



Community Reintegration Summit: Service Members and Veterans Returning to Civilian Life

- *Briefing Book* -

Washington, D.C.
January 26-27, 2009



Booz | Allen | Hamilton

Introduction to the Briefing Book

- ▶ The purpose of this briefing book is to provide:
 - An overview of the simulation that will be conducted
 - A review of current statistics and research
 - Findings from representative interviews
 - Findings from the October 21st Initiators Conference

- ▶ We invite you to use this document as a preparation tool for the Summit, but it is not intended as an all-inclusive assessment of community reintegration and its related issues

- ▶ The Summit will take place January 26th and 27th at the Carnegie Institution in Washington, DC

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Community Reintegration Summit

Survivor Corps, the Veterans' Coalition, and Booz Allen Hamilton are hosting a Summit to improve community reintegration for returning service members and veterans

Our **Vision** for the Summit is to ensure that service members and veterans have every opportunity to make a healthy return to their families and communities following their service or discharge, so they can thrive physically, psychologically, socially, and economically.

Our **Goal** is to convene a community of thought-leaders from the public, private, and civil sectors to collaboratively address the critical issues of reintegration that affect service members' return to family, work, school, and community.

The *Community Reintegration Summit* will bring participants together to address four key objectives

Summit Objectives

- ▶ Review themes, issues, and challenges faced by service members and veterans returning to civilian life
- ▶ Develop a definition of successful community reintegration
- ▶ Develop specific action plans to address issues of community reintegration that reach across sectors
- ▶ Launch megacommunity workgroups to address specific issues of community reintegration

Community Reintegration Summit
Summit Schedule
 Carnegie Institution • Washington, DC
 January 26-27, 2009

MONDAY

7:30-8:30 AM	Registration, Continental Breakfast available
8:30-9:30	Welcome and Introduction to Summit
9:30-10:00	Introduction to Move 1
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15 AM-12:00 PM	Move 1 – Teams work in breakouts
12:00-1:30	Teams brief actions and decisions to all in plenary; <i>Working Lunch</i>
1:30-1:45	Feedback and Introduction to Move 2
1:45-2:00	Break
2:00-3:45	Move 2 – Teams work in breakouts
3:45-4:45	Teams brief actions and decisions to all in plenary
4:45-5:00	Day 1 Wrap-up
5:00-6:00	Reception

TUESDAY

7:30-8:30 AM	Continental Breakfast available
8:30-8:45	Introduction to Day 2 and Move 3
8:45-10:45	Move 3 – Teams work in breakouts
10:45-11:00	Break
11:00-11:45	Teams brief actions and decisions to all in plenary
11:45 AM-12:00 PM	Feedback and Introduction to Insights and Next Steps
12:00-1:30	Insights and Next Steps – Teams work in breakouts; <i>Working Lunch</i>
1:30-2:45	Teams brief actions and decisions to all in plenary
2:45-3:00	Closing Remarks

Participants have been assigned to stakeholder teams and will engage in a simulation from this perspective

Federal Government

- ▶ Represents U.S. federal government agencies and policymakers (Defense, VA, Labor, Education, Health and Human Services)

Media/Communications

- ▶ Represents communications organizations and mass media, including print, web, and TV

Veteran Service Organizations

- ▶ Represents veteran service organizations

Education

- ▶ Represents universities, community colleges, technical/trade schools, K-12

Healthcare

- ▶ Represents public and private sector community-level health care providers and mental health resources (including military treatment facilities, VA medical centers, etc.)

Business

- ▶ Represents large businesses and other employers

Non-Governmental Organizations

- ▶ Represents large, national nonprofit organizations

Community

- ▶ Represents state and local government, State VA's, small businesses, and local NGOs

Control

- ▶ Facilitation
- ▶ Oversight of simulation

Veterans and Families

- ▶ Veterans, spouses, family, caregivers

Stakeholder teams will interact and respond to a scenario that unfolds over 2 days



Stakeholder Teams

- ▶ Identify concerns, objectives
- ▶ Take actions to achieve objectives
- ▶ Share information/ collaborate with others
- ▶ Brief decisions to all

Control

- ▶ Oversees simulation
- ▶ Updates scenario and injects additional events or information as needed
- ▶ Reacts for all those not represented by a stakeholder team, e.g., Congress



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The reintegration of service members and veterans from today's wars are of vital interest to this country

- ▶ In the Fall of 2008, Survivor Corps and Booz Allen Hamilton united to engage with other stakeholders in a new effort to address the immediate and long-term community reintegration needs of veterans, service members, and families
- ▶ A series of interviews of representative stakeholders from across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors revealed a core set of issues impacting community reintegration
- ▶ These core issues laid the groundwork for the structure of an Initiators' Conference in October of 2008
- ▶ Findings resulting from the Initiators' Conference further supported these core issues, leading to the arrangement and logic of the briefing material which follows
- ▶ Survivor Corps, Booz Allen Hamilton, and the Veterans' Coalition, a recent partner in the effort to bring together a Community Reintegration Summit, look forward to further exploring these issues and how all three sectors can best facilitate the country's transitioning service members and veterans into civilian life

Upon separation from the military, service members return to civilian life through family, school, work, and community

- ▶ Upon returning home to civilian life, several important events take place for a service member:
 - Rejoin family
 - Return to a previous place of employment or seek new employment
 - Return to or enter higher education
 - Accessing information
 - Rejoin community
 - Undergo rehabilitation and address health concerns
- ▶ Life at home continues without the service member, resulting in a new reality when the service member returns:
 - Both the family and service member face adjustments upon return. The spouse may be seen as the "family leader," sometimes leaving the returning service member feeling a lack of purpose or an intrusion in a functioning family unit. Children must adjust to a parent they have not seen in 6-18 months
 - Former colleagues will have progressed in careers and learned new job-related skills, while the workplace as a whole may have filled gaps left by a service member on active duty
 - A college schedule and fitting in on campus may be difficult to adjust to after having been deployed to a war zone

Since October 2001, over 1.69 million US troops have been deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)

- ▶ As of November 2008, the US military had over 180,000 military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan
- ▶ The National Guard and Reserve make up 52% of OEF/OIF veterans
- ▶ 34% of all OEF/OIF veterans were deployed multiple times
- ▶ Of OEF/OIF veterans:
 - 88% are male, 12% are female
 - 65% Army, 12% Air Force, 12% Navy, 12% Marine
 - 52% are between 20 and 29 years old

Casualties in OEF/OIF since October 2001 (as of January 16, 2009)

Total Wounded	33,608
Wounded (Did not return to duty)	15,350
Deaths	4,862

Federal programs provide services to facilitate the service member's transition out of active duty

Representative Agencies and Programs



State programs provide services to facilitate the service member's transition to civilian life

Representative Programs



"You give us the call...we'll give you the answer."

Medical Counseling Employment Tricare/DEERS

The seal of the State of Oregon, featuring an eagle with a shield, holding an olive branch and arrows, with the text "STATE OF OREGON" and "1859".

Helping Soldiers Help Themselves

Oregon National Guard Reintegration and Service Member Support

24 Hour Toll-Free Number: **1-888-688-2264**

An icon for the Soldier Reintegration Program showing a soldier standing with an American flag.

(Click to Open)

Soldier Reintegration Program

An icon for the Career Transition Assistance Program showing a soldier and a sun.

(Click to Open)

Career Transition Assistance Program

Nonprofits provide programs and services to facilitate the service member's transition to civilian life

Representative Organizations and Programs



Employers provide services to facilitate the service member's transition to civilian life

Representative Employers



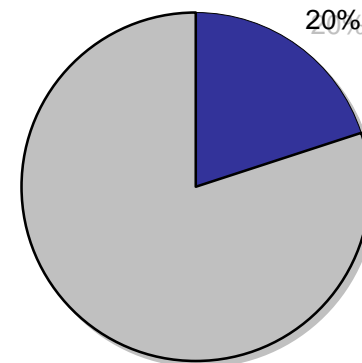
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Families of veterans play a central role in the reintegration process—they too must reintegrate

- ▶ As of 2007, over 700,000 children had at least one parent deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan, leaving these children with either a single parent or another relative
 - Separation anxiety and worry about the deployed parent(s) can impact the child in school and in daily interactions
 - As these anxieties may not fully disappear upon a parent's return, they could impact successful reintegration for both the service member and the rest of the family
- ▶ Parents make up a considerable portion of the military
 - Over 43% of active duty military and 43% of the Guard and Reserve are parents
 - Overall, nearly 6% of active duty military and over 8% of the Guard and Reserves are single parents
- ▶ According to DoD's Family Advocacy Program FY07 data, domestic and child abuse continues to be an issue
 - A reported 21% incident rate of domestic abuse among spouses in the military
 - There was an over 12% incident rate of child abuse
- ▶ In a 2004 survey from the National Military Family Association, 75% of respondents stated that the first three months post-deployment were the most stressful, while the remaining 25% stated that the stress increased after three months

20% of Married Service Members in Iraq Planning a Divorce



Source: IAVA Congressional Testimony, http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/MilPers020708/Bowers_Testimony020708.pdf

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An integral part of community reintegration involves adjustment to civilian employment

- ▶ Service members and veterans will either return to positions they held prior to active duty or will seek a new form of employment
- ▶ If returning to a previous position, veterans have to contend with peers who may have advanced beyond them and feel a need to recover lost ground
 - Veterans that require certification in order to retain their position find it more difficult to re-certify and maintain accreditation
 - Small-business owners may discover clientele have found other businesses to fulfill their needs
- ▶ Veterans coming from a structured military environment may have developed personal or technical skill sets beyond what their previous civilian employment required
 - Service members may seek a “career,” but will have to find “jobs” to cover necessary expenses in the meantime
- ▶ The 2007 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics provided information around the unemployment rates of OEF and OIF veterans, but it was shown to not be statistically different from the civilian population
 - The jobless rate for OEF/OIF veterans between the ages of 18-24 was 12%, which is twice that of the jobless rate for veterans aged 25-34
 - Of service members who served since September 2001, 6.1% were jobless in 2007, whereas the unemployment rate was 3.8% among all veterans

Employers must also be prepared to address reintegration issues for veterans returning to their workplace

- ▶ The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) prohibits discrimination against persons because of their service in the Reserve, National Guard, or other uniformed services
 - Employers must hold a deployed reservist's or Guard member's position or a comparable position until returning after being absent due to military service or training
 - The law applies to virtually all employers, regardless of size
 - While the law seeks to protect service members, particularly reservists, there were over 1,300 new complaints made in 2006 against employers

Potential Employer Concerns

- ▶ Employers are hesitant to hire recently returned veterans because there is a lack of understanding about PTSD
- ▶ Employers must back-fill a service members positions while they are on deployment, oftentimes with only a few weeks notice before departure
- ▶ Though large employers can better afford to train and temporarily replace an employee on deployment, smaller businesses cannot do this as easily
- ▶ Employee reintegration time in the workplace can be required upon return to understand and learn any changes in policies or new developments that affect the employee's work—this is time the employer must invest as well

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Returning to or seeking higher education opportunities can be an overwhelming task for veterans, but it also helps them to reintegrate

- ▶ Over 540,000 veterans used their VA education benefits in FY 2008
 - 20% of these veterans are first-time students
- ▶ The newly expanded GI Bill, which will go into effect in August 2009, applies to veterans who served after September 10, 2001
 - The length of time served directly correlates to the percentage of tuition that the new GI Bill will cover, which can be up to 100% in addition to a monthly housing allowance and yearly supplies stipend
 - The new bill can provide up to 36 months of education assistance
 - Eligibility lasts for 15 years from the point of release from active duty
- ▶ Education benefits take time to process, leading veterans to potentially incur late fees that may ultimately disrupt education
- ▶ Many veterans do not use the GI Bill and other programs due to a lack of awareness of their earned benefits and the obstacles in accessing them
- ▶ Many veterans return to higher education after a deployment interrupted a semester, leading these veterans to partially repeat coursework and lose money and time invested previously
- ▶ Many colleges and universities do not have resources for veterans
 - Student veterans can feel isolated from the rest of the student body, as the “traditional” student does not have the same life experiences
 - Veterans may avoid attending college because the climate on campus towards veterans may not be welcoming

30-35%
Percentage of service members who drop out in the first semester after returning to college after deployment

Source: DoD Mental Health Task Force Report, 2007

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Increased awareness and acceptance within the community can help to ease the reintegration of returning service members and veterans

- ▶ Though the public is aware of the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the challenges service members, veterans, and their families may face upon return to the civilian community are not well publicized
 - The community can include family, friends, neighbors, employers, clergy, judges and lawyers, fellow veterans, educators, healthcare providers, media, and first responders
- ▶ Education on the needs of veterans has been cited as a key area where communities could improve
- ▶ Though service members often return to military communities, this is not the case for those serving in the National Guard and Reserve
- ▶ If returning to a non-military community, a veteran may find themselves without peers to discuss shared experiences. It has been frequently cited that peer interaction is of great benefit to the veteran
- ▶ Veterans also struggle to transition from a combat environment where aggression and vigilance are assets, to a civilian community where these attributes have less utility
- ▶ Communities often struggle to communicate services available to veterans, family members, and the service providers that support them

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Though veterans and service members receive a range of helpful information upon return from deployment, they often have difficulty accessing information and care

- ▶ Upon return from deployment, service members and veterans are provided a large amount of information to facilitate the reintegration process
 - Information can be overwhelming to a recent returnee, especially as many may not require assistance after returning to the US for several months
 - Despite improvements in communicating information to beneficiaries, navigating the military health system can still be daunting
- ▶ In order to better facilitate the health needs of injured veterans, the Federal Recovery Coordinator Program was established
- ▶ The National Resource Directory is an online resource that provides a veteran and their family with community-based information and resources
- ▶ Veteran social networks such as *Community of Veterans*, *MyVetwork*, and *Together We Served*, can also provide a veteran with important information and recommendations for obtaining care
- ▶ Accessing care services, such as rehabilitation, screening for emotional distress, and counseling can be more difficult given distance from VA hospitals and clinics
- ▶ In non-military communities, physicians, psychologists, and psychiatrists are less likely to have encountered recent returnees, making timely diagnosis of various issues more difficult

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Physical and invisible wounds can hinder successful community reintegration

- ▶ Of the more than 30,000 veterans who are physically wounded, more than 1,200 are amputees who require extensive rehabilitation
- ▶ Significant rehabilitation is required for many of those wounded in OEF/OIF
 - Rehabilitation at the Military Medical Center for those physically wounded can range from eight months to two years
 - The time spent rehabilitating lengthens time spent away from family, community, and other support systems, potentially resulting in a more difficult reintegration process
- ▶ The Department of Veterans Affairs has prioritized claims processing for OEF/OIF veterans; finalizing claims took an average of 110 days in 2007
- ▶ As of September 2007, over 220,000 OEF/OIF veterans (35% of those eligible) filed disability claims
 - 89% received claims decisions
 - 11% were still waiting for claims decisions
- ▶ The cost of providing disability compensation benefits and medical care to OEF/OIF veterans over the course of their lives is estimated to be \$350 - \$700 billion (subject to length of deployment, speed with which veterans claim disability benefits, and growth rate of benefits and health care inflation)
- ▶ For those with unseen injuries, community reintegration can be challenging
 - Civilians, or even other veterans, may not acknowledge or understand a veteran's disability without a visible presence
 - Service members may not understand or recognize post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury (TBI) before diagnosis, while these conditions manifest themselves through a range of symptoms

PTSD and TBI have become signature wounds among OEF and OIF veterans – these and other unseen injuries often have negative downstream symptoms

- ▶ Over 300,000 OEF and OIF service members and veterans are estimated to be affected by PTSD or major depression, while over 320,000 are estimated to have experienced a probable TBI
- ▶ Invisible wounds can be the most difficult to diagnose prior to separation from the military— symptoms often do not surface until months or years after returning home
- ▶ As of April 2007, nearly 40% of OEF/OIF veterans who sought health care through the VA had a mental health condition or concern
- ▶ Screening in the military for PTSD, TBI, and depression increased as OEF/OIF continued, though reports maintain the difficulty of diagnosing PTSD, which requires observation of a subject for many weeks or months
- ▶ Mental health experts have estimated that at least 15% of service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan will develop PTSD

PTSD or depression can lead to additional issues, affecting all parts of a service member's life and relationships

- ▶ While dealing with PTSD, TBI, or depression can be difficult for the veteran, both before and after diagnosis, the family struggles as well
- ▶ PTSD and depression effects include:
 - Lashing out or isolating oneself
 - Inability to hold a job
 - Lack of motivation
 - Reduction in general health and energy
 - Feel out of place in the world or community
- ▶ Of those veterans who have screened positive for PTSD, more than half (56%) are taking advantage of some medical service (e.g. group or individual therapy, medication)
- ▶ A 2004 study suggested that those veterans who do not seek treatment for mental health problems may feel as though they would be seen as weak, be treated differently, or that others would lose confidence in them

Suicide

- ▶ From 2002 to 2007, suicide attempts in the Army rose from 350 to 2,100
- ▶ Suicides among OEF/OIF veterans doubled from 52 in 2004 to 110 in 2006

Homelessness

- ▶ Some OEF/OIF veterans are seeking housing services within months, rather than years of returning home, as was the case following Vietnam
- ▶ Female veterans are 2 to 4 times more likely to become homeless

Substance Abuse

- ▶ A third of those screened for PTSD report hazardous levels of drinking, which is twice the number for the general veteran population

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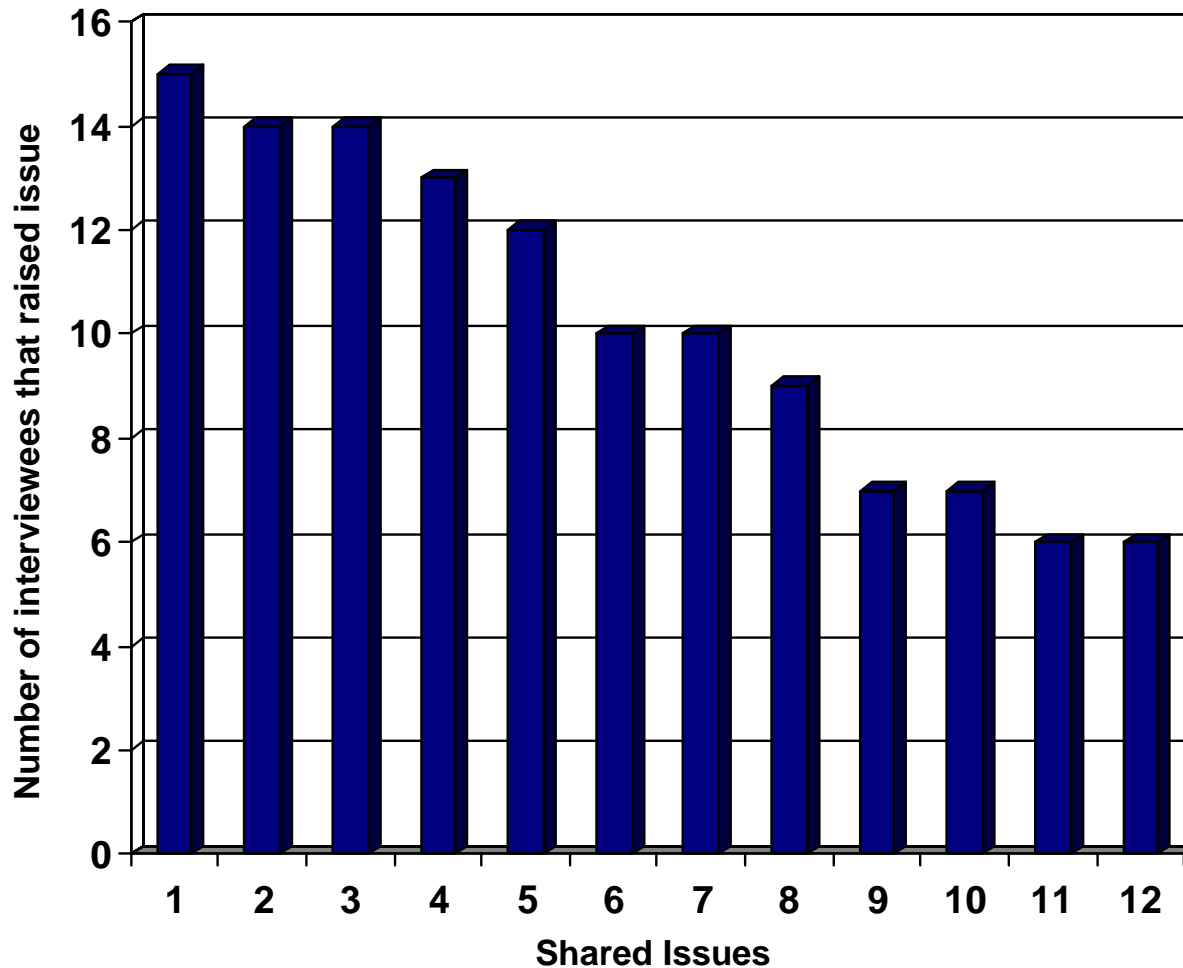
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- Appendix B – Findings from Initiators Conference
- Appendix C – Community Reintegration Working Definition

Prior to the Initiators Conference, Survivor Corps and Booz Allen Hamilton conducted interviews with representative leaders involved in community reintegration

- ▶ Over 4 weeks, 26 leaders from 21 organizations - representing service members & veterans, military spouses, government, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions offered their thoughts on reintegration challenges and opportunities
- ▶ The leaders we interviewed all share a common abiding interest in the community reintegration of service members and veterans and their respective organizations are working diligently to meet one or more reintegration challenges
- ▶ The ideas raised in the interviews provided the foundation for the Initiators Conference in October and the Summit

After analysis of the interviews, 12 issue areas were identified

Top shared issues among interviewees



Shared Issues
1. Employment Issues
2. Family Issues
3. Navigating Information
4. Accessing Benefits & Services
5. Rehabilitation
6. Education Issues
7. Fragmented Services
8. Community Issues
9. Bureaucratic Hurdles
10. Financial Issues
11. Program Funding
12. Resource & Service Gaps

Addressing these shared issue areas is the top priority for many leaders and their organizations

▶ **Employment Issues**

- Returning service members and veterans finding and returning to work
- Employers finding and retaining talent and making accommodations

▶ **Family Issues**

- Returning service members and veterans rejoining family
- Support systems for spouses and children

▶ **Accessing Benefits & Services**

- Geographic access
- Navigating available resources

▶ **Navigating Information**

- Finding needed information among overwhelming number of resources

▶ **Rehabilitation**

- Rehabilitation for seen and unseen wounds (e.g., PTSD, TBI, Depression)

▶ **Education Issues**

- Service members and veterans transitioning to school
- Institutions connecting with veterans and making accommodations

▶ **Community Issues**

- Returning service members and veterans actively reengaging in the community
- Communities being aware of and acting upon the assets and needs of returning service members and veterans

▶ **Fragmented Services**

- Redundancy and lack of coordination among programs and service offering
- Sub-populations of service members and veterans require special consideration (e.g., soldiers who are women, injured, rural, or minorities)

▶ **Bureaucratic Hurdles**

- Navigating bureaucracy while seeking benefits and services
- Managing transition between organizations

▶ **Financial Issues**

- Challenges managing money, debt, and benefits

▶ **Program Funding**

- Government funding and future uncertainty
- Nonprofit organization sustainability

▶ **Resource & Service Gaps**

- Gaps in resources and services needed by returning service members and veterans

The shared issues point us to five opportunity areas for further exploration as a community of leaders

Themes	Description of Opportunity
Rejoining Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Families need help coping with deployment, grieving the loss of a service member, preparing for return, and adjusting to reunion▶ Spouses and children need a community of support to be successful
Returning to Work & School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ There is a win-win opportunity for returning service members and veterans and the schools and workplaces to which they return▶ Employers need help understanding veterans' strengths and needs
Accessing to Services, Benefits, and Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Veterans and their families need help navigating the fragmented and often overwhelming landscape of available services and benefits▶ Geography, awareness, and stigma barriers often prevent service members and veterans from seeking needed services
Health and Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Rehabilitation requires strong support from the family, workplace, and community▶ Rehabilitation can be hindered by lack of access to resources
Rejoining Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Successful reintegration requires that communities become aware of the needs of service members and their families and work to meet them▶ Communities have much to gain from returning veterans

The themes of the interviews laid the foundation for the Initiators Conference discussions and the Summit simulation design

Interview Themes

Rejoining Family

Returning to Work
& School

Accessing
Services, Benefits,
and Information

Health and
Rehabilitation

Rejoining
Community

Questions Raised by Interviews to Address at the Initiators Conference and Summit

- ▶ Have we identified the right issue areas?
- ▶ Are these issue areas shared among leaders, beyond those interviewed?
- ▶ Are these issue areas too complex to be solved by any one organization acting alone?
- ▶ Are leaders open to collaborative action to address these issue areas?



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The *Initiators Conference* took place on October 21st, 2008, in Washington, DC to prepare for the *Community Reintegration Summit*

- ▶ Over 50 participants from 41 organizations representing the government, business, and non-profit sectors convened for the *Initiators Conference on the Community Reintegration of Service Members and Veterans*
- ▶ Initiators Conference objectives:
 - Explore shared reintegration themes, issues, challenges, and opportunities
 - Identify where resources exist, what resources are needed, and how they can be aligned and balanced to best support service members and veterans as they reengage in their communities
 - Strengthen current relationships and establish new relationships to enable successful reintegration efforts
 - Chart a collaborative path ahead for a broader Summit in January 2009

Initiators Conference Key Findings

- ▶ Community reintegration is not a single event but an ongoing process that may not have a distinct endpoint
- ▶ Today's military veterans and service members are different demographically than in previous generations
- ▶ An increased focus on the reintegration of veterans with less visible wounds appears to be needed
- ▶ Veterans separating from the military return to seek employment and/or education but find a need for additional support from the broader community
- ▶ Families of service members and veterans face a host of issues misunderstood by society and often not well supported by traditional resources
- ▶ Despite advances in technologies and augmentation of resources, many veterans continue to struggle with access to appropriate healthcare services and benefits
- ▶ Leaders have an opportunity to work together across organizational and sector boundaries to support community reintegration

Community reintegration themes emerged from participant discussion, including issues around the process, military demographics, and invisible wounds

- ▶ *Community reintegration as an ongoing dynamic process*
 - Returning service members and veterans have to adjust to some form of a “new normal”
 - A service member or veteran must return to civilian life following deployment and strive for physical, social, economic, and psychological well being
 - Rehabilitation of the body and mind are integral to successful community reintegration
 - Not limited to rehabilitation, employment, or shelter
 - The need for a veteran to feel and be seen as “normal” is paramount
- ▶ *Demographic shift in the military*
 - The military represents greater diversity in age, gender, relationship status, and parenthood than in previous generations
 - The traditional profiles of a veteran and their family do not necessarily always match with corresponding benefits
 - A broader definition of who a veteran (and their family) is must be incorporated when considering how to assist in reintegration
 - Flexibility in approach to community reintegration is necessary to best assist the individual veteran
- ▶ *Veterans with less visible wounds need increased attention*
 - Veterans with invisible wounds are offered fewer resources and assistance opportunities due to a general lack of understanding of their issues
 - Leaders within the armed forces were unwilling to model healthy behavior and to seek help for invisible wounds like PTSD and TBI

Participants also discussed the broader community, the importance of families, and access to care issues

- ▶ *Broader community support is essential*
 - Employers, educators, and community members have as much of a role to play in successful reintegration as the government and the veteran's family
 - Acknowledgement, understanding, and adaptability provisions from employers, educators, and the members of a veteran or service member's community is imperative to successful reintegration
 - Support from the community helps veterans face the challenges of returning to civilian/community life
- ▶ *Families of service members and veterans require understanding and support*
 - Support for the family is important to successful deployment and reintegration of service members
 - All members of a military family make great sacrifices when a service member deploys
 - Reintegrating the service member back into the family unit can be challenging on various fronts
- ▶ *Access to care*
 - Organizations in all sectors provide a variety of quality programs and services, but veterans and returning service members can be overburdened with too much information
 - Service members who return to families far from military bases have less access to military health resources and a less established support system
 - The community health services in non-military areas are sometimes less aware of what additional help is necessary for a veteran
 - It is also important to recognize that caregivers need respite care and even therapy

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Findings from both the interviews and the Initiators' Conference assisted us in developing a draft definition of community reintegration

Draft Community Reintegration Definition

The process by which service members and veterans successfully return to family, work, school, and community following deployment or discharge. This process has physical, social, psychological, and economic components.