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I am the President and CEO of the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC). I am writing to share my strong support for the Operation Military Experience (OpME) study, and to encourage young people and their families to participate.

The OpME study is led by Dr. Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, who directs the Military Family Research Institute (MFRI) at Purdue University. MCEC has drawn on MFRI's expertise many times over the years, and we are very pleased that Dr. MacDermid Wadsworth accepted our invitation to serve on the MCEC Science Advisory Board.

MCEC is eager to learn about the downstream effects of OIF/OEF deployments for youth and families, and the OpME study will provide ground-breaking new information. The study will include youth and their families who are still serving, as well as those who have left military service. It will be one of the very first studies to include siblings in military families, and it will include a large number of families with military moms.

MCEC relies heavily on scientific evidence to guide its programs and advocacy. It is important to us to learn about the experiences of the OIF/OEF generation of youth and their families. MCEC services and resources are all grounded in best-practice educational development systems. Our mission to advocate, educate, and collaborate on behalf of military-connected students relies on relevant and reliable research-based initiatives like those in MFRI's already broad and deep portfolio. MFRI's record of excellence and impact informs the PADDIE+M process that drives our planning, analysis, design, development, evaluation and maintenance of cutting-edge content for students, military parents, and the educators and other stakeholders who serve these students. MFRI's proposed research will further inform our efforts to make every military-connected student college-, work-, and life-ready.

If your family is invited to participate, I hope you will accept! The procedures for this study have been rigorously reviewed, so you can feel confident that only group information will be reported, no details about individuals.

Thank you – all of you -- for your military service. We at MCEC are eager to learn about your experiences.

Sincerely,

Rebecca I. Porter, PhD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Military Child Education Coalition