

# YOU ARE A CONNECTOR AND INFLUENCER!

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- You have the experience and the wisdom of years; you have a lot to share.
- High rank is conspicuous. This is a visible role. Understand the power of your voice.
- What are YOUR priorities?  
Discuss with your spouse: What are OUR priorities as a couple?
- GOFO rank is an honor for your spouse and there are a limited amount of GOFO positions. You have a limited amount of time. Move quickly, as Christine Grady, spouse of the JCS Vice Chairman, says: "Courageous Impatience"
- You will need a "trusted agent." Find that person!

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Get an "Immersion Brief" at your new installation.
- Educate families.
- Promote the exceptional value of military spouses.
- Share information.
- Military One Source app - share how to use it and all that it offers. Your DC area group can take a tour of the Call Center, Arlington, VA
- Senior Leader Tool Kit on OneSource.
- Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (MyCAA) - disseminate this program to spouses
- DECA has cooking classes
- Food pantries on base - a spouse club activity, a resource for young families
- NMFA has about \$800,000 annually for scholarships & grants
- Promote any DoD/Installation Family Survey.
- Suggest one of the resource organizations as a conference speaker.
- Suggest a resource organization for spouse club charity donation.
- When delving into an issue:
  - Trust, but verify
  - Actively listen
  - Ask what has been done already
- Display Toxic Positivity!

You are an Influencer. People are watching you (think about how the media watches Taylor Swift's reactions in the stadium box, and when Travis Kelce yelled at his coach). People get a little star struck around you. So, how you portray yourself and how you put yourself forward are important. Here are some of the ways:

### **1. The Niceties - deposits for your future**

- RSVPs
- Thank you notes - keep a stash of cards - for dinners & parties, for organizers of events or seminars, for spouse club leaders

### **2. Social Interactions**

- Develop a short sound bite about yourself. Don't be afraid to brag about who we are and what we do as senior spouses. "I'm a big advocate for military families." "I do pro bono work for the Navy!" "It's such a privilege to support these young Americans and their families who volunteer to serve their country."
- Be able to say what your spouse does without using acronyms. Say it in English!
- Calling Cards - rather than your business card, have a spouse version

### **LET'S TALK ABOUT ATTENDING A SOCIAL EVENT:**

- There is an unwritten rule that guests are not there to enjoy themselves exclusively, but are there to be actively sociable and willing participants.
- At a social event, make a point of meeting two new people before migrating to those you know. We introverts need to take a deep breath and do this!
- Rather than ask, "What do you do?", ask, "What keeps you busy during the day?"

### **3. Relationships in your unit or command**

- "You can't surge relationships" I give the example of socially developing the CO spouses of the nineteen commands within the USS George Washington Strike Group and how they quickly came together to support the 17 fallen families of the USS COLE. Coffees, luncheons, dinners, parties, command events all go toward building relationships over time.
- Get an Immersion Brief (public affairs officer, JAG, family/community service center, hospital, DoD school, school liaison officer) at every new posting. It lets everyone know you're interested, and it lets people know who you are.

- Honor the people who work for your spouse by attending promotions, awards ceremonies, command events, retirements, etc.
- Being an advisor to an organization. If you choose to do so, be sure you participate fully. If you choose not to, you can say, "I don't have the time that your organization deserves."

#### **4. Public Speaking**

- 90% of your message is presentation. No one is going to remember what you said. They will remember that you had the presence to stand up and say a few words with confidence and ease.
- Here's a good trick on how to do that: Past, Present, Future

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#### **5. Your Bio**

Conversation starter. A way to introduce yourself.

When might you need a bio: dinner party, community event, spouse club intro, seminar speaker.

Have a couple different ones. They can be tailored to your audience. Different and distinct from your professional bio.

Have the headshot taken and put it together with your narrative. Use the PAO to assist.