

Army Substance Abuse Program team invests in healthy military community

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The Carlisle Barracks Army Substance Abuse Program team (1st row l to r) V. Jane Long-Koegel, social work-er; Lisa Wilson, drug testing coordinator; and Ann Marie Wolf, prevention coordinator; (2nd row) Jeremy Hicks, social worker; John Knowles, manager After more than 30 years as a clinical social worker and manager, the Navy Commander retired to his home state of Pennsylvania to explore a special academic inter-est and pursue an

old love of mu-sic. He earned a second master's degree at Mount St. Mary's Uni-versity in theology and partnered in two bands with his Scottish wife, **Sharon**, performing Irish and Scot-tish traditional music in Pennsylv-ania, Maryland, D.C and Virginia. Then, Carlisle Barracks lured him back to social work.

Since January, **John Knowles**, MSW, has been manager of the Army Sub-stance Abuse Program here. Serv-ing military personnel, employees and families, the five-person staff offers counseling and education. ASAP programs integrate preven-tion, identification and individual-ized treatment strategies.

"Alcohol and substance abuse don't just affect the Soldier. It also affects their Families, readiness, and the overall mission," said Knowles, who clarified ASAP's role supporting military readiness.

Military members and family members who abuse alcohol and drugs are impaired, and that in turn impairs the mission, said Knowles. "It impedes the mission, not only in the field, but in garrison because of all the associated problems it creates, like DUI's, accidents, marital and family discord, indebtedness -- all these things are compounded," he said.

Among his assignments on active duty, Knowles directed counseling for Marines at Camp Lejeune, N.C.; directed the So-cial Work Department at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.; led the Navy Special Psychiatric Rapid Interven-tion Team (SPRINT) at the Pentagon after the 9/11 attack; and chaired the Behavioral Health Advisory Board at the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in Washington, DC.

"I am so impressed by the ASAP staff here," said Knowles. "I find them all very seasoned, experienced, and competent care givers. There is a real cohesive team spirit here and everyone works to-gether well. Mission comes first, and the mere fact this staff was able to carry on the mission without a manager on board for an 18-month hiatus speaks volumes about their abilities."

"There is nowhere else I'd rather be than at Carlisle Barracks supporting our men and women who protect our lives and free-doms," said **Ann Marie Wolf**, prevention coordinator. One of the great things about this staff is that we work quickly and well to-gether and that really pays off for the Soldiers and their Families. We have experts in their fields who know how to help people effectively work through challenges."

"When the opportunity to come work here became available I saw it as a way to help support our military," said social worker **V. Jane Long-Koegel**. "I feel that substance abuse and prevention is the most important issue for the health of the service."

"What is special about working here is that you really interact with all components of the military, Active duty, National Guard, Reserve, retirees and Family members, she said."

The ASAP office serves a diverse population including military and military retirees, Family members from Active, Reserve and National Guard, to include Recruiting and ROTC programs across the state, as well as organizations at Fort Indiantown Gap and Letter-kenny Army Depot.

"What means the most to me is being able to help Soldiers and Families, especially when we are dealing with so many challenges as a military," said **Lisa A. Wilson**, drug testing coordinator.

ASAP is also responsible for the **Employee Assistance Program** services to Army civilian employees. A voluntary program for employees, EAP can include assessment and evaluation, help identify problems, and assist with the referral process.

"EAP is a management tool that can be used to assist civilian employees struggling with whatever kind of difficulty," said Knowles. "The problems don't necessarily have to relate to alcohol and drugs. It can be related to indebtedness, relationship problems, child-rearing problems, mental health problems, etc."

"We are basically a springboard to aid and assist the employee to find resources in the community at large to assist them resolve their problems. EAP does not provide long term services; the cost of care for services in the community must be borne by the employee, either through insurance coverage or private means," he explained.

"I enjoy working with people and seeing them make positive changes in their lives," said ASAP social worker **Jeremy Hicks**. "While this is a unique installation in terms of population, it's still true that people make positive changes for themselves and their Families every day. I'm glad to be part of this great team."

Call ASAP at 717-245-3845 to learn about their programs, and learn whether they offer the help that you, a friend, or co-worker, may need.