



June 24, 2008

Dear Indiana Librarian,

Did you know that today there are Hoosier soldiers from every county in Indiana deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan? The state of Indiana is 15th in the U.S. in population, but is 4th in the nation in its contribution of guard and reserve members. The continued commitment of Hoosier soldiers and their families to the service of our nation is amazing.

Libraries are an integral part of every Indiana community and provide valuable education and awareness-raising that improve the quality of life for all citizens. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in a new tradition across Indiana this fall, with the goal of supporting and encouraging families in your community who are dealing with the deployment of a family member, friend or other loved one.

In honor of Indiana Veterans and to help increase community awareness of the sacrifices made by service members and their families, MFRI at Purdue University is inviting your library to join us in starting a community tradition through the *Our Heroes' Tree*SM program. *Our Heroes' Tree*SM is a way to cultivate community spirit and share the experiences of military family service, separation, and trauma or loss. It is also a great way to promote patriotic pride among families, organizations and communities.

MFRI is inviting libraries from across Indiana to participate in this program. With new resources and educational materials, participating in the *Our Heroes' Tree*SM program will provide you and your library a means to attract and interact with members of your local community. Because each county in our state is affected by the current deployment, community awareness of military families and the soldiers returning from deployment is essential in helping these soldiers and families transition from combat back into the civilian world. MFRI is working with community organizations to increase awareness about the needs of this special group. By joining with us in this project, you are providing a valuable service to your community and your country.

Attached is a FAQ sheet that will answer many of the questions you might have about the program and what is entailed. Each library that participates will receive a resource kit to assist in implementation of the program. The program will run from late October through Veteran's Day.

On behalf of MFRI at Purdue University, please accept this invitation to participate in the *Our Heroes' Tree*SM program. If your library is interested in joining us, please register on our website at www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri. Please don't hesitate to contact me directly at (765) 496-6013 if you have questions about this opportunity. I thank you in advance for your participation in this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Broniarczyk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "K" and "B".

Kathy Broniarczyk
Director of Outreach
Military Family Research Institute