



# “WRAIR Forward”

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## COMMANDER’S CORNER

This quarter, we are launching USAMRU-E’s first unit crest (see circle, upper right). I worked with graphic designers at the Medical Research and Materiel command (MRMC) to design a crest that would reflect the unit’s unique history and mission. The unit crest is in a circular format with "US Army Medical Research Unit-Europe" and "WRAIR Forward" around the design in Army Medical Department Colors. “WRAIR Forward” is to reconnect us with the WRAIR, our higher command. "1977" is also on the border and denotes the year we were founded. There are two arrows on the inner circle, representing the cycle of deploying (white) and redeploying (yellow). The arrows do not connect; this gap symbolizes the phase between deployment for reintegration and training. Inside the circle are the words in Latin for "Protect, Optimize, and Enhance". These words reflect our mission: protecting, optimizing, and enhancing the psychological resilience of our Soldiers. In the center are pictures of Soldiers, a family, and a map of Europe, representing the focus of our work here in Europe. The yellow star marks Heidelberg, Germany, the location of USAMRU-E, the US Army, Europe and Europe Regional Medical Command.

-LTC Maurice Sipos

## STUDY: ALTERNATIVE REINTEGRATION

USAMRU-E is gearing up to conduct a study with the Special Troops Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division (1AD) in order to assess the impact of an alternative post-deployment reintegration program. In December 2010, the 1AD provided expanded behavioral health support and training prior to returning home to Germany after a year in Iraq and then conducted a shortened reintegration with troops in Germany. The study will include surveys and focus groups to assess this alternative reintegration approach compared to the typical 7 half-day reintegration schedule. The study is being conducted under the Land Combat Study protocol (#1480F; Principal Investigator: Dr. Riviere, WRAIR; Site-specific lead: LTC Sipos).

### COORDINATION

- LTC Sipos and Dr. Adler met with the 1AD Surgeon, LTC Barnhart and 1AD Psychiatrist MAJ Brent (2 FEB 11; Wiesbaden).
- LTC Sipos, CPT Wood and Ms. Salvi conducted a site visit and met with key staff members in preparation for the 1AD data collection (28 FEB 11; Wiesbaden).
- The study was coordinated with BG West, Commanding General, Europe Regional Medical Command (ERMC).
- Dr. Crane, Ms. Miller, and Mr. Abernathy (ERMC) met with LTC Sipos, Dr. Wright, and Dr. Foran to discuss the impact of behavioral health care interviews conducted via Virtual Teleconference during the 1AD reintegration (19 JAN 11). Survey questions in the 1AD study will address perceptions of this virtual assessment.
- The 1AD study will also include a computer-based measure of anxiety (called the “dot-probe task”). Professor Bar-Haim, Psychology Department, University of Tel Aviv and his doctoral student Mr. Abend visited the unit to train the staff in this technique (21-22 MAR 11; Heidelberg).

## J-MHAT 7 OUTBRIEFS LEADERSHIP

The Joint – Mental Health Advisory Team (J-MHAT 7) report was briefed to the Joint Chiefs of Staff by team leader COL Bliese (DATE; Washington, DC). LTC Sipos and LtCol Slack briefed the results to the 86<sup>th</sup> Medical Group, Ramstein Air Base (3 Feb 11) and to BG West, ERMC CG (15 Feb 11).

## DEPRESSED SOLDIERS PERCEIVE MORE ORGANIZATIONAL INJUSTICE OVER TIME

(New Publication)

Lang, J., Bliese, P. D., Lang, J. W. B., & Adler, A. B. (2011, February 7). Work gets unfair for the depressed: Cross-lagged relations between organizational justice perceptions and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96, 602-618. DOI: 10.1037/a0022463

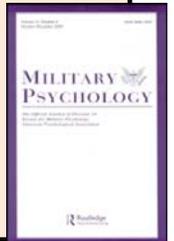


## BENEFIT FINDING BUFFERS

### EFFECTS OF COMBAT

(New Publication)

Wood, M. D., Britt, T. W., Thomas, J. R., Klocko, R. P., & Bliese, P. D. (2011). Buffering effects of benefit finding in a war environment. *Military Psychology*, 23, 202-219. DOI : 10.1080/08995605.2010.521732



## COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS: REVIEW OF RESEARCH EFFORTS

(New Publication)

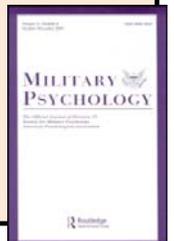
Lester, P. B., McBride, S. A., Bliese, P. D., & Adler, A. B. (2011). Bringing science to bear: An empirical assessment of the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program. *American Psychologist*, 66, 77-81. DOI: 10.1037/a0022083



## MENTAL HEALTH ATTITUDES DRIVE HEALTH CARE USE MORE THAN STIGMA

(New Publication)

Kim, P. Y., Britt, T. W., Klocko, R. P., Riviere, L. A., & Adler, A. B. (2011). Stigma, negative attitudes about treatment, and utilization of mental health care among soldiers. *Military Psychology*, 23, 65-81. DOI: 10.1080/08995605.2011.534415





## INVITED WORKSHOP IN BELGIUM

LTC Sipos conducted a workshop with COL Castro on the Army's Resilience Training program at the request of the

Director-general of the Royal Higher Institute for Defence. The workshop, entitled “Lessons Learned from Iraq and Afghanistan: Psychosocial aspects of military operations”, was presented to psychologists from Belgium and the Netherlands in Brussels, Belgium (28-31 MAR 2011).

## UNIT COORDINATES RESILIENCE TRAINING

Resilience training development and research continued to move forward with several key meetings.

- Dr. Adler worked with WRAIR's Research Transition Office (RTO) to develop Post-Deployment Couples Resilience Training (25-28 JAN 11; Silver Spring, MD).
- WRAIR's RTO is planning a Master Resilience Trainer (MRT) Implementation Evaluation this year. Dr. Adler, a senior advisor with the RTO, met with the team on the project (18 FEB 11; Silver Spring, MD).
- Dr. Adler co-chaired the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF)/WRAIR Research Steering Committee meeting with LTC McBride, CSF (24 MAR 11; Silver Spring, MD). The committee prioritizes and advises on the development of resilience training and related research. A follow-on meeting with CSF reviewed RTO's program evaluation plans.
- Dr. Adler led team meetings in preparation of piloting Advanced post-deployment resilience training (ArmySMART, formerly called “Advanced Battlemind”; 14-18 FEB 11 and 22-23 MAR 11; Silver Spring, MD).

## UNIT'S RESEARCH PROGRAM REVIEWED

COL Castro, Director, Military Operational Medicine Research Program (MOMRP), MAJ Bonilla-Vasquez, Deputy Director, MOMRP, and Dr. Marshall, MOMRP, conducted a Review and Analysis (R&A) for the Advanced Technology Objective (Psychological Resetting after Combat Deployment: Advanced Battlemind), W-1 (Interventions to Enhance Warfighter Psychological Resilience) and W-3 (Suicide Prevention in a Combat Environment) in Heidelberg, Germany (24 FEB 11). Dr. Adler and Dr. Wright led the R&A with support from LTC Sipos as well as COL Bliese, Director, Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience, LTC McGurk, Chief, RTO, and MAJ Thomas, Chief, Military Psychiatry Branch, WRAIR.

- An ATO/W-1 Steering Committee meeting was conducted with LTC Sipos, Dr. Wright, and Dr. Adler from USAMRU-E and COL Bliese, LTC McGurk and MAJ Thomas from Silver Spring (25 FEB 11; Heidelberg).
- Dr. Adler attended the Millennium Cohort Study Task Area's MOMRP R&A, and meetings with the Psychological Health program and with Dr. Hurtado and other Naval Health Research Center scientists (8-10 FEB 11; San Diego, CA).

## UNIT SUPPORTS ARMY STARRS

SGT(P) Martinez, NCOIC, is assisting the University of Michigan with the Army STARRS project. This large-scale suicide surveillance effort includes surveying Soldiers in Europe. SGT Martinez is helping the researchers gauge the transportation time of surveys from Army STARRS to Europe and back using two shipping strategies.



## INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL PANEL MEETS IN NEW ZEALAND

The annual meeting of Technical Panel 13 (TP13), *Psychological Health and Operational Effectiveness*, was held in Auckland, New Zealand (4-13

MAR 11). TP-13 is part of The Technical Cooperation Program (TTCP), a 5-nation initiative. COL Castro (TP13 Chair) and Dr. Adler are the panel's US representatives. This year's meeting focused on expanding measurement of barriers to care, the next iteration of a military occupational health model developed by TP13, and assessing resilience training. The panel presented its work in a Navy Symposium of Senior Leaders and Mental Health Providers in Auckland (10 MAR 11) and to New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) senior leaders at the NZDF headquarters in Wellington (13 MAR 11). Dr. Adler presented with LtCOL Sadler (Australian Defence Force; ADF) and Lt CDR Wray (NZDF) on the 5 nations' approach to resilience training.

As a follow-on, Dr. Adler and other panel members, were invited to Brisbane, Australia, to consult with ADF researchers. Besides meeting with the ADF resilience training research team (15 MAR 10), Dr. Adler and LtCOL Sadler also talked about TP-13 resilience training initiatives in a Senior Advisors Working Group (16 MAR 11).

## USAMRU-E MEETS WITH KEY STAFF

- LTC Sipos and staff met with Dr. Yourick, WRAIR Public Affairs Officer (PAO), and Ms. Calvillo, MRMC PAO (3 MAR 11; Heidelberg).
- LTC Sipos met with Ms. Ardner, ERMC HQ, to discuss USAMRU-E relocation to Sembach, Germany, tentatively set for Fall 12 - Spring 13 timeframe (14 JAN 11; Heidelberg).

## RESEARCH TEAM RECEIVES AWARD

Authors Dr. Adler, COL Bliese, LTC McGurk, COL (Ret.) Hoge and COL Castro of the 2009 paper validating the efficacy of post-deployment Battlemind Psychological Debriefing were presented with the Cofounders Award for Excellence in Crisis Intervention/Trauma Research (26 FEB 11; Baltimore, MD). LTC McGurk accepted the award on behalf of the team.

## PERSONNEL UPDATES

- SSG Williams received an ARCOM (4 FEB 11) and PCSed to Fort Bliss, TX (6 FEB 11).
- SGT Martinez became unit NCOIC (20 DEC 10).
- Dr. Wright received a 25 year civilian service award (Heidelberg; 22 FEB 11 – see photo).
- Dr. Adler was nominated by MRMC to be considered by MEDCOM for the civilian employee of the year (12 MAR 11)



LTC SIPOS AND DR. WRIGHT

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