Executive summary
In 2014, the Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) at Purdue University experienced exceptional expansion in key areas. We furthered our research, amplified the impact of existing programs and solidified our place on the national stage. Expanding our reach through key collaborations and partnerships, we are an engine of social innovation using academic rigor to help improve the lives of military and veteran families.

Respected visionary on the national stage
MFRI is becoming known as a respected leader that aims to improve the systems surrounding military and veteran families. In 2014, the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) funded MFRI’s proposal to evaluate selected family support programs across the armed forces, and we began working with family support groups that provided trainings on financial readiness, emergency preparedness and couple resilience. The Department of Defense (DoD) approved an MFRI grant application to continue our Family Journeys study, enabling us to further grow the body of knowledge about military families. In addition, a number of other partnerships moved forward. The Indiana National Guard invited MFRI to co-lead the creation of Joining Community Forces Indiana, with the goal of increasing community-level engagement to support military-affiliated families. We worked on a five-year project to develop a new child care curriculum for the Department of Defense, led by Purdue University’s Distinguished Professor Douglas Powell. MFRI researchers also began work on a NIFA-funded project led by Purdue Professor Jim Elicker, which will study and make recommendation on preschool access for children with parents stationed at overseas bases.

Increasing partnerships, expanding reach, becoming an engine of social innovation
We also signed three memoranda of understanding (MOU) to extend existing relationships with nationally-known and respected organizations: Student Veterans of America, Got Your 6 campaign and the Points of Light Foundation. These agreements will advance veterans’ education and employment as well as community mobilization.
Working toward sustainability, MFRI developed new relationships by engaging new supporters. Our series of “On the Road” events brought MFRI to major military-friendly cities across the U.S. and helped Purdue alumni, military members, veterans and others learn more about our goals and objectives. We participated in Purdue’s first annual “Day of Giving,” a 24-hour campaign driven by social media, offering our message to Boilermaker friends and family across the world.

We continue to disseminate Star Behavioral Health Providers to a wider public, and, consequently, SBHP is truly an Indiana innovation gone national. Today, 21 organizations across seven states collaborate with us on its implementation. Thanks to a grant from the Wounded Warrior Project™, we are building a regional approach to the program with expansion into Ohio and South Carolina. Since the launch of SBHP, we have held more than 125 trainings and trained more than 4,675 participants who in turn treat more than 10,000 service members, veterans and family members. New York is coming on board soon.

Finally, national organizations and leaders, including those in Congress and at the White House, continue to seek our expertise and guidance as they formulate and refine military-friendly policies and programs. We accepted multiple invitations to educate White House and Congressional leaders, delivering evidence-based sessions about the latest research on military and veteran families.

These developments are just the tip of the iceberg. We are honored to have the opportunity to do this work for the millions of military and veteran families in our communities across the nation and across the globe. The landscape for military and veteran families is always evolving; military drawdowns mean reductions in spending, but at the same time, the number of veterans is increasing as more service members transition to the civilian world. This affects caregivers as well. MFRI remains committed to serving military and veteran families by working to support and strengthen the infrastructures that serve them, while conducting the most rigorous research to help inform new and existing practices. Thank you for your efforts on their behalf.

By the numbers: Star Behavioral Health Providers

21 organizations collaborating on SBHP
across 7 states:
California, Georgia, Indiana,
Michigan, New York,
Ohio and South Carolina

704 providers on California,
Georgia, Indiana and Michigan registries

39,227 total training hours as of Dec. 31, 2014
2014 Highlights

**Capitol Hill Science Roundtables:** In partnership with the offices of Sen. Joe Donnelly, Rep. Jackie Walorski (R-IN) and Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA), we delivered two enthusiastically received research-based roundtables to Congressional staff and leadership. One focused on research related to suicide within the military community, while the second discussed on existing and emerging health care research for military members, veterans and their families.

**White House consultation:** MFRI provided, with other organizations, consultation during the drafting of President Obama’s August 2014 executive orders, which included priorities of strengthening access to mental health care for military-affiliated families.

**Homeless veterans assistance:** Consistent with VA priorities, we supported 14 Stand Downs, serving more than 2,000 homeless or at-risk veterans and their families.

**Student leadership training:** Partnering with SVA, we worked with its national and local leadership summits and, using MFRI-created curriculum, trained more than 375 student leaders from more than 210 institutions and 44 states.

**Student leadership mentoring:** MFRI helped national SVA chapters successfully compete for $10,000 Home Depot grants to create/rehabilitate campus student veteran centers; 46 percent of grant awardees were awarded to organizations we mentored. We also mentored more than 550 student veterans and school leaders from more than 200 institutions selected to participate in the national business plan competition and the SVA National Conference.

**Battlemind to Home Symposium V:** More than 400 participants from over 100 organizations attended Battlemind to Home V to gather to improve their knowledge about military and veteran families and connect the systems that best support them. The event was put on by the Roudebush VA Medical Center in collaboration with MFRI, the Indiana National Guard and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

**Community mobilization:** MFRI awarded 28 community small grants to help communities build and strengthen capacity.

**Employment support for veterans:** We assisted with the annual Operation Hire a Hoosier Veteran Job Fair, which attracted 194 employers who extended 100 job offers during and immediately following the event.

**Research with impact:** By year’s end, MFRI had completed 1,000 Family Journeys interviews with Indiana National Guard members, 1,000 interviews with their spouse or significant other; and 300 interviews with their adolescent children.