

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL  
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**STATEMENT OF  
SERGEANT MAJOR MICHEAL P. BARRETT  
SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE MARINE CORPS  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
BEFORE THE  
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, VETERANS AFFAIRS AND  
RELATED AGENCIES  
ON  
MARCH 19, 2013  
ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE MILITARY**

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## **Sergeant Major Micheal Barrett** **Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps**



Micheal P. Barrett was born in Niagara Falls, N.Y., and raised in Youngstown, N.Y. He enlisted in March 1981 and underwent recruit training at 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, Delta Company, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

In November 1981, Private First Class Barrett completed Infantry Training School at Camp Lejeune, N.C. He was ordered to 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, Twentynine Palms, Calif., for duty. He served in a variety of billets from Grenadier to Platoon Sergeant.

Sergeant Barrett was transferred in August 1984 to Inspector-Instructor duty with 2nd Battalion, 25th Marines, New Rochelle, N.Y. Outside of his primary duties as an infantry instructor, he was assigned numerous support duties to include; Armorer, Nuclear Biological Chemical noncommissioned officer, and Training Chief.

In September 1987, Sergeant Barrett was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines where he assumed the responsibilities as Platoon Sergeant of the Surveillance Target Acquisition Platoon. Staff Sergeant Barrett deployed forward during the Gulf War with Task Force Papa Bear.

In April 1992, Staff Sergeant Barrett received orders to Drill Instructor School, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, Calif. Upon completion of Drill Instructor School, he was assigned to Company F, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, as a Drill Instructor, Senior Drill Instructor, and Chief Drill Instructor. In January 1994, he was selected as the Battalion Drill Master of 2nd Recruit Training Battalion.

In January 1995, Gunnery Sergeant Barrett was assigned to Scout Sniper Instructor School, Quantico, Va., as the Chief Instructor.

In September of 1996, Gunnery Sergeant Barrett was transferred to Marine Security Company, Camp David, Presidential Retreat, for duties as the Company Gunnery Sergeant and liaison to the United States Secret Service.

Upon completion of his tour at Camp David, First Sergeant Barrett was transferred to 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, Twentynine Palms, Calif., where he assumed the duties as India Company First Sergeant from August 1998 until April 2000. He was then assigned to Headquarters and Service Company from April 2000 to March 2001 and his tour culminated as the Senior Enlisted Leader of Weapons Company from March 2001 to June 2002.

Sergeant Major Barrett was then assigned to Recruiting Station Cleveland, Ohio, from July 2002 until May 2005, as the Recruiting Station Sergeant Major.

Sergeant Major Barrett was transferred to 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines in May 2005, where he completed two combat deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (04-06.2 and 06-08.1) in the Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

From October 2007 to May 2009, Sergeant Major Barrett was assigned to Officer Candidates School, Quantico, Va.

Sergeant Major Barrett was selected as the 1st Marine Division Sergeant Major and took his post in June 2009. In December 2009, he assumed the duties as I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) Sergeant Major, and deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom (10.1/10.2) in March 2010. During this deployment, he also became the NATO Regional Command (Southwest) Command Sergeant Major for Nimruz and Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He turned over the 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) and Regional Command (Southwest) in March and April 2011. Sergeant Major Barrett assumed his current post as the 17th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps on 9 June 2011.

His personal awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal with combat "V" and gold star, Meritorious Service Medal with gold star, Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal with combat "V" and three gold stars, Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two gold stars, Combat Action Ribbon with gold star, and the Presidential Service Badge.

Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member Bishop and distinguished Members of this Subcommittee, we live in unpredictable times. While our Nation debates the appropriate size of our federal budget, we face numerous external threats around the globe. Despite these challenges, your Marines continue to live hard, train hard and fight hard. The Marine Corps stands ready to contain the crisis, fill the gap, and hold the line. We are able to do so because of your fidelity to us and our families and your enduring commitment to the quality of life needs we hold dear. As I visit with Marines and families throughout the world, I continue to stress our five pillars of readiness: recruiting and retaining high-quality people; maintaining high unit readiness; shaping our force to meet the needs of Combatant Commanders; investing in our infrastructure; and conducting equipment modernization that supports our core competencies.

The quality of life needs we will discuss today, ranging from family readiness and schools to improvements in transition assistance and suicide prevention, impact each of these five pillars and our readiness to respond to any contingency around the globe when our Nation calls. Marines can face the enemy on the frontlines because of the care and support you and our fellow citizens give us and our families on the homefront. Thank you for this opportunity, my second, to report to you on our efforts in these vital quality of life areas, efforts that ensure Marines and families remain ready in these unsteady times.

### ***Remaining Ready through Strong Families***

Our Family Readiness Program strengthens and fortifies Marines and families by providing official unit communication, readiness preparedness training, information on and referral to qualified helping professionals, and vital unit, installation and community connection. Our 380 Family Readiness Officers are an asset throughout the Total Force and support the

commander's family readiness mission through direct interaction with Marines and families. Our Marine Corps Family Team Building training provides preventative education to Marines and families and enhances their quality of life, provides a feeling of empowerment, and increases levels of resiliency. Lifestyle, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, and Skills training, for example, helps Marines and families connect to the military culture and teaches how best to thrive in it. Our Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation Program offers pre-marital counseling and relationship training. eMarine, our secure family readiness website, delivers strategic communications to Marines and their families, both active duty and reserve, whether they are stationed at large installations or in remote locations. It gives family members access to documents, photos and videos, discussion forums, and information about their Marine's unit from anywhere in the world, 24/7. We continue to improve and streamline our programs in Fiscal Year 2013 with a focus on our computer-based Marine Corps Family Team Building curriculum and a new initiative to promote volunteerism to enhance unit morale and family readiness.

Our Family Care programs support the care and development continuum of Marine Corps children from birth to their teens. Child care services remain a high priority. Our school liaisons provide more than 70 school districts with information about the needs of Marine Corps families and access to beneficial training and counseling services to support teachers and students.

Marine parents are comforted by the support of a local education expert, who provides meaningful insight to new transfers and those with questions on local education policies. The states and DoDEA's initiatives and support programs like the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and the Common Core State Standards, the Non-DoD School Program and the Virtual High School have greatly assisted and benefited our children. Child

care services remain a priority and we have increased our child development and care capacity and expect to create more spaces in Fiscal Years 2013-2014 through off base fee assistance. However, we may have to curtail the hours of our youth and teen programs due to the effects of sequestration.

Families enrolled in our Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) strongly endorse our focus on providing a continuum of care and the improvements made to their level of support. Two years of increasing enrollments and a reduction in issues experienced by families relocating to new duty stations demonstrates this approval. EFMP had only 4,500 enrolled family members in Fiscal Year 2008; it has almost 11,000 today. The Marine Corps continues to underwrite the cost of up to 40 hours of short-term respite care per month for enrolled families, providing more than 400,000 hours of respite care in Fiscal Year 2012. We continue to transform our EFMP program. We are focused on increasing recreation and fitness inclusion for individuals of all abilities and will provide the American College of Sports Medicine Certified Inclusive Fitness Trainer certification program to staff at each installation in order to support individuals with special needs.

### ***Remaining Ready to Support the Families of our Fallen***

The Marine Corps Casualty Assistance Program is committed to ensuring that families of our fallen Marines are treated with the utmost compassion, dignity and honor. Always seeking to improve survivor assistance and demonstrating a record of quick, effective action, our Casualty Assistance Program is a 24-hour-per-day operation manned by Marines trained in casualty reporting, notification and casualty-assistance procedures. Casualty Assistance Calls Officers assist the next-of-kin with burial arrangements, applications for benefits and entitlements,

contact with benevolent and philanthropic organizations, and obtaining reports of investigation. Within days of the incident, the Marine Corps connects families to representatives from the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, a nationally-recognized provider of comfort and care to those who have suffered the loss of a military loved one. We then reach out to the next-of-kin approximately 60 days after the loss to help resolve any residual issues and to let the families know that they are still part of the Marine Corps family. We will remain steadfast in our support of our Marine Corps families who have paid so much in service to our Nation.

### ***Remaining Ready to Support our Wounded, Ill and Injured***

The Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR) is a fundamental component of the Marine Corps pledge to “keep faith” with those who have served. The WWR administers the Marine Corps Recovery Coordination Program that ensures wounded, ill and injured (WII) Marines’ medical and non-medical care needs are fully integrated. In the broadest terms, this includes determining the degree of support required through case review, working with Marines and their families to develop recovery plans, and executing those plans for their return to duty or reintegration to their hometowns.

WWR care typically begins at the point of incident (wound, illness or injury), with a review of the Marine’s Personnel Casualty Report to determine the best course of action. Medically acute Marines are joined to a WWR element for high-touch support. When WII Marines are joined to a WWR element, they benefit from the familiar disciplined environment of a Marine Corps unit, but it is carefully balanced with the necessary components of healing, compassion, and personalized daily motivation. During this time, WWR staff and medical and non-medical advocates team together to ensure the WII Marine is attending their medical

appointments, progressing through the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) process, and executing the various components of their recovery plan.

Under the Marine Corps proven care model, WII Marines may remain with their parent units so long as their medical conditions allow and their units can support them. When WII Marines remain with their parent units, they are also supported by the WWR through its various assets. This support is accomplished through WWR's direct contact with the WII Marine, through the WWR providing information and resources to the WII Marine's commander, or a combination of both. WII Marines not assigned to a WWR element are tracked through the Wounded Warrior Battalion Contact Centers.

To be successful in his or her recovery mission, a WII Marine must take a pragmatic look forward and set attainable goals. These goals must be developed based upon the Marine's and his or her family's needs, and committed to a plan with carefully articulated and monitored action steps. Currently, 1,016 WII Marines and families are successfully executing Comprehensive Recovery Plans (CRP) with the assistance of the Wounded Warrior Regiment's Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs). RCCs meet with a WII Marine within 72 hours of assignment and begin a comprehensive assessment process which takes into consideration the various recovery components. The results of this assessment process form the basis for the Marine's CRP. Each CRP is tailored to the WII Marine's and family's specific recovery circumstances and the document is frequently updated and adjusted to suit the WII Marine's evolving situation.

Most WII Marines will not return to duty and will transition to veteran status. Meeting this transition milestone prepared and confident is paramount to a WII Marine's success in his or

her civilian community. The WWR's transition support is twofold: we help WII Marines and families successfully enter the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) system and assist them with securing rewarding and fulfilling careers.

For WII Marines with CRPs, prior to leaving active duty service, the Marine's RCC will schedule phone conferences with the Marine's VA recovery team members to ensure all required paperwork is transferred and benefits are on schedule for payment. Marines not joined to a WWR element may be provided VA transition information via the WWR's fact sheets and staff. They are also assisted through the WWR's Call Center.

We aim for our WII Marines' civilian careers to be as productive and rewarding as their Marine Corps careers. WWR has transition cells at its Regimental Headquarters and its Wounded Warrior Battalions where transition coordinators work with Marines in a one-on-one setting to conduct comprehensive career assessments; develop education and career plans; provide career coaching; identify education, internship and training opportunities; and facilitate networking and transition activities such as job fairs. WWR also coordinates with external entities to enhance WII Marines' transition success. The Regiment has placed eight Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Service counselors aboard various Marine Corps installations; WII Marines continue to take advantage of federal internships through the Operation Warfighter Program; and WWR continually coordinates with charitable organizations, such as the USO and Hire Heroes USA, to provide transition workshops and opportunities specifically geared toward WII service members and their families.

To further ensure WII Marines are succeeding in their civilian lives, we utilize our Sergeant Merlin German Call Center to conduct outreach calls to check on Marines and families



who have transitioned. The Call Center conducts an average of 7,000 calls per month. Call Center staff, to include psychological health professionals, is also available 24/7 to accept calls from Marines and families.

The WWR's District Injured Support Coordinator Program (DISC) provides assistance to WII Marines transitioning from active duty or reserve to veterans status through its geographically dispersed network of Marines. Our DISCs are purposefully aligned with the Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Integrated Service Networks to further enhance coordination with VA services. DISCs provide a multitude of services to include conducting face-to-face visits with Marines and families, ensuring Marines are registered with the VA, providing information on various community resources, and linking WII Marines in need back to the WWR for assistance.

As this statement demonstrates, the Marine Corps is heavily invested in providing for WII Marines and their dedicated family members. Whether we are a nation at war or in times of peace, the WWR will continue to successfully meet their care and support needs. For the Marine Corps, wounded warrior care is not a process, but a persistent relationship between the Marine Corps and our Marines.

### ***Remaining Ready to Transition to Civilian Life***

Our transition assistance programs cover the lifecycle of a Marine from recruitment, through separation or retirement, and beyond as veteran Marines. Our first step is our revised Transition Readiness Seminar, which now gives Marines a choice of one of four pathways during this program: College/University Education; Employment; Vocational or Technical Training; or Entrepreneurship. This tailored approach reduces information overload, targets individual needs

of the Marine, promotes effective military skills translation, and is in full compliance with the Vow to Hire Heroes Act and the recommendations of the President's Veterans Employment Initiative. The Marine for Life Program, with its nationwide network of Marine for Life Representatives, will support improved reach-back and outreach support for those veteran Marines who require localized support in their hometowns with information, opportunities, or other specific needs. These assets help veterans develop and maintain local networks of Marine-friendly individuals, employers, and organizations.

Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) provides a variety of classes and tools, including one-on-one financial counseling and workshops, that help Marines and their families make responsible decisions in personal finance. Our information and referral capabilities help connect Marines and families with appropriate resources. In addition to our Family Member Employment Assistance Program, which helps Marine families achieve employment goals, we provide relocation assistance and voluntary education services at all of our installations. Our award-winning MCCS General Library Program continues to play a vital role in the personal and professional development of our Marines and families. They extend invaluable opportunities for learning, community sharing, academic research, and self-improvement to our Marines and families. More than a half dozen of our librarians have won National Parks and Recreation Association – Armed Forces Recreation Society awards, and the DoD awarded seven of our libraries with Premier Library certificates.

### ***Remaining Ready to Step Up and Step In to Prevent Sexual Assault***

Sexual assault is a crime that is incompatible with Marine Corps values of honor, courage, and commitment. Not only does it undermine mission readiness and unit cohesion,

sexual assault results in an irrevocable loss of faith in the institution and violates the basic principles every Marine has vowed to uphold and defend. In step with our Commandant-directed 2012 Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Campaign Plan, the SAPR Program implemented large-scale Corps-wide training initiatives, utilizing a top-down leadership model. SAPR's training message charges leadership with establishing an environment that is non-permissive to any misconduct or crime – especially sexual assault – and making certain that the Marine Corps' high standard of discipline is maintained. SAPR training remains unequivocal in its assertion, however, that the inherent duty of preventing sexual assault belongs ultimately to Marines of every rank.

While aggressive in our prevention initiatives, we remain steadfast in our commitment to victim care and response, never ceasing in our efforts to ensure that all victims of sexual assault receive the kind of supportive services and justice that preserve their dignity and safety. Response systems have been strengthened through intensified credentialing requirements for SAPR personnel, as well as through an increased number of SAPR personnel in the field. In addition, the Commandant directed a reorganization of our legal community to improve our ability to prosecute complex cases such as sexual assaults. The centerpiece of this new model is the regional complex trial team comprised of experienced military prosecutors and augmented by civilian highly qualified experts, providing a wealth of experience for the prosecution of such cases. These teams will not only have the ability to prosecute “special victims” type cases, but all types of cases. Eliminating sexual assault in our ranks is our ultimate goal, and the Commandant intends to stay personally and actively engaged in leading this campaign.

***Remaining Ready through a Focus on Behavioral Health and Resiliency***

The integration of our behavioral health programs synchronize our efforts in suicide prevention and response, combat and operational stress, substance abuse, and family advocacy into the larger support network of command structures and the health and human services across the Marine Corps. We focus on evidence-based practices to ensure we are providing effective support in these critical areas. The Marine Corps has and will continue to increase the number of personnel available on installations to develop, implement, and execute behavioral health prevention and treatment assistance. In addition to our very dedicated clinicians that serve our Marines across the wide range of societal issues, our Military & Family Life Consultants (MFLC) are aimed at preventing the development of or exacerbation of mental health conditions that detract from military and family readiness. The desired end-state is to strengthen unit readiness by providing Marines, Sailors and family members the ability to anticipate and resolve challenges associated with military lifestyle, deployment, and reintegration. Our Community Counseling Centers will be strengthened and continue to enhance clinical case management capabilities as well as easier resource system navigation and ensure that Marines are properly screened, tracked, and referred to appropriate behavioral health services.

Enhanced command staffing is planned for the short term that will provide operational commands with behavioral health resources to assist in meeting prevention requirements. This staffing model will place a Behavioral Health Prevention Specialist at Marine Expeditionary Forces, major subordinate commands, and regiments or equivalent to be responsible for execution of all behavioral health prevention education initiatives. These individuals will conduct preventive education, sustain a cadre of trainers, develop and implement strategic plans, brief leadership on current trends in behavioral health issues and collect vital information which will improve behavioral health efforts throughout the Marine Corps.

We will implement our Behavioral Health Integrated Training, which will consolidate all behavioral health information into a single training session that focuses on common risk and protective factors across the full spectrum of behavioral health issues. Our Behavioral Health and Brain Injury Advisory Committee meets quarterly to advise senior Marine Corps leadership on emerging programs and issues, solicit senior leadership guidance and feedback regarding integration efforts, and identify gaps in services delivery as well as opportunities to gain efficiencies. Our Behavioral Health Integrated Case Management System will facilitate the communication of clinical and administrative data across behavioral health programs.

In Fiscal Year 2013, we are continuing to advance our Marine Total Fitness concept (mind, body, spirit, and social) to develop Marines of exemplary psychological, physical, spiritual, and social character. Marine Total Fitness, supports the Navy's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailor and Marine Initiative, by infusing fitness-based information and concepts into all aspects of a Marine's training and readiness and prepares Marines to successfully operate in and respond to the rigors, demands, and stressors of both combat and garrison.

One suicide is too many. Suicide prevention is not a single act but rather a series of actions. The Marine Corps is actively engaged in making lasting improvements to the overall health, well-being, and quality of life for Marines. Each tragic loss to suicide has a far-reaching impact on families, friends and our entire Marine Corps community. Saving lives requires vigilance and our concerted effort to harness the strength of engaged leaders. Engaged leaders are alert to those at risk for suicide and take action to help Marines address the hard times or pain in their lives, helping individual Marines optimize their physical, psychological, social, and spiritual spheres and revitalize depleted areas. Fit Marines are fortified and strengthened and better able to withstand the tensions and stressors of life in and out of the Marine Corps.

Leaders prevent suicide by strengthening all Marines and encouraging them to engage helping services early when problems are most manageable. Whenever possible, we deploy evidence-based prevention practices such as our award-winning “Never Leave a Marine Behind” suicide prevention training program, which is peer-led and updated to reflect emerging evidence-based practices. Our Suicide Prevention Program Officers, located at our battalions and squadrons, will be an administrative and coordinating resource for the commander to use in managing a unit’s suicide prevention program. Our DSTRESS Line, which is staffed by veteran Marines and corpsmen, family members and civilian counselors trained in Marine Corps culture, provides anonymous, 24/7 counseling services to any Marine, attached Sailor or family member. DSTRESS Line gives our Marines, Sailors and families one of their own to speak to about everyday stress or their heaviest burdens in life. We work closely with DoD and forge strong relationships with other Federal agencies, academia, and private industry in an effort to work together to better understand suicide and improve our programs.

Our Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC) program assists Marine leaders with maintaining warfighting capabilities by addressing the impacts of stress, enhancing fitness, and addressing the long-term health and well-being of Marines and their families. COSC resources support all of the tenets of good leadership. Understanding the full range of stress reactions and associated leader actions enhances the ability to mitigate risk and take care of Marines in all environments. COSC efforts prevent, identify, and manage combat and operational stress-related issues and increase access to mental health care by breaking stigma and raising awareness. COSC principles are embedded in Operational Stress Control and Readiness Team Training, Deployment Cycle Training and third location decompression events that reach the Total Force. We have improved training including education and awareness on Traumatic Brain Injury,

continuing the de-stigmatization of behavioral health care, and incorporating current information from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom deployments.

### ***Remaining Ready to Support our Marines in the Fight***

Deployed support is one of the most important services we provide. Our Exchange, Recreation, Fitness, and Communication services boost morale and reduce mission-related stress.

- ***Exchange.*** Ongoing missions in Afghanistan include the operation of two Direct Operation Exchanges Tactical (DOX-T) at Camps Leatherneck and Dwyer, one Tactical Field Exchange at Camp Delaram II, one Imprest Fund Site at Forward Operating Base Edinburgh, and numerous Warfighter Express Services Teams (WEST) operating out of Camps Leatherneck, Dwyer and FOB Edinburgh.
- ***Recreation and Fitness.*** We provide sports, recreational, and fitness equipment to units throughout Helmand Province. This transportable equipment includes sports/recreation cooler kits filled with sports gear and board games, electronic game kits, Theater-in-a-Box kits, and functional fitness equipment for use in austere environments. Reading materials, both electronic and paperback, are also distributed. Our award-winning libraries provide online tools for research, recreation and professional development. Several libraries offer private webcam meetings so families can stay connected with their deployed Marines.
- ***Communication.*** Morale satellite services are available to deployed Marines. We have delivered 13 small satellite communications systems to units in Afghanistan. Each system has two phones that provide 6,000 free minutes per month and five laptops that allow internet browsing, social networking, and chat/video capabilities to deployed Marines. Motomail continues to serve deployed Marines with over 4.1 million letters sent since December 2004.
- ***MCCS Amenity Wi-Fi Solution.*** The Marine Corps Community Services Amenity Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) Solution program acquires, deploys, administers, and supports Wi-Fi capability at no-cost to Marines and Families. This morale and welfare initiative helps families stay in contact while separated from their Marines. Wi-Fi is conveniently located on 19 installations and 250 facilities such as, temporary lodging facilities, exchange food courts, libraries, education centers, child and youth Centers, Clubs, and Wounded Warrior program facilities.

Marine Corps Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) activities support the readiness, resiliency and retention goals of Marines. MWR supports the social and physical cords of

Marine Total Fitness efforts by providing the best mix of programs and services to Marines and their families. The following highlights our new initiatives, primarily focused on the areas of fitness, sports, and recreation, as they are essential in maintaining a totally fit Marine.

In 2012, Semper Fit introduced High Intensity Tactical Training (HITT), a comprehensive strength and conditioning program geared toward optimizing physical performance and combat readiness. HITT provides a fulfilling workout for Marines and is designed to reduce the likelihood of injury while in theater. Initial feedback from Marines is positive, and the Marine Corps-wide rollout of the program began in October 2012. Social fitness is linked with unit cohesion and we are identifying unit-driven recreational activities to provide at Marine Corps installations. Operation Adrenaline Rush (OAR), currently offered at MCAS Yuma and Camp Lejeune, assists Marines in reintegration by empowering small unit leaders, maintaining combat readiness, and reinforcing unit cohesion. OAR offers opportunities for unit recreation through high adventure, outdoor recreation activities like white water rafting and rock climbing. There are plans to expand OAR to additional installations in 2013.

In addition to programs that support the physical health of Marines, the Marine Corps Exchange (MCX) helps to ensure the financial wellbeing of Marines and families. One program, “Our Cost is Your Cost,” offers items such as diapers, formula, baby food, bread, and milk at cost to support the financial readiness of Marines and their families. MCX is committed to supporting initiatives like the White House’s Joining Forces Initiative to employ veterans and family members. As a member of the Military Spouse Employment Partnership Program, MCX helps to provide jobs to military family members who may be worried about finding a job at their next duty station. Currently, about 29 percent of MCX employees are military family members.



### ***Remaining Ready through Quality Facilities and Infrastructure***

The Marine Corps continues to strive for a prolonged commitment to facilities and infrastructure that supports operations and quality of life for our Marines and their families.

- In Fiscal Years 2009 - 2012, the Marine Corps received \$8.8 billion in new construction and design. With this funding, we are providing new quality of life facilities, improved operational and training facilities, and more up-to-date utility infrastructure systems. The Marine Corps is currently waiting on final approval by Congress of nearly \$790 million in new construction and design for Fiscal Year 2013.
- The Marine Corps has three major funding areas where recapitalization and modernization initiatives in infrastructure and facilities are programmed: Bachelor and Family Housing; Facility Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization; and Military Construction.

The Marine Corps currently maintains over 100,000 bachelor enlisted housing spaces worldwide for permanent party and trainees.

- From Fiscal Years 2008 – 2012, the barracks construction projects were planned to replace inadequate facilities, provide a consistent 2+0 standard across the Marine Corps, and eliminate space deficiencies by 2014. These projects were programmed to meet 90 percent of the requirement for a 202,000-Marine force and are now projected to meet just under 100 percent of the requirement for a reduced force.
- Fiscal Year 2013 and future barracks projects are primarily related to specific force relocations and student/training needs, not the previous Barracks Initiative. The Fiscal Year 2013 MILCON program includes two barracks projects that are not part of the Barracks Initiative; these will provide spaces for our Marines at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown and at The Basic School for student officers.
- The Marine Corps is the youngest, most junior, and least married of the four military Services. Providing appropriate and comfortable living spaces that positively impact the morale and development of these young men and women makes sense.
- The Marine Corps' goal is to provide a 2+0 room standard that allows two junior enlisted Marines (E1-E3) to share a room and bath. We believe that assigning two junior Marines to a room is the correct balance between the privacy desired by the Marines and the Marine Corps' goals of providing companionship, camaraderie, and unit cohesion. This balance provides the atmosphere we believe is necessary to motivate, train and develop Marines, while fostering unit integrity. Noncommissioned officers (E4 and E5) are provided a private room with bath in a 2+0 room.

Marine Corps families are an integral component of readiness. We must always remember that Marines and their families serve out of a sense of duty and loyalty to our country and, as they do so, face the difficulties of the military lifestyle - frequent relocations often far from extended family and frequent deployments that separate families for months at a time. We have a responsibility to provide adequate family housing to our families.

- Continued support for full funding of the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) allows more families to access quality, affordable housing in the local community. This is important since more than two-thirds of service members do not live on a military installation.
- However, we have over 24,000 homes worldwide for the many families who prefer to live in military or Public Private Ventures (PPV) housing for a number of reasons, including economics, safety, schools, and community support. PPVs, combined with traditional military construction, will continue to build and improve the homes necessary to supplement local community housing.

We have privatized over 96 percent of our world-wide inventories to date and continue to see success from our PPV projects across Marine Corps installations. PPVs have not only improved the homes in which our families live, they are also providing community support facilities such as community centers, playgrounds and greenscapes that help create neighborhoods and a sense of community for our Marines and their families.

As resources overall and military construction funds in particular become more constrained, the Marine Corps will continue to rely on the sound stewardship of existing facilities and infrastructure to support our needs. Funding in recent years has provided facilities that address long-standing requirements at our bases and stations across the Marine Corps. It is always a pleasure to visit our installations and hear young Marines talk about the work they perform in these new facilities. Funds are being requested to support new mission and new platform requirements, force structure repositioning, replacement of aging infrastructure to

support enduring missions, and support of force protection, safety, and physical security requirements.

### ***Remaining Ready in Unpredictable Times***

Adherence to the five pillars of readiness ensures that the Marine Corps remains ready in these unpredictable times. As we remain constantly vigilant to the external threats to our Nation, we will stay focused on our internal responsibilities to our Marines and families. We have a young force and an almost equal number of active duty Marines and family members. We have to maintain the quality of life support they need to keep leaning forward and be ready to answer our Nation's call to duty in any clime or place. Our approach to required sequestration cuts to our Marine and Family support portfolio will focus on preserving programs that support the health, welfare and morale of our Marines and families. These programs are considered most essential in meeting the organizational objectives of the Marine Corps, and they promote the physical and mental well-being of Marines and families.

We will be fiscally responsible during this challenging budget environment and will critically assess the needs of our family members and prioritize resources. We will do so, however, in a manner that sustains the world's finest fighting force while keeping faith with our Marines and their families. Your Marines will continue to live hard, train hard and fight hard. We don't know when or where we will be called to next, but know that your Marines are ready to leave tonight. I look forward to your questions.