

The Key Spouse Program is coming to Luke AFB

This exciting program assists spouses with playing a key role in enhancing mission readiness by assisting family members during deployments and remote assignments. The Key Spouse Program is a unit-based family readiness and assistance program.

Modeled after the Navy's Ombudsman Program, the Air Force implemented the Key Spouse Program (KSP) in 1997 at five high-deployment bases. Due to its success, the KSP has been standardized and implemented Air Force-wide. Luke AFB will have one umbrella KSP. However, a Key Spouse's duties will vary according to the needs of each squadron.

"With the current number and length of deployments, it is more important than ever that families are supported during these times of separation. In addition, the Key Spouse Program will also benefit commanders; their members will come to work more focused on the mission knowing their families are taken care of," said Ms. Deborah Iverson, Airman and Family Services Flight Chief.

Key Spouses, appointed by commanders, volunteer their time and assistance to offer support and provide information to families during deployment and remote tours, and welcome new members and families to the unit. Key Spouses also provide an important link between families, the first sergeant, and the commander.

One Key Spouse will be appointed for every 100 active duty members in the unit. In addition, Key Spouses are appointed for a one-year term. The commander will issue an official appointment letter. Key Spouses will be trained by the Airman & Family Readiness Center (A&FRC).

Key Spouse volunteers should be friendly, accessible, and professional. One of the most important traits is the ability to listen. Key Spouses often deal with a variety of issues and become a referral source in many instances.

There are four key players in the program: Key Spouse, Unit Commander, First Sergeant, and the Airman & Family Readiness Center. The Unit Commander will interview, appoint, and provide administrative support to the Key Spouse. The First Sergeant will serve as a point of contact and a link with the Unit Commander.

The Key Spouse will maintain contact with and support families of deployed members. He or she will welcome new families and provide information. The A&FRC will provide oversight of the program and Key Spouse training. The A&FRC will also be the point of contact for information for the Key Spouse.

"As Community Readiness Consultants here at the Airman and Family Readiness Center, we will be able to assist Key Spouses by providing information, referral, and guidance as they assist their unit members," said Mr. James Knuckles, Airman and Family Readiness Center Director.

Spouses who want to volunteer to be a Key Spouse should contact their squadron's first sergeant. For additional information, please contact the A&FRC at 623-856-6550.

2009 Key Spouse Training Schedule

0800-1200 each session

4 November

9 December