

## Lessons about Work and Family from Families Serving in the U.S. Military

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**March 16, 2007**

EAST LANSING, Mich. - When Ian Whitney, an MSU senior, was deployed to Kuwait in 2003 to serve with the 110th Fighter Wing of the Michigan National Guard in many ways he was more prepared for the role than his family.

"Seeing him off was incredibly stressful," said his mother, Louise Whitney of East Lansing. "There were all these thoughts going through my mind, so I disciplined myself to set those aside and I focused on getting him ready. Did he need lip balm, sun screen, or powdered Gatorade? And we had to help our two younger sons understand that their brother was going far away for an undetermined amount of time. It certainly wasn't easy for Ian, but this was something he was trained to do. In a supporting role I had to put on a cheery face and cope as best I could."



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Today's military families serve in extremely demanding conditions, including long, repeated, and dangerous deployments, according to Shelley M. MacDermid, professor of Family Studies and co-director of the Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University. MacDermid is the featured presenter at the Family Research Speaker Series on Friday, March 16, 2007 sponsored by the Family Research Initiative at Michigan State University.

"New research on military families provides insight into the impact of quality-of-life factors for military members and their families, and can be shared with those who affect policies and practices for our military," said MacDermid.

The public is invited to the presentation, entitled *Lessons about Work and Family from Families Serving in the U.S. Military*, 12:00 noon in Room 230 of the Psychology Building on the campus of Michigan State University. Information is available at [families.msu.edu](http://families.msu.edu).

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The Family Research Initiative is a university-wide effort that promotes and supports collaborative faculty and student scholarship concerning a wide array of issues impacting families and communities. Michigan State University is dedicated to generating interdisciplinary research to improve the quality of life for families.