the world, and volunteer support activities for military families through "Delaware Boots on the Ground".



**Kimberly Cody** is a Veteran, the Daughter of a Veteran, Sister of a Veteran, Daughter In Law of a Veteran, Sister in law of a Veteran, Niece of a Veteran and the Spouse of an Active Duty Army Officer.

She graduated from the United States Military Academy with a degree in Management and Systems Engineering. She served as an Army Engineer Officer in the 101st Airborne Division from 2003-2009 deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003-2004 and 2007-2009. Upon leaving the military to pursue personal goals in the civilian sector, Kimberly worked for Defence Force Protection Systems as a Military Engineer and Brand Manager in Nashville, TN.

As an Active Duty military Spouse Kimberly served as a Unit Family Readiness Group Leader earning her the Marne Spirit Award in 2014 and also had an active role in the Brigade Level Family Readiness Group. She also has devoted a lot of time and effort to the West Point Society of Nashville and Savannah along with their Field Forces for future Cadet Admissions.

Kimberly resides in Northern Virginia with her Active Duty Army Husband and her two young sons.



**Rachel Conley** is a proud Coast Guard spouse and mother of three. She and her husband, Chief Warrant Officer James Conley, are high school sweethearts.

Rachel has devoted her life to serving the military community, dedicating countless hours to her extraordinary voluntary efforts. As a United States Coast Guard Ombudsman, Rachel directly supports thousands of service members and families, ensuring that they have the information and support needed to meet the challenges of a military lifestyle. As a preeminent Ombudsman Program ambassador and visionary, Rachel serves as a Coast Guard Ombudsman Training Instructor and the Fifth District Ombudsman Community of Practice Chairperson, providing mentorship, support, and wisdom to Coast Guard Ombudsmen,

Commands, and colleagues.

Rachel Conley's vast knowledge is frequently put to great use as an expert panelist and guest speaker, allowing her to passionately advocate for the needs of service members and families. Additionally, Rachel works extensively on multiple special projects, enhancing the Coast Guard Ombudsman Program and enriching the lives of the Coast Guard family and community.

Rachel's noteworthy accomplishments have earned her the United States Coast Guard Swivel Shot Award and three Presidential Volunteer Service Awards. Rachel was also named the San Diego Navy League Coast Guard Spouse of the Year in 2011.



**Lisa Curtin** has a degree in child development and was recently selected for the FINRA Foundation Military Spouse Fellowship Accredited Financial Counselor® Program. She is a dedicated volunteer for Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS), serving since 2011 as a caseworker and chair of volunteers. She was employed by NMCRS as interim director for the Corpus Christi office in 2013-2014. She currently volunteers in NMCRS Headquarters as a program specialist in training. Blue Star Families is another organization that Lisa is passionate about, and she volunteers at various events in the DC area. Lisa completed OMBUDSMAN training and served as a mentor for Naval Services Family Line's COMPASS Program. She's been an advisor and volunteer for various spouse

and family readiness groups during her 20+ years of marriage to her husband, an active duty naval aviator. She has worked as a substitute teacher for more than three years and has volunteered in schools that her children attended over the past 15 years. Lisa is a recipient of the 2013 Presidential Volunteer Service Award (Gold Level), the 2014 Yellow Rose of Texas Award, and the NMCRS Meritorious Service Award in 2013. She is the proud mother of Ryan, Michael and Sean.



**Nerissa Custer** grew up in Oregon and graduated from Oregon State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication and joined the U.S. Peace Corps, serving in Ghana, West Africa. She returned to the states and completed her Master of Arts degree in Communication-Public Relations at Eastern New Mexico University. She has enjoyed the opportunity of working within many organizations, across the spectrum, as the life of a military spouse has relocated her around the country.

Along with her career, she has volunteered in many organizations including the American Red Cross as a Services to Armed Forces Case Worker. She has supported military spouses and families over the years through various programs, including Key Spouse programs at several bases. She has been fortunate to have played a role in mentoring many active duty spouses, and is so thankful for the opportunities she has to support dual active duty families, young airman and single active duty parents.



**Scott Dardenelle** graduated from California State University at Northridge with a degree in communications in 2003. After working in sales for 7 years, two being in the medical field, he received his teaching credential from California State University at Bakersfield in secondary social sciences and English. During his first year as a teacher, he received his Masters of Education from Touro University with an emphasis in innovative learning, specifically project based learning, which he enjoys incorporating into his classrooms.

Currently, Scott stays busy with his 19 month old son, Troy where they enjoy hiking, biking, and touring the DC area together.



**Heather Escamilla** is a native of Maryland where she graduated from Towson State University with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. After marrying her Marine Corps spouse, Heather taught elementary school for the Department of Defense Dependent Schools in Okinawa, Japan during their initial assignment. Since that time, Heather has been deeply involved with the military and civilian communities while raising her family and actively supporting the families of her husband's units. A highlight of her volunteerism was the recent opportunity to serve as the senior advisor for a battalion family readiness program. In addition to volunteering at her children's schools, Heather has remained committed to various officer spouse organizations to include holding a variety of board positions on six different occasions while also serving as a facilitator for the Marine Corps Cornerstone Program for senior commanders and their spouses.

Heather has been married to her husband, a Marine Artillery Officer for 21 years and they have moved ten times (to include 2 overseas assignments) during that period. They have four children and currently reside in Stafford, VA.



**Terry Gruny** hails from Louisville, KY. For the last 16 years she has balanced a fulfilling home life with working as a contract manager. In addition to her contract and financial responsibilities, her clients depend on her to work closely with military event organizers, focusing on content management and strategic decisions that best fit the needs of the audience. She is known for her attention to detail.

Terry has held leadership positions on family readiness teams in multiple units. She carries a passion for helping to establish command climates that reinforce values of inclusiveness and family resilience. For the past two years she has focused her efforts on mentoring young spouses of drill instructors and on improving family support programs at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego. For her efforts through the years, she was the recipient of the Presidential Lifetime Volunteer Service Award in April, 2015.

Terry met her Marine in high school. They have been married for 29 years and have two grown sons. She believes that if you truly love someone, you fry chicken wings from scratch.



**Rita Owens** Rita Owens has an M.A. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and a B.A. in Psychology. For over ten years, she worked in municipal government personnel administration in southern California.

A Marine Corps wife for 33 years, Rita has served as Scholarship Advisor to several military spouses' clubs, as a board member, advisor, and volunteer at Marine Corps and Navy thrift stores, and as a community volunteer supporting children's causes. Rita has served on the Family Readiness team at all levels throughout her husband's career. She served as Lead Facilitator for the Spouses' Workshop (a companion program to the Commanders' Course at Quantico, VA), has volunteered with LINKS, LES, USO, Navy Marine Corps Relief Society, and a variety of other Marine Corps family support programs. She is a recipient of the Meritorious Public Service

Award from the Commander, US Naval Forces Europe. They have two grown sons and currently reside in Washington, D.C.



**Erica Parra** Erica Parra is a native of Greensboro, NC. She graduated from East Carolina University with a MBA in e-commerce and also holds an advance project management certificate from Stanford University. After graduation she started her career in supply chain management at Somera Communications in Santa Barbara, CA. Erica then moved to San Francisco, CA to continue her career at Intel Corporation where she resided for 9 years . While at Intel she received a number of awards for her service, one of which was the distinguished Division Recognition Award. She then found her creative skills being utilized as a training coordinator and director of Clinical Education at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston. Currently serving as the Vice President of Marketing at Burns Network Solutions, Erica is responsible for developing and implementing marketing strategy to drive operational effectiveness and enhance the customer experience.

Erica is a world traveler with a network of friends around the globe. She is married to an active duty Coast Guard officer, is a mother of three, and active in the PTA as well as the Coast Guard Spouses Club.

Supporting military families is a top priority for Erica. She is the founder and chair of the Military Family Support Group at her son's elementary school which directly aids and inspires confidence in 200 plus military students.



**Stacey Porter** graduated from Northwestern State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English education and received a Masters of Education in administration and supervision from the University of Phoenix. She has made her career in the public school system as an English teacher in the traditional high school classroom and the online classroom. She is currently the onsite and online English teacher for TC Williams High School in Alexandria, VA.

Stacey comes to MOAA from the National Guard Bureau Officer's Spouses Club, where she served as president for two years helping to support the welfare of National Guard Bureau (NGB) members and families assigned to the Washington, DC area.

Stacey's work with the NGBOSW helps to support military families with access to annual scholarships, social events, and information. As a military spouse she knows firsthand how important support organizations are the success of the military member and their family.



**Meredith Reed** graduated from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design, and a Bachelor of Science in Religious Studies. She later received her Masters of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University. In 2001 she was commissioned in the United States Air Force and served as a Chaplain as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee until 2007. As a chaplain, Meredith served at several bases in the United States, and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, as well as in locations across Europe.

In addition to serving in the Air Force, Meredith has been serving the military community in many other roles. She has been a consultant with the Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs, the Army Wounded Warrior Program, and the Department of Defense Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program. She has also provided volunteer leadership to the family support groups associated with her husband's assigned units.

Meredith and her husband are the proud parents of four amazing children. They call Park City, Utah home. In addition to enjoying the many outdoor activities, Meredith is an avid horseman.



**Makenzie Schulz** is a US Coast Guard spouse who has been working with military families for five years. After graduation from Point Park University in 2010 with a BS in Biological Sciences, she spent time teaching at the international school on JFC NATO Base Naples, Italy. When her husband was reassigned, she started working as the US Navy Staff Assistant to the US Commanding Officer, providing assistance to service members and their families as they transition to living in Portugal. In this position she managed support services acting as the Community Liaison Officer, Sponsorship Coordinator, the Cultural Awareness Program Coordinator and the School Liaison Officer.

With two European tours under her belt, Schulz moved to Washington DC, where she started working for Fisher House Foundation. In her position as the Operations Officer, she serves as the executive assistant to the President and Board of Trustees, assists veteran and military families with program eligibility, directs flow of correspondence and provides operational support for all Fisher House Foundation initiatives and sub-programs. She is often required to facilitate fundraising campaigns as an event assistant and speaker on behalf of the Foundation.

Schulz is also a member of the USCG Washington DC Spouse Club, and a certified yoga and Pilates instructor. The Schulz family resides in Washington, DC and welcomed a baby boy October 2014. They can be found, stroller and dog in tow, heading to brunch to visit friends or at the city parks.



**Elizabeth Shaw** is the Federal Grassroots Manager at the American College of Cardiology and has been married to her husband, an officer in the Navy for 2 years. They are stationed at ONI in Suitland, MD. They do not have children but they have a husky named Laila and are fostering a husky named Amadeus.

Elizabeth is currently the Military Spouse of the Year for Naval District Washington DC and Vice President of the Naval Officer Spouses Club of DC and was the Speakers Luncheon coordinator for the Naval Officer Spouses Club of DC in 2014 and a Member of the Sasebo Officers' Spouses' Club and Sasebo International Ladies Club in 2013. She was Secretary of the Arlington/Falls Church Young Republicans in 2012 and is currently a USO Volunteer, a United States Military Organization volunteer, and a McLean Bible Church Kids Quest Teacher. Elizabeth loves to hike and run with her husband and dogs in her spare time, and together they love to travel the globe. Elizabeth is excited to join the MOAA Currently Serving Military Spouse Advisory Council and bring her enthusiasm and ideas.



**Tammie Smiley** is a San Antonio native, graduated from Prairie View A& M University with a Bachelor of Business degree in Information Systems. Later, she obtained a Master of Arts Computer Resources and Information System degree from Webster University.

The past 20 years, she has been serving the Warfighter in various agencies as a Modeling & Simulation Engineer. She is a published author for both Interservice/Industry Training Simulation Education Conference (I/ITSEC) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) proceedings. Currently, she is a Sr. System Engineer for Research Development and Engineering Commands (RDECOM) Night Vision Electronic and Sensor Directorate (NVESD). Ms. Smiley is also a judge for the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education for America's youth.

In addition, Ms. Smiley is a member of the Board of Directors for the Trideum Foundation. Though the Foundation, we assist members of the community throughout the United States.

Ms. Smiley a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and Jack and Jill of American, Inc. both are service organizations. She attend Antioch Baptist Church, alongside of her husband, they teach Sunday school to kindergartners. She enjoys traveling and assisting others to reach their potential.

Lastly, they are blessed with a daughter (7) and two Yorkshire Terrier's (Scottie and Bailey)



**Anne M. Walsh** is a marketing manager with over 13 years of experience assisting organizations to develop, target and deliver on brand promises. Anne's former employers range from large non-profits like AARP, financial services firms like MetLife and T. Rowe Price to small firms serving niche markets like a Norfolk, VA engineering firm with government contracts. Her experience and education have helped her sharpen presentation, copywriting, editing, budgeting, project, vendor and team management skills that she hopes will be assets to MOAA's Currently Serving Military Spouse Advisory Council. Anne is currently at Bloomberg BNA in Arlington, VA on their Cross Platform marketing team. Anne received her BSBA from Suffolk University in Boston, MA and her MBA from the University of Maryland.

Being a Navy spouse has significantly impacted Anne personally and professionally over the last five years, teaching her what really matters in life and how to make it work no matter what challenges are in her path. She and her husband Brian (LTCR US Navy) have a feisty two-year-old daughter, smiley infant son and charismatic Boston terrier at home. Anne's brilliant stepdaughter lives in San Diego.