

OUTSERVE ANNOUNCES MILITARY PARTNERS GROUP TO CO-SPONSOR DC SUMMIT

Military Partners and Families Coalition to Co-Sponsor “Our Families Matter”

WASHINGTON, April 9, 2012 – Today OutServe announced that the Military Partners and Families Coalition (MPFC) will join the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), Courage Campaign, and Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) in sponsoring the first OutServe Capital Summit, to be held May 14-15 in Washington, DC. The two-day event will focus on the theme “Our Families Matter.”

This two-day event will be the first of its kind, dedicated to advocating for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) military families. MPFC will be presenting at the Capital Summit, which will include panel discussions and workshops addressing resources and available support systems for LGBT service members and their families.

“OutServe and MPFC share the same goals, and with this Summit we will bring together the military community to address the issues that affect LGBT military families and how to solve them,” said Josh Seefried, co-director of OutServe. “Too many Americans don’t understand that gay and lesbian military families aren’t eligible for the supports that straight families get. We need to educate decision-makers, as private citizens, how our families are affected – and send a clear message that our families matter.”

“Partnering with OutServe on this summit is important to us as members of a community that for many years has been hidden, silenced, and completely unsupported,” said MPFC President, Ariana Bostian-Kentes. “It is time for *our* military families to step out from the shadows and proudly stand beside our service members, accepting both the respect that is long overdue and bringing to light the fact that our families carry the same burden as any military family and deserve the same support and recognition. We intend to work closely with MPFC’s coalition members and other mainstream organizations that embrace the civic responsibility to support *all* families of those serving our country.”

The Summit will gather actively-serving military of all sexual orientations with experts from resource and advocacy groups to discuss the legal rights of gay and lesbian military partners, as well as resources for their support. Spouses and partners of gay and lesbian service members are not currently provided all available resources to support their families during and after deployments, nor are they given access to base facilities or many educational, counseling, healthcare, and other privileges. For example, a gay or lesbian spouse cannot pick up a child from military day care, or purchase groceries for the family at the commissary.

The Summit will also include visits to elected and/or appointed officials to educate them on the challenges facing gay and lesbian military families.

Registration is at <http://outserve.org/capital-summit/>.

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OutServe is the association of actively serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) military personnel. With more than 4,700 members and 42 chapters worldwide, it is one of the largest LGBT employee resource groups in the world. OutServe works to support a professional network of LGBT military personnel and create an environment of respect in the military with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity. For more information, go to www.outserve.org.

Military Partners and Families Coalition (MPFC) is a private non-profit, non-partisan organization based in Washington, D.C. It was founded in 2011 by a group of partners of active duty U.S. Armed Forces Servicemembers stationed in the U.S. and overseas. MPFC provides support, resources, education and advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender military partners and their families. For more information, go to www.milpfc.org.