

Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

Fort Drum honors military spouses with day of workshops and support

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- The Fort Drum Relocation Readiness Program hosted Military Spouse Appreciation Day on May 8 inside the Family Resource Center to provide spouses with a day of connection, learning and access to installation support services.

Kelly Bice and Kelsea Dopler, with the Fort Drum Relocation Readiness Program, organized the event as a series of informative sessions to discuss the unique challenges and opportunities of military life.

“We don’t grow up thinking, ‘I’m going to be a military spouse,’” Bice said. “It’s a challenge and it’s a commitment that you all made for your spouses. And they don’t always give you a toolkit to manage that.”

Bice highlighted the goal of building supportive circles, or tribes, to foster safety and resilience, and attendees engaged in an icebreaker exercise to find common ground with each other.

Dopler described military spouses as the architects of stability, and the de facto heads of household when the service members are away. She said they are constantly at odds with

“Murphy’s Law” because, inevitably, they will face one challenge after another at the most inopportune times.

“During my husband’s last deployment, I learned how to uninstall and install a dishwasher,” Dopler said. “I learned how to fix the torsion spring on the garage door. There was some plumbing and electrical work in there too – it was a whole thing.”

Her message resonated with attendees, who later shared their own stories of “Murphy’s Law,” from furnaces failing in the middle of winter to dealing with hailstorms while a service member was away.

Dopler said she experienced being an angry spouse who wanted nothing to do with the military. Then she realized her anger consumed too much time and energy, which she decided to invest instead in finding “the little joys in life that make you happy.”

“My goal today is to help you build a relationship with the military that works for you,” she said. “Success in this lifestyle isn’t measured by volunteer hours or the number of events you participate in. It’s measured by the balance you find by being a supportive partner and being a whole person.”

A key focus of the event was ensuring spouses have the tools they need for success and stability. Attendees rotated through workshops and presentations from community organizations, including Fort Drum Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation’s Sports and Fitness, Ready and Resilient (R2) Center, Army Volunteer Corps, and the Armed Forces Wellness Center.

Maddie Clark, with Army Community Services' Information and Referral, informed attendees about the "Start Your Journey" program – a streamlined process for spouses to get connected with installation support services. After filling out an online form, community members can be matched with what interests them and receive updates on classes and events.

To learn more about Fort Drum ACS, call (315) 772-6556, visit www.facebook.com/FortDrumSFRD or stop by the Family Resource Center, Bldg. 11042 on Mount Belvedere Boulevard.

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Photo Captions:

Fort Drum community members attend a Military Spouse Appreciation Day event, hosted by the Relocation Readiness Program, May 8, 2026, inside the Family Resource Center. The event included a series of informative sessions to discuss the unique challenges and opportunities of military life, with presentations from community organizations, including Fort Drum Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation's Sports and Fitness, Ready and Resilient (R2) Center, Army Volunteer Corps, and the Armed Forces Wellness Center. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

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