The Implementation Evaluation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration (2009)

- **Part I: Early Implementation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration**

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- **Part II: Additional Findings from the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration: Implementation Progress and Participants' Characteristics and Plans**

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THE IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF THE MILITARY SPOUSE CAREER ADVANCEMENT ACCOUNT DEMONSTRATION

The implementation evaluation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Account Demonstration describes the early experiences of demonstration sites, the characteristics of spouses who received CAAs and their military sponsors, and spouses' plans for using their CAAs as of when they enrolled in the demonstration. The evaluation was a two-pronged approach that consisted of a qualitative study on the demonstration sites and an accompanying quantitative study of descriptive statistics on a sample of the participants. This publication contains two reports, each of which focuses on one of these studies.

The first report, *Part I: Early Implementation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration*, provides an overview of the demonstration and key findings about the demonstration's partnerships, early implementation experiences, marketing efforts, and other topics. The primary information sources for the implementation study were in-depth site visits conducted shortly after the start of the demonstration. At most sites, interviews were conducted with staff from the state labor or workforce department, the participating Workforce Investment Board and the local One-Stop Career Center, and the military partner, which usually consisted of the education and family support centers that provide support to service members and their families. When possible, evaluation team members also observed military spouses' interactions with demonstration staff, such as orientation sessions when military spouses learned about the requirements. Finally, they conducted group discussions with participants who had opened CAAs.

The second report, *Part II: Additional Findings from the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration Study*, supplements the implementation study by providing additional information on implementation issues and quantitative information about the characteristics of participants, as well as their plans for using the CAAs for participation in education and training programs and the attainment of credentials, licenses, or certifications to support careers in high-wage, high-growth occupations. The quantitative analysis used two types of data. The first was on the number of CAAs awarded through mid-May 2009, according to states' weekly reports to DOL. Using these data, an analysis provided supplemental information about sites' initial startups and patterns over time in states' awards of CAAs to military spouses, for all states combined, by state, and by industry. The second type of data was individual-level data for an analysis of the characteristics of the spouses and their sponsors, as well as spouses' education and training plans for using the CAAs. The data included spouses who began their involvement in the demonstration between July 14, 2008, and early 2009, which is a portion, but not all, of the spouses who ultimately participated in the demonstration. Since most CAA participants had not yet completed training when data were collected, information about spouses' post-training outcomes was not available.

ABSTRACT

In 2007, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) began a joint initiative to support the spouses of military personnel in their pursuit of portable postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Through the Military Spouse (MilSpouse) Career Advancement Account (CAA) Demonstration, eligible spouses could obtain an account to pay for career-related education and training. Demonstration goals were to (1) help military spouses with careers and (2) encourage the retention of service members by increasing families' satisfaction with military life. Eight states received demonstration grants, which were used in substate areas where participating military bases and One-Stop Career Centers were located. DOL and DoD established demonstration guidelines about the local partnerships to be formed; which military spouses were eligible for CAAs; the types of training, education, and credentials that could be funded; the funding amount available to each spouse; and the extent of guidance that demonstration staff could give to spouses.

This report presents findings from the implementation evaluation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Account Demonstration. *Part I: Early Implementation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration* provides an overview of the demonstration and key findings about the demonstration's partnerships, early implementation experiences, marketing efforts, and other topics. *Part II: Additional Findings from the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration Study* supplements the earlier report by providing additional information on implementation issues and quantitative information about the characteristics of participants, as well as their plans for using the CAAs for participation in education and training programs and the attainment of credentials, licenses, or certifications to support careers in high-wage, high-growth occupations.

DISCLAIMER

This report was prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration, Office of Policy Development and Research by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., under contract number DOLJ061A20351. The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to DOL, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of same by the U.S. Government.

PART I:

Early Implementation of the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration

February 27, 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007, the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) began a joint initiative to support the spouses of military personnel ("military spouses") in their pursuit of portable postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Although military spouses tend to have more education than their civilian counterparts, they are generally employed at lower rates, in part as a result of the deployments and frequent moves common to families with a member in the military (Harrell et al. 2004; Lim et al. 2007; Savych 2008).

Through the Military Spouse (MilSpouse) Career Advancement Accounts (CAAs) Demonstration, eligible military spouses can obtain an account to pay for education and technical training that will aid them in their careers. The theory underlying the demonstration is that attainment of a portable degree or credential will help military spouses enter and advance in the workforce even as their family relocates to other duty stations. A longer-term goal of the demonstration is to encourage the retention of the service member by improving the military spouse's job prospects and increasing the family's satisfaction with military life.

DOL contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) to conduct an implementation study of the demonstration, with the support of Coffey Consulting, LLC. This report details the findings of that study. After providing an overview of the demonstration and study, this summary presents key findings on (1) the demonstration's partnerships and collaborations, (2) early implementation and staffing, (3) marketing efforts, (4) account management, and (5) participants' experiences. The summary concludes with overarching lessons and next steps for the evaluation.

The Demonstration and Study

In fall 2007, eight state workforce agencies received a grant to implement the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration: California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, North Carolina, and Washington. CAAs are offered only in selected areas in these states, where the participating military bases and the One-Stop Career Centers, which provide employment and training services as part of the nation's public workforce system, are located. For

purposes of this study, MPR identified 11 sites in which the 18 lead military bases partnered with One-Stop Career Centers to provide CAAs.

The Demonstration

Each state provided grant funding to the participating One-Stop Career Center(s) to fund and manage participants' accounts. The participating military bases did not receive funding to support their role in the demonstration, which typically focused on marketing the demonstration, providing education and career counseling to interested military spouses, and confirming that applicants met the military criteria for eligibility.

In addition to directing the military and workforce entities to develop partnerships in the local area, DOL and DoD established six other demonstration guidelines:

1. To be eligible for a CAA, a military spouse must (1) be married to a service member of any rank who has a minimum of one year left at the current duty assignment, and (2) have a high school diploma or General Educational Development credential at the time he or she applies.

2. Participants could pursue education and training programs, and ultimately careers, only in nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields specified by DOL and DoD. Within those specified fields, however, they could select any education or training program that was nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education (or an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education) or that was on the state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Eligible Training Provider List.

3. The CAAs are restricted to paying the tuition for education and training programs and related expenses, such as books, equipment, and credentialing and licensing fees.

4. As the demonstration rolled out in 2007, each CAA had a maximum value of $3,000 in each of two consecutive years. This policy changed after the implementation study concluded its data collection. As of December 2008, participants in five states can spend their $6,000 allotment as they incur expenses during the two-year period or until the end of the grant period in June 2010, whichever is first.

5. The CAA-funded education or training program must result in a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized portable credential.

6. Within the limitations set by the preceding principles, CAA recipients make their own decisions, with limited staff involvement, about how to use their accounts.

Sites used a common set of steps to open and manage participants' accounts. The first four steps—orientation sessions, assessing for military eligibility, identifying education needs, and completing the CAA approval process—comprise opening an account. The remaining steps—ongoing followup, renewing the account, and completing education—occur throughout the period of account management.

The Implementation Study

Data collection for the implementation study consisted of in-depth site visits six to eight months after the start of the demonstration. The implementation study team found sites at different points in their program implementation, and none had CAAs that were ready to be renewed for a second year.

During each visit, the implementation study team attempted to conduct a common set of data collection activities to ensure a consistent and thorough understanding of the 11 sites. Interview respondents included demonstration staff representing the workforce partner, which generally consisted of the state labor or workforce department, the participating Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the local One-Stop Career Center, and the military partner, which generally consisted of the education and the family support centers that provide support to service members and their families. When possible, team members observed military spouses' interactions with demonstration staff, such as orientation sessions when military spouses learned about the requirements. Finally, they conducted group discussions with participants who had opened a CAA.

During the analysis phase, the implementation study team looked across data sources to pursue three main goals: (1) complete detailed descriptions of each site's demonstration implementation; (2) conduct a cross-site analysis to identify themes and patterns in implementation across the states and sites; and (3) identify implementation strategies and creative solutions to challenges that other sites might find helpful as they provide CAAs to military spouses. Analysis occurred at the site level by comparing and contrasting implementation at the 11 sites.

The Demonstration's Partnerships and Collaborations

Building partnerships between military and workforce entities was a cornerstone of this demonstration from both a design and an operational perspective. At the federal level, DOL and DoD partnered to design and carry out the demonstration. At the local level, DOL and DoD emphasized military and workforce partnerships to capitalize on the specific skills, knowledge, concrete systems, and perspectives that each partner brought to the initiative, gained through their experience of providing education and workforce services. While some of their areas of expertise overlap, each partner offered a range of relevant, and sometimes unique, experience and skills. The military offered its experience providing education and career/employment services, working with the military spouse population, and collaborating with education institutions. Partners from the workforce system brought experience operating employment and training programs, connecting with local employers to help customers obtain jobs, and administering training funds.

Demonstration sites that formed solid partnerships between the military and workforce entities exhibited common characteristics, while sites with unstable partnerships exhibited common issues. In strong partnerships, partners were open to discussing problems and demonstrated an ability to resolve problems as they arose; relied on the strong and supportive leadership that emanated from either the military or the workforce partner; and reported the importance of clearly defined roles and responsibilities, especially early on, to mitigate unintended duplication of effort and to minimize the possibility of sending mixed messages to potential CAA participants. In addition, partners were able to work through such common challenges as defining a collaborative process and establishing a communication strategy. Three sites struggled to establish solid relationships among partners, and two sources of these challenges were (1) questions about which partner should be leading the demonstration, and (2) inconsistent views of the partnership and its strength.

In all sites, the demonstration benefited from long-standing pre-existing relationships that partners had with local schools. Schools often had on-base representatives at the education centers to provide educational assistance to military members and their families. Some schools even offered classes on base. The workforce systems also had pre-existing relationships with schools, primarily through the experience of the WIB and the One-Stop Career Centers in opening and managing WIA customers' individual training accounts (ITAs), the main source of training funds under WIA. As a result, partners possessed in-depth knowledge about local education programs, and this enabled demonstration staff from both the workforce and the military partners to make quick and efficient connections between potential CAA participants and school staff. However, while school involvement had benefits, it also had drawbacks, which led some partners to limit schools' activities to market the demonstration.

Early Start-Up Experiences of Demonstration Sites

After on-site training from DOL and DoD in October 2007, sites were to have begun demonstration implementation quickly, with a goal of some participants attending education or training programs by January 2008. Some were able to meet this expectation; others required more time to become fully operational. Analysis of sites' start-up phase provides important information about the successes and challenges they faced during this time. Start-up pace appears important, as it was generally associated with later implementation progress.

The pace of start-up varied significantly across states. Two states had a particularly quick start-up phase: they obligated nearly 6 percent of their total grant award as of February 4, 2008, and they continued at this rapid pace, with nearly 20 percent of funds obligated only one month later (DOL/DoD 2008). Administrators from the two sites with quick start-up attributed their pace to early planning facilitated by (1) pre-existing relationships between military and workforce partners, as well as educational institutions; and (2) an early and active interest in the demonstration. Two states exhibited a slow start-up phase—obligating only about 1 percent of their total grant award by February 4 as well as one month later. The third group of four states implemented the demonstration at a moderate pace; they had awarded a relatively modest number of accounts by early February, but gained momentum by the next month.

Site-specific challenges posed start-up problems for at least four sites, two of which had a moderate start-up pace. In one of these moderate-paced sites, partners reported that the military lacked sufficient resources and staff to begin work on the demonstration immediately. While workforce partners had access to some demonstration funds for staffing, military partners had to leverage existing resources. In another moderate-paced site, the staffing structure appeared to delay start-up, as the state engaged in a lengthy negotiation process for grant operations with one of their two One-Stop Career Centers.

Key to early implementation was devising and implementing a staffing approach. Staff from workforce and military partners each devoted time to the demonstration, but the amount of time spent by partners depended on site needs, contextual site factors (such as the size of the grant or the number of participating bases in a site), and the amount of time staff had available. The workforce staff tended to spend more time on the demonstration than military partners because of the nature of their demonstration responsibilities, as well as their access to grant funds that could be used for staffing purposes. It is anticipated that staffing patterns will change over the life of the demonstration, particularly as sites shift some of their emphasis from enrolling new participants—an activity that involves both military and workforce staff—to tracking existing participants, which involves primarily workforce staff.

Staffing challenges were most common for the military partner. Military staff involved in the demonstration often had to divide their time between their regular work and demonstration work, which led them to report an overload of work. In addition, there appeared to be a difference in the perspective of and impact on staff from the military's education and family support centers, seemingly related to variation in the perceived mission of the two types of centers. Family support centers viewed their mission and goal as serving the military family as a whole (including members, spouses, children, and so on). Staff from education centers described their primary focus as serving military members, though not to the exclusion of military families.

Marketing Efforts and Orientations

Each of the demonstration sites embarked on marketing efforts to inform potential participants of the demonstration. Military partners often led the effort to inform their military community about who was eligible, what occupations would be funded, and what the timing of available funds would be. A variety of marketing efforts was used, including disseminating written materials on bases and placing advertisements in base newspapers and on base television stations. Military partners also described the demonstration during briefings for new and existing families. With time, sites viewed word of mouth as an increasingly helpful way of marketing the demonstration.

After introducing spouses to the demonstration through their marketing efforts, sites held more formal and in-depth orientations, where spouses could get answers to their questions and possibly speak individually with military or workforce demonstration staff. Orientations were usually held at the military bases and involved staff from both the base and the One-Stop Career Center. In a small number of sites, representatives from education institutions also attended group orientations to serve as a resource for spouses. In addition,

in seven sites, orientations served as the first step in receiving CAA approval, though it was rare that all steps could be completed to fully open an account during orientation. Formats included group and individual settings, and many sites offered group orientations on a set schedule along with opportunities for individual orientation to address scheduling needs for some participants.

Administration of Accounts

Responsibilities for opening an account were typically shared between the workforce and military partners, while the workforce partners assumed much, if not all, of the responsibility of managing the account once it was open.

Opening Accounts. DOL and DoD developed a standardized process form that guided the steps for enrolling in the demonstration and opening a CAA. As part of the first step, the interested military spouse completed the form and then a member of the military staff, typically the commander's designee, certified the potential participant's military eligibility for the demonstration. In the second step, One-Stop Career Center demonstration staff received the military-approved process form, filled in information on the servicing One-Stop Career Center, and noted whether the account was awarded and, if it was, the award amount. The One-Stop Career Center staff then faxed the completed form to the education support office for DoD, called Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES).

Depending on the site, workforce partners asked applicants to provide a variety of documents. Frequently, the papers mirrored what was asked of persons receiving an ITA, such as documentation of citizenship or right to work and proof of selective service enrollment. In addition, One-Stop Career Centers in at least seven sites required that potential participants submit an education plan to supplement information on the process form. The format of the education plan was not standardized, and content varied across sites. Generally, the purpose of the education plan was to document the participant's program and ensure that plans aligned with the demonstration's guidelines.

In accordance with the demonstration's self-managed account principle, potential participants could—but were not required to—receive career or education counseling. All demonstration sites suggested that some portion of their potential participants needed and received this guidance; staff across sites estimated that this portion ranged from 15 to 85 percent. When provided to these participants, counseling typically occurred as the potential participant completed the process form, but it could also be provided if the participant wanted to switch career fields or training programs, or if the workforce partner expressed concern with the initially identified plan. A unique aspect of this demonstration was that staff from multiple organizations were qualified to provide, and often did provide, career or education counseling to potential participants. Staff from the education centers and family support centers on military bases and from the One-Stop Career Center had experience providing education and career counseling in their other non-demonstration responsibilities. In addition, staff at education institutions had skills in counseling people on career paths and training options.

Managing Accounts. Once approved and opened, CAAs progressed to the management stage. Accounts can be open for up to two years, during which management transitions through different phases. Managing open accounts involved (1) developing systems for issuing payments to training programs; (2) tracking participants with open accounts to ensure that they remain in good standing with their training program; and (3) handling processes such as renewing accounts for a second year, closing accounts when participants drop out of or complete training, and de-obligating funding when participants use less money than was originally obligated.

After approving the participant's CAA, the workforce partner issued payment to the selected education institution. All but one of the demonstration sites used their existing processes for issuing ITA payments, where the One-Stop Career Center paid the education institution's invoice. The one exception was the site where the grantee was not the state workforce agency. This site did not have prior experience issuing payments of this nature to education institutions and developed a reimbursement system requiring participants to pay their tuition and then be reimbursed by the education institution.

Many sites were quite open to developing payment arrangements with any eligible school, and payment problems appeared to be isolated and quickly resolved. However, staff in at least one site described their awareness of the slow and bureaucratic process to establish new arrangements and in some cases were apparently unable to resolve payment challenges with new schools. Another site described a problem with issuing payments to the local community colleges, but eventually the workforce partner met with these colleges to clear up certain miscommunications that had reportedly caused the difficulty.

Demonstration sites emphasized their need to remain in regular contact with participants while they attended training programs. Interview respondents stated that ongoing contact enables sites to monitor training progress, so that future payments can be approved. This contact also allows maintenance of a relationship that supports the military or workforce partner staff providing job search assistance, and it should allow them to track participants' subsequent employment status. Although DOL and DoD did not set forth expectations for how frequently followup was to occur, all sites developed expectations for regular, ongoing contact that ranged from semi-weekly to once each term.

As participants continued to attend training programs, demonstration sites managed a growing number of open accounts. A critical aspect of account management was tracking available demonstration funds. In planning, sites estimated the number of CAAs they expected to fund during the course of the demonstration, but they still had to maintain an accurate tracking of (1) their obligated funding, and (2) their actual payments to training institutions. The main reasons for these two levels of tracking were to ensure that prior obligations could be met and to remain aware of how many more CAAs could be awarded. Sites tracked CAA funds with two systems, developing their own tracking mechanisms, typically an Excel spreadsheet, in addition to their existing fiscal management tools. The dual-systems sites were limited in how well they could track funds paid out for a participant, or for the demonstration as a whole, which created a challenge when calculating remaining funds for new participants.

At the time of the visits, sites had little if any experience with renewing or closing CAAs, as participants were still in their first year of training. In summer 2008, all demonstration sites anticipated that they would need to begin renewing CAAs in early 2009 to allow participants to access their next $3,000. At the time of the site visits, sites indicated they were likely to institute few additional steps for renewal, but did expect participants to be in good academic standing. Sites described three plans for how they would close participants' accounts. One was to close the account after the participant used available funding and obtained the certification/degree; a second was to keep the account open until the participant was employed; the third was to close the account after the site completed followup on the participant's employment outcomes.

Participants' Experiences

To gain understanding of military spouses' experiences in and perspectives on the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration, the implementation study team held group discussions with spouses in each of the 11 sites. Although the discussions were informative, the findings are not conclusive, because (1) spouses were not randomly selected to participate in the discussions, (2) participants were still in their education programs and could only surmise how they would use their credential and how the CAA would affect their family's future, and (3) only three groups of military spouses who might have been interested in a CAA but did not receive one were convened. Although they were not randomly selected to participate, the discussion participants appeared to be typical of a spouse served by the demonstration. The typical group discussion participant was a 31-year-old woman with an average of 1.8 children, and most of the participants with children had a least one child under the age of 13.

Across the 11 discussions, military spouses expressed five common reasons for participating. First, they were interested in improving their career options as they moved from base to base. Second, though they were accustomed to putting their spouses and children first, the CAA provided an opportunity for them to do something for themselves. Third, they jumped at the chance to further their education, which they might have put off because of their families or the cost. Fourth, they wanted to relieve their service member spouses of the burden of being the sole financial support of the family. Finally, participating provided a positive distraction while their spouses were deployed.

Participants were positive about their experiences in the demonstration. Many learned about it through information provided by the military partner to the active duty personnel or through advertisements at base centers or newspapers. Participants tended to be supportive of the demonstration's focus on portable careers, though they also suggested that more flexibility be given to participants' career interests. With few exceptions, participants spoke highly of the demonstration staff available to guide their choice of career and education programs.

While participants could not predict how the CAA would affect their futures, most believed that their participation would have positive effects on their families. They felt that attending school and eventually being able to provide additional financial support to their families set a good example for their children and improved their relationships with their spouses. However, participants did not offer consistent views on how they felt the

demonstration would affect their families' decisions on whether or not to remain tied to the military. Although the group discussions could not produce estimates of the number of participants likely to remain with the military as a result of the CAAs or provide insight into the types of families that were more likely to remain, they illustrated two different attitudes. One set of participants said that the demonstration would help them prepare for civilian life when their spouse retired. The participant's ability to establish a career as a result of the credential obtained through the demonstration would provide family income at the point that the service member spouse pursued a non-military career. A second set of participants said that their increased satisfaction from obtaining a credential and establishing a career would enable their spouse to remain in the military. In this view, the service member spouse would remain attached as a result of the military spouse's rewarding and fulfilling career.

Summary and Future Study

Analyzing across aspects of early implementation resulted in several lessons about replicating this demonstration and for forming partnerships between the military and workforce system more broadly.

Pre-established or Early Partnerships Implemented the Demonstration Quickly. Early establishment of partnerships and collaborations fostered a quick start-up, a goal set by DOL and DoD. In several sites, the partnerships had been formed through earlier joint efforts, and sites used these relationships to proactively plan for implementing this demonstration. Other sites found that forging these relationships quickly contributed to successful implementation. Face-to-face interactions, particularly discussions about how each entity would contribute to implementation and how workflow would occur, helped solidify partnerships.

Strong Partnerships Built on Each Partner's Skills and Experiences. Sites formed the needed partnerships between the military and workforce partners using the strengths and experience of each partner. Using their prior experiences working with military families, military partners conducted marketing efforts and also cultivated word-of-mouth marketing, approaches that participants also mentioned when asked how they learned about the demonstration. The workforce partner brought experience providing training services to customers through WIA and ITAs, a familiar system for some of the main education providers. The workforce partner also brought linkages to employers and experiences with job search assistance and placement.

The Demonstration Expanded the Number and Types of Education Institutions Partnering with Workforce Agencies. With eligible training institutions defined so broadly, participants could select from a wide range. One result of the broad definition was that sites, particularly the workforce partners, expanded the education institutions with which they had relationships to include those with online and distance learning programs available through military bases. Most sites were agreeable to developing these new relationships, though they required staff time up front to develop payment procedures. A few sites exhibited some resistance to developing these new relationships, which was related to delays in negotiating a payment process.

Education Institutions That Conduct Outreach Require Oversight. Education institutions could serve not only as centers of learning for the participants, but also as collaborators in marketing efforts. Some sites welcomed this marketing assistance, while others dissuaded education institutions from directly advertising the demonstration to potential participants. When education institutions marketed the demonstration, staff from either the workforce or the military partner had to oversee their efforts to ensure that an accurate portrayal of the demonstration was provided.

Even with Account Self-Management, Intensive Staff Time Was Required. Staff at sites found that the demonstration required significant time to fulfill the stated expectations, including marketing, assisting potential participants in selecting a career field or training program and opening accounts, and ongoing account management. In group discussions, participants remarked on the amount of time staff spent assisting them during enrollment. In some cases, the necessary staff resources exceeded initial plans by the workforce partner. Further, staff from military partners expressed concern that they did not receive funding for the demonstration, yet they had to supply staff time, which they accomplished by asking military staff to add demonstration responsibilities to their existing workloads. Because military staff involved in the demonstration had to divide their time between their regular work and demonstration work, they reported being overloaded and having to make accommodations in their workflow to complete CAA work.

Managing CAAs Posed New Accounting Challenges for Workforce Partners. For the workforce partner, managing accounts introduced a new set of challenges, which required time to address and resolve. Most significantly, sites had to track the funds promised and provided to CAA participants. Two separate categories required monitoring—obligations and actual spending—and sites often developed multiple systems in their attempt to track this information. Staff spent time resolving differences between systems and ensuring that accurate and appropriate information was reported and recorded.

This report discusses sites' progress in implementing the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration and providing education and training opportunities to military spouses. However, several questions remain about the demonstration's success at meeting its primary objectives—assisting military spouses' entry into portable careers and retaining families in the military. The final report of this current study, to be provided to DOL in mid-2009, will analyze data collected from sites about their participants' characteristics and their education and training programs. Since the data will pertain to participants enrolled from July 2008 through February 2009, many will still be participating in their education program by the time the data are analyzed. Further research will be necessary to fully assess participants' short- and long-term outcomes, including whether the demonstration has affected their ability to maintain their portable careers and their families' future with the military.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

I n 2007, the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) began a joint initiative to support the spouses of military personnel ("military spouses") in their pursuit of portable postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Although military spouses tend to have more education than their civilian counterparts, they are generally employed at lower rates, in part as a result of the deployments and frequent moves common to families with a member in the military (Harrell et al. 2004; Lim et al. 2007; Savych 2008).

Through the Military Spouse (MilSpouse) Career Advancement Accounts (CAAs) Demonstration, eligible military spouses can obtain an account to pay for education and technical training that will aid them in their careers. The theory underlying the demonstration is that a portable degree or credential funded with a CAA will help military spouses enter and advance in the workforce even as they relocate when their service member spouses transfer to other bases. A longer-term goal of the demonstration is to encourage the retention of the service member by improving his or her spouse's job prospects and increasing the satisfaction of the entire family with life in the military.

DOL contracted with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) and Coffey Consulting, LLC, to conduct an evaluation of the demonstration.[1] The objectives that DOL defined, in collaboration with DoD, are (1) to inform DOL and DoD about early implementation experiences, challenges, and promising practices for successful implementation; and (2) to provide information about participant characteristics, service use, and outcomes, as reported by grantees through a demonstration-wide data collection tool designed by the evaluation team.

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[1] DOL contracted with MPR to lead the evaluation. Coffey Consulting received a separate contract to support MPR in conducting the evaluation by designing a data collection tool (with guidance from MPR), providing technical assistance to demonstration sites on using the tool, and conducting several site visits to assess demonstration implementation (following MPR site visit guidelines).

This report presents findings from implementation study site visits conducted to support the first study objective. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the demonstration (Section A) and presents the research questions guiding the evaluation and the site visit effort (Section B). Section C presents a roadmap to the remaining chapters in the report. To support the second objective, MPR will analyze individual-level data relevant to the demonstration. A report focusing on these quantitative data will be provided to DOL in spring 2009.

A. The Military Spouse CAA Demonstration

DOL and DoD designed the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration as a partnership between selected military bases and nearby One-Stop Career Centers that provide employment and training services as part of the nation's public workforce system. DoD identified military bases that would participate, and then DOL identified nearby One-Stop Career Centers that would serve as partners to recruit spouses and manage their CAAs. The demonstration officially began in fall 2007 when DOL awarded MilSpouse CAA Demonstration grants to eight states. In seven of them, the state's department of labor received the award; in one state, the award went to the governor's office of workforce development. By design, the state office was to provide funding to the selected One-Stop Career Center; the participating military bases did not receive funding to support their demonstration role. Depending on the partnership, One-Stop Career Centers work with military spouses attached to one or several branches of the military. All participating One-Stop Career Centers and military bases implement CAA guidelines, aligning with seven guiding principles, and all follow a common workflow. The demonstration runs until June 2010.

1. Eight States Participated in the Demonstration

Eight states received a grant to implement the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration: California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, North Carolina, and Washington (Table I.1). CAAs are offered only in selected areas in these states, where the participating military bases and the One-Stop Career Centers attached to them are located. In four states—California, Florida, Hawaii, and Washington—two One-Stop Career Centers participate in the demonstration; in each of the other four states, a single One-Stop Career Center participates. One or two lead military bases collaborate with each One-Stop Career Center. For purposes of the implementation study, in all states except Hawaii, a "site" consists of a One-Stop Career Center and the military bases that collaborate with it for the demonstration. Although two One-Stop Career Centers participate in Hawaii, the study counts it as only one site because of the centers' proximity to each other on the island of Oahu. In total, the implementation study looks at 11 sites.

Table I.1.   Military Spouse CAA Demonstration States and Sites

State	One-Stop Career Center/City	Lead Base(s)/Education Center	Site Visit Date
CA	North County Coastal Center, Oceanside	Camp Pendleton/Joint Education Center	August 6-7
CA	San Diego South Metro Career Center, San Diego	Naval Base San Diego/Navy College Office	August 4-6
CO	Pikes Peak Workforce Center, Colorado Springs	Fort Carson/Mountain Post Training and Education Center Peterson AFB/Base Education Office	June 24-26
FL	Military Family Employment Liaison Jobs Plus, Fort Walton Beach	Eglin AFB/Education Office Hurlburt AFB/Education Office	June 2-4
FL	Military Family Employment Advocate WorkSource One-Stop Center, Jacksonville	Jacksonville NAS/Navy College Office	July 22-23
GA	Columbus Career Center, Columbus	Fort Benning/Army Continuing Education System Division	August 26-27
HI[a]	Oahu Works Links-Dillingham Office, Honolulu Oahu Works Links-Waipahu Office, Waipahu	Hickam AFB/Force Development Flight Kaneohe Bay/Joint Education Center Pearl Harbor/Navy College Office Schofield Barracks/Army Education Center	July 21-24
ME	BRAC Transition Center, Brunswick	Brunswick/Navy College Office	May 7-8
NC	Cumberland County Workforce Development Center (JobLink), Fayetteville	Fort Bragg/Education Services Division Pope AFB/Education Office	July 28-30
WA	WorkSource Center Serving Kitsap County, Bremerton	Bremerton/Navy College Office	May 19-20
WA	WorkSource Center Serving Pierce County, Tacoma	Fort Lewis/Stone Education Center McChord AFB/Education and Training Office	July 7-9

[a]The study treats Hawaii as one site even though two One-Stop Career Centers provide services.

Across these 11 sites, the One-Stop Career Centers partnered with 18 lead military bases (6 Air Force, 5 Army, 2 Marine Corps, and 5 Navy installations).[2] Most installations involved, in some way, both their education center, which primarily helps service members

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[2] In some sites, nearby bases have links to the lead bases, and families stationed at those installations are also eligible to participate in the demonstration. In total, spouses from 36 bases are eligible to receive a CAA.

further their education, and their family support center, which provides general and employment-related support services to service members and their families. These centers are referred to by different names, depending upon the branch of the service.[3]

The states involved in the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration received grants ranging in size from $10,115,998 (California) to $750,000 (Maine) (Table I.2). Each state projected the total number of CAAs that it planned to award throughout the grant period. The state with the largest grant, California, planned to award the most (2,466), while the state with the smallest grant, Maine, planned to award 250.

Table I.2.   Military Spouse CAA Grant Funding and Target Number of Account Awards

State	Total Grant Amount	Target Number of CAAs to Be Awarded
California	$10,115,998	2,466[a]
Colorado	$2,193,870	643
Florida	$4,405,196	1,031[a]
Georgia	$4,593,276	719
Hawaii	$2,450,000	638
Maine	$750,000	250
North Carolina	$6,953,639	1,000[b]
Washington	$3,738,061	897[a]
Total	**$35,200,040**	**7,644**

Source: State MilSpouse demonstration implementation plans, fall 2008.

[a]The target number of CAAs is an aggregation of the two sites in the state.
[b]North Carolina decreased its target number of CAAs to 800 in August 2008.

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[3] The military's voluntary education program constitutes one of the world's largest continuing education programs. Service members enroll in postsecondary courses leading to associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees. Each installation has an education center with professional staff who provide counseling and testing to service members and their family members to help them further their education. Each service branch uses a distinct name for its education center: Army Continuing Education System/Army Education Centers; Air Force Voluntary Education/Air Force Education Centers; Navy College Office; and Lifelong Learning/Lifelong Learning Office/Education Centers (Marines). Bases in each service branch also operate family support centers that offer transition support services, general employment services, resume and employment workshops, career interest inventories, and counseling and therapy for individuals and families. Service branches use specific names for their family support centers: Army Community Services; Airman and Family Readiness Center (Air Force); Fleet and Family Support Center (Navy); and Marine and Family Services.

2.   Seven Principles Guided MilSpouse CAA Implementation

States were encouraged to be innovative in their delivery of CAA services, but they were required to follow seven principles when implementing CAAs:

1. ***Collaboration Between Workforce and Military Partners.***   The demonstration is intended to be a partnership between the local public workforce entities—the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and One-Stop Career Center—and the military bases. The One-Stop Career Centers and the military bases are jointly responsible for conducting outreach to potential participants; for using DoD and DOL criteria to screen for eligibility; and for collaborating to provide coordinated workforce and economic information, career and education guidance, skills assessment, and other related resources and services.

2. ***Eligibility Limited to Specific Military Spouses.*** To be eligible for a CAA, military spouses must be married to a member/sponsor who has a minimum of one year of duty assignment left at the demonstration base. The exception is for assignments that will require relocation as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005 (BRAC) or the selection of training that can be completed prior to departure from the assigned base and that results in a license or certification. In addition, spouses must have at least a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential at the time they apply. Initially, DoD and DOL restricted eligibility to military spouses married to a service member/sponsor who was at the E1-E4 levels (junior enlisted service members), E5 level (noncommissioned officer), or O1-O3 levels (junior commissioned officers). In April 2008, this restriction was lifted and military spouses of service members of all ranks became eligible.

3. ***Selected Training and Education Programs Must Meet Demonstration Criteria.*** DOL and DoD required participants to pursue education and training programs, and ultimately careers, in nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields.   Originally, five fields were identified: financial services, information technology, health care, education, and construction. In April 2008, DOL and DoD authorized the issuance of CAAs for specific occupations in four additional sectors: human resources, hospitality, homeland security, and business administration. DOL and DoD further expanded the list of eligible occupations in December 2008. Military spouses can select any education or training program appropriate for an allowed field or occupation, as long as the program is nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education (or an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education) or on the state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Eligible Training Provider List.

4. ***CAAs Are to Be Used Primarily for Education or Training.*** CAAs are used only (1) to fund tuition for education and training programs and related expenses, such as books, fees, and equipment; and (2) to pay for credentialing

and licensing fees. CAAs cannot be used to fund supportive services, such as food, clothing, child care, or transportation. DOL and DoD encouraged One-Stop Career Centers and military bases to leverage other resources for supportive and other employment-related services.

5. ***CAAs Have a Maximum Value of $6,000 over Two Years.*** At the start of the demonstration, the initial maximum amount of the CAA was $3,000 for one year, beginning from the date that a participant entered an approved education or training program. The CAA could then be renewed for a second year for an additional $3,000. The actual value of a CAA is determined by the specific employment/training plan. In December 2008, DOL and DoD revised this policy to allow participants in five states to exhaust the full $6,000 allotment at any time during the two-year period or by the end of the grant period in June 2010, whichever was first.

6. ***CAA-Funded Training and Education Programs Should Lead to Degrees or Credentials.*** The education and training provided through a CAA must result in a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized portable credential in a high-demand field within two years.

7. ***Military Spouses Should Manage Their Accounts.*** Within the limitations set by the preceding principles, CAA recipients should make their own decisions, with limited staff involvement, about how they use their accounts. By self-managing their accounts, military spouses have flexibility to determine personal career goals and identify employment and training opportunities that support their individual preferences. This differs from the service delivery model for individual training accounts (ITAs), the predominant method One-Stop Career Centers use to fund eligible customers' education and training. Before receiving an ITA, customers participate in a sequence of WIA services, starting with core services, such as self-serve job information and workshops on resume writing, and then intensive services, such as comprehensive assessments and individual counseling. They then receive staff counseling to select ITA-supported training programs.

3.   A Common Workflow Guided Opening and Managing CAAs

To implement the seven guiding principles of CAAs, sites used a common set of steps to open and manage accounts (Figure I.1). The first four—hold orientation sessions, assess for military eligibility, identify education needs, and complete CAA approval process—comprise opening an account. The remaining steps—perform ongoing followup, renew account, and complete education—occur throughout the period of account management.

B.   Overview of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the success of the demonstration in supporting education and training activities that can lead to portable careers for military spouses.

Figure I.1.   MilSpouse Career Advancement Accounts Flow Diagram

Orientation Sessions

Introduce spouses to CAAs; explain eligibility requirements and expectations

Assess for Military Eligibility

Provide documentation to determine military eligibility
Receive approved process form with military signatures

Identify Education Needs in Selected Career Field

Identify career interest area

Research programs offering a degree or certification in field

Complete CAA Approval Process to Open Account

Receive final approval for CAA from workforce partner

Enroll in selected degree or certification program

Begin attending program

Account Management Process by CAA Staff

Approve CAA for spouses

Establish payment system for education institutions

Process invoices from education institutions

Review spouses' standing at education institutions

Process invoices for additional courses/semester

Renew accounts for second year

Review spouses' standing at education institutions

Close account when spouse leaves program or completes program

Ongoing Followup with CAA Staff

Complete expected followup with CAA staff

Provide requested documentation regarding program status

Renew CAA

When appropriate, complete steps to renew CAA for year 2

Complete Education and Obtain Employment

Complete certifications needed for selected career field

Obtain employment in selected career field

1. Research Questions and Evaluation Overview

Four research questions guide the overall study:

1. To what extent are sites implementing the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration according to the seven principles guiding military spouse CAAs, and what successes and challenges are sites experiencing?

2. What are the characteristics of military spouses participating in the demonstration? How are participants using their accounts?

3. What are the education- and employment-related outcomes of CAA participants? What proportion of participants is enrolling in education and training programs, completing the programs, obtaining credentials, and finding employment related to their credentials?

4. What factors are associated with participants' successful outcomes? How does participation affect their satisfaction with their spouse's military career? How are the sites and participants working to overcome any barriers to successful participation?

The evaluation team is addressing these questions through both an implementation study and a quantitative study. Using qualitative information gathered about how the demonstration is providing services and developing strategies to overcome challenges to implementation, the implementation study begins to address these questions. The quantitative study, which will occur during the first half of 2009, will provide further information using data collected about: (1) individuals, including demographic characteristics; (2) shorter-term outcomes, such as program completion; and (3) to the extent allowed by the data, longer-term outcomes, such as attainment of employment. A final report of this study, which will be submitted to DOL in spring 2009, will present the findings from this quantitative analysis, as well as a summary of implementation lessons.

2. Implementation Study Methods

The implementation study was guided by 10 topics that MPR identified through (1) a review of DOL and DoD implementation guidance to states and sites, and (2) an analysis of early implementation issues collected during initial technical assistance and monitoring calls among DOL, DoD, and the participating states. The 10 topics looked broadly at implementation of CAAs across demonstration states and at the associated challenges:

1. Grantee Context

2. Grant Design and Implementation

3. Collaboration and Partnerships

4. Staff Structure and Time Allocation

5. Recruitment and Eligibility

6. Experiences with Education and Training Programs, and Supportive Services

7. Account Management Processes

8. Characteristics and Motivation of Participating/Non-participating Spouses

9. Data Management

10. Accomplishments, Lessons Learned, and Challenges with Operating Military Spouse CAAs

Data collection for the implementation study consisted of in-depth site visits conducted in each of the eight demonstration states between May and August 2008 (Table I.1). MPR and/or Coffey Consulting staff conducted each visit. In three states—California, Florida, and Washington—the implementation study team conducted two visits to ensure that information about implementation at each of the lead military bases and their partnering One-Stop Career Center was collected. All visits occurred six to eight months after the start of the demonstration, but implementation study team members found sites at different points in their program implementation, and none of the sites had CAAs ready to be renewed for a second year.

During each visit, implementation study team members attempted to conduct a common set of data collection activities to ensure that they developed a consistent and thorough understanding of each site. Interview respondents included demonstration staff from entities of the workforce system, which generally included the state labor or workforce department, the participating WIB, and the local One-Stop Career Center, and from centers of the military base, which generally included the education and family support centers.[4] When possible, implementation study team members observed military spouses' interactions with demonstration staff. For example, they observed base briefings when service members learned about the accounts that were available to their spouses, orientation sessions when military spouses learned about the requirements, and one-on-one meetings when military spouses began the process of opening an account. Finally, team members conducted group discussions with participants who had opened a CAA. They also attempted to hold group discussions with military spouses who expressed interest in opening an account but did not do so. However, since site staff had difficulty recruiting spouses who did not have an ongoing relationship with them through the provision of a CAA, only three sites successfully convened these groups.

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[4] Throughout this report, the term "workforce partner" refers to the entities of the workforce system involved in the demonstration and the term "military partner" refers to the entities of the military base involved in the demonstration.

During the analysis phase, the implementation study team looked across the data sources to pursue three main goals: (1) complete a detailed description of demonstration implementation in each site; (2) conduct a cross-site analysis to identify themes and patterns in implementation across the states and sites; and (3) identify sites' implementation strategies, as well as their creative solutions to challenges, that other sites might find helpful as they provide CAAs to military spouses. Analysis occurred primarily at the site level by comparing and contrasting implementation at the 11 sites.

C. Roadmap to Report

The rest of this report focuses on how sites implemented the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration. Chapter II discusses demonstration partnerships between military and workforce entities and partners' collaborations with educational institutions. Chapter III describes early implementation of the demonstration and how partners staffed the demonstration to carry out their implementation responsibilities. Chapter IV turns to how sites introduced the education and training opportunity to military spouses through broad marketing efforts and orientation sessions. Chapter V focuses on the CAA account process, including how sites opened and managed CAAs. Chapter VI describes participants' experiences with the CAA process and the demonstration as a whole, including their perspective on how the demonstration benefited them and their families. Chapter VII summarizes the lessons learned through the study.

CHAPTER II
FORMATION OF PARTNERSHIPS
AND COLLABORATIONS

Strong partnerships between the local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and One-Stop Career Centers on the workforce side and education centers and/or family support centers from the participating military bases were key to successfully launching the joint-agency demonstration envisioned by DOL and DoD. DOL and DoD had expected workforce and military partners to work together to conduct outreach, screen for eligibility, and provide guidance on selecting career fields and education opportunities. Another relationship important to successful implementation and mentioned by partners in most sites was collaborations with educational institutions. These collaborations were developed to make CAA participants aware of the widest range of schools that could potentially meet their needs, and facilitate their enrollment using CAA funds.

This chapter explores these two key relationships in greater detail. Section A focuses on the formation of partnerships between the military and workforce partners, including pre-demonstration relationships between partners; common features that were identified in sites with positive partnerships; and common challenges to maintaining the partnerships. Section B discusses collaborations between partners and educational institutions, including resulting benefits to CAA participants as well as drawbacks to collaboration.

A. Partnership Formation and Challenges

Building partnerships between military and workforce entities was a cornerstone of this demonstration from both a design and an operational perspective. At the federal level, DOL and DoD partnered to design and carry out the demonstration. At the local level, DOL and DoD emphasized military and workforce partnerships to capitalize on the specific skills, knowledge, concrete systems, and perspectives that each partner brought to the initiative, gained through their experience providing education and workforce services. While some of their areas of expertise overlap, each partner offered a range of relevant, and sometimes unique, experience and skills (Table II.1).

Key Findings on Partnerships and Collaborations

- To carry out the demonstration as envisioned by DOL and DoD, most sites successfully formed partnerships between state and local workforce entities and One-Stop Career Centers on the workforce side, and education centers and/or family support centers from the participating military bases.

- Partners generally had experience working together prior to the demonstration through jointly operated DOL-DoD programs, DOL grants or state-funded efforts to provide workforce services to military families, or other programs. The current demonstration built upon these experiences.

- Strong partnerships appear to rely on open communication, dedicated leadership, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities among partners.

- Although defining a collaborative process and establishing a communication strategy were common challenges, most sites were able to overcome them. Inter-agency tensions and inconsistent views of the partnership prevailed at sites that were not able to do so.

- Partners' collaborations with educational institutions offered benefits to CAA participants, such as readily accessible information about the schools and their programs and easy access to school staff.

Given the mission and role of the two types of military centers involved in the demonstration, the military partner was expected to draw on its experience providing education and career/employment services, working with the military spouse population, and collaborating with education institutions. Each military center, though, had slightly different expertise. As their name implies, education centers offered experience providing customers, primarily military personnel, with a range of education-related services, including skills assessments, education counseling on institutions and training programs, and assistance with designing courses of study. Education centers also offered established relationships with local schools, both on base and off base. Family support centers were expected to bring their experience providing career and employment-related services, such as skills and career assessments, information about available employment opportunities, job search services, and employment-readiness counseling. Family support centers, which viewed their target population as military families, had a history of regularly providing these services not only to military personnel, but also to military spouses. They also had a history of providing services at a broader level, offering ombudsman support and coordination to help link families with their commands, workshops and support groups, and other similar services.[5]

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[5] A military ombudsman, also known as a family liaison or key volunteer, is a critical communication link between the commanding officer and family members. The ombudsman can offer information and referrals to help family members gain access to the assistance and services they need.

Table II.1.   Experience and Skills of Demonstration Partners

Experience and Skills	Military: Education Center	Military: Family Support Center	Workforce: One-Stop Career Center
Serving military spouses		X	X
Providing education or career counseling	X	X	X
Administering skills assessments	X	X	X
Offering job search assistance		X	X
Existing relationships with education institutions	X		X
Providing payments to education institutions for training accounts			X

Source: Analysis of site visit interview information and other written documents provided by the 11 sites.

The entities from the workforce partner, particularly the participating One-Stop Career Centers, were expected to bring forth their experience operating employment and training programs, connecting with local employers to help customers obtain jobs, and administering training funds. In particular, the workforce partner had experience operating individual training accounts (ITAs), which, like CAAs, allow customers to choose and purchase education or training services. Through this experience, the workforce system had an existing infrastructure to make payments to institutions on behalf of customers for education and training. In addition, the workforce partner and its entities typically provided a range of services, such as career guidance, skill and career assessments, job search assistance, training and education, and supportive service referrals. A final aspect of the workforce partner that benefited the demonstration was its linkages with local schools and training providers. At the state level, the state workforce entity was expected to bring its experience overseeing the range of employment and training programs offered at the local level.

This section will describe four key findings related to partnership formation: (1) military and workforce partners generally had experience working together before the demonstration; (2) strong partnerships demonstrated open communication, leadership, and defined roles; (3) defining collaboration and communication processes were common challenges, although most sites were able to overcome them; and (4) sites with less stable partnerships exhibited inter-agency tensions and inconsistent views of the partnership.

1. Partners Generally Had Experience Working Together Prior to the Demonstration

In nearly all sites, staff reported pre-demonstration relationships between workforce and military partners. Past relationships were forged through implementing previous DoD-DOL joint programs or operating programs that serve the members of their partner agency

(although the latter category was limited to workforce partners offering services specifically to military families). Interview respondents in three sites noted that past partnerships—in which military and workforce entities had worked together—had helped to build their current demonstration partnerships. Examples of programs that benefited from past relationships include:

- ***Transition Assistance Program*** is a partnership between DoD, DOL, and Veterans Affairs to meet the needs of separating service members and their families when transitioning to civilian life. The program offers job search assistance and related services. Military staff are responsible for pre-separation counseling, including a review of transition services, benefits, and resources, while the workforce staff offer employment workshops and introduce One-Stop Career Center services.

- ***Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program*** (DVOP) is a DOL program in which One-Stop Career Center staff provide outreach assistance to veterans with disabilities and provide services to meet their training and employment needs. In some locations, a DVOP representative from the One-Stop Career Center is stationed on a military base.

- ***Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)*** is the process DoD uses to reorganize its installation infrastructure to more efficiently and effectively support its forces, increase operational readiness, and facilitate new ways of doing business. Through workforce and military partnerships, affected personnel were linked to the full range of One-Stop Career Center resources for career, training, and job assistance. In Maine, BRAC led to a more developed military/workforce partnership through opening on base a mini One-Stop Career Center called the BRAC Transition Center, to serve the transitioning base population.

Previous Military/Workforce Partnerships
• Transition Assistance Program
• Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program
• Base Realignment and Closure initiatives
• DOL grants to provide workforce services to military members
• State-funded efforts to provide workforce services to military members
• Military members sitting on Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs)

Three sites also participated in earlier DOL grants targeting military members or spouses. In North Carolina, the workforce partner operated a three-year DOL Transition Services Project grant to assist military spouses with accessing education and training. In Colorado, the workforce partner operated a DOL National Emergency Grant targeting displaced military spouses. In California, the workforce partner operated a DOL Career Advancement Center grant to assist military members and their families.

The two participating One-Stop Career Centers in Florida had ongoing experience with a state-funded effort to link military spouses to workforce services. They employed Military Spouse Employment Advocates—funded by state general revenue dollars—who were stationed at local military bases to provide employment-related services to military spouses.

Ongoing partnerships also existed as a result of involving military representatives on local WIBs. This type of partnership was reported in both Colorado and Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

Other less common examples of previous partnerships were DOL Rapid Response grants to assist civilians laid off by military bases, DOL Fast Track programs to provide service priority to veterans seeking WIA services, and jointly conducted job fairs.

2. Strong Partnerships Demonstrated Open Communication, Leadership, and Defined Roles

In 8 of the 11 demonstration sites, interview respondents consistently reported that the partnership between the military and workforce entities was positive. While interview respondents commented on different aspects of the partnerships' strengths, three core features emerged. Sites demonstrating positive partnerships had (1) partners who were open to discussing problems and able to resolve them effectively, (2) strong and supportive leadership, and (3) clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Of the eight sites, three exhibited all three of these key features and thus appeared to have particularly strong partnerships. In the other sites, some weaknesses were reported in at least one of these three areas.

Openness to Discussing Problems and the Ability to Resolve Them Effectively. In nearly every one of the eight sites with a reportedly positive partnership, military and workforce partners agreed that they are willing to discuss issues or problems that arise and negotiate solutions without getting stymied by potential differences of opinion. For example, interview respondents in Jacksonville, Florida, and Tacoma, Washington, described how partners have resolved problems in paperwork flow (that is, the hand-off of paperwork from the military to the workforce partner) by asking for partners' input on how the process should change and jointly agreeing upon solutions. In Oceanside, California, interview respondents emphasized that partners achieve consensus on how to resolve problems even when conflicting goals or perspectives exist, which is evidence of the partners' commitment to working through issues.

Out-stationing of One-Stop Career Center staff on the military bases seemed to facilitate this process, but it was not necessarily a pre-condition for effective problem-solving in every site. As part of the demonstration, DOL and DoD strongly encouraged at least part-time out-stationing of One-Stop Career Center staff, especially in the early stages of implementation, and this occurred in six of the sites. Partners in those sites, particularly in the four where staff were out-stationed on a full-time basis, found that this set-up made it easier to resolve problems, because they could deal with issues as they arose instead of having to arrange meetings. There also seemed to be benefits in out-stationing when it came

to helping partners understand each other's work processes and perspectives, thus leading to more reported openness and cooperation in problem solving.

However, it was not always necessary for staff to be out-stationed on base for partners to be successful. In Bremerton, Washington, which (because of the location of the base and concerns about parking availability) decided not to out-station staff, partners made effective use of the time they were all together, such as during CAA participant orientation sessions, to discuss problems and find solutions. For example, during one such occasion, the workforce partner expressed concern about the availability of funding for CAA applicants, leading the workforce and military partners to devote that time to deciding how they would handle the issue.

Strong and Supportive Leadership. There is evidence of the value of having site leaders who take charge of the demonstration and make their support of it known. Interview respondents from the three sites with reportedly strong partnerships indicated that a key feature of their success was strong and supportive leadership emanating from different and sometimes multiple sources. These leaders took on different roles—key among them taking charge of the demonstration from an operational perspective. In two sites, one individual emerged as the leader. In one case, for example, the leader was the key administrator from the One-Stop Career Center who was very hands-on in the demonstration and was lauded for helping define the demonstration initially and for facilitating decision-making as it moved forward. In another site, a lead partner (rather than a lead individual) emerged. In this case, military and workforce partners reported that the WIB had taken the lead in guiding the work of all partners. Administrators from the WIB reported that they believed the success or failure of the demonstration ultimately fell on them, and as a result they actively ensured that all partners understood and carried out the demonstration appropriately.

Interview respondents in the sites described above also indicated that they had the support and leadership of the lead bases' commanding officers. By actively helping to promote the demonstration, the commanding officers in these sites seemed to send the message to demonstration staff on the military side that this initiative was important and valued. This appeared to add legitimacy to the effort from the staff perspective. While the enthusiasm among staff for this demonstration was evident in most sites, it seemed particularly evident where commanding officers took on this role.

Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities. In at least four sites with positive partnerships, staff reported the importance of clearly defined roles and responsibilities, especially early on. Confusion over partner roles can lead to unintended duplication of effort or to activities not being carried out at all. Clarifying roles, particularly those designed to be the sole responsibility of one partner, is key to avoiding the tensions and frustrations that can occur, according to interview responses. Since partners in all 11 sites reported that they did not have formal partner agreements (such as Memoranda of Understanding), it was even more important that roles were clear. In Tacoma, Washington, interview respondents noted that the military partners knew and respected the fact that approving fields of study is the responsibility of the One-Stop Career Center staff. Although staff from partners did not state directly why this was important, the implications are clear: if both workforce and military staff were assuming the responsibility of approving fields of study, there could be

instances in which—despite following the demonstration rules—partners might come to different conclusions, thus causing confusion from an operational perspective, sending mixed messages to potential participants, and causing tension between partners.

3.   Defining a Collaboration Process and Establishing a Communication Strategy Were Common Challenges

Nearly all sites experienced challenges forming and sustaining partnerships. Common challenges across the sites related to (1) defining a collaborative process, and (2) establishing a communication strategy.   In most sites, partners were able to work through these challenges and ultimately establish positive, or at least stable, partnerships. However, three sites were unable to establish solid relationships among the partners.

Defining a Collaborative Process.   The overlapping skills and background of partners, described earlier, contributed to some disagreements about how the partners would share demonstration tasks. Specifically, partners described difficulties in determining which partner would complete specific tasks and how tasks would be accomplished. These issues sometimes materialized during the planning process when partners disagreed on priorities. For example, interview respondents at one site described how the military partner wanted to focus on process and workflow in planning, while the workforce partner was focused on data outcomes.

In other cases, partners approached their roles from different perspectives.   For example, in one site the military partner viewed the workforce partner as overly concerned about completing paperwork and following processes and believed this slowed down the enrollment process. The workforce partner attributed the length of time needed to complete CAA processing to a backlog in applications. After voicing concerns, the workforce partner made changes to the processes, but not to the satisfaction of the military partner.

While staff at sites commonly mentioned challenges in defining a collaborative process, sites with reportedly positive partnerships were often able to overcome these issues. For example, in the first site described, the workforce partners tried to describe clearly how their existing systems and processes could be used to operate the demonstration efficiently, which seemingly reassured the military partners that they did not have to focus so much on process and workflow.

Establishing a Communication Strategy. Effective communication was a common challenge expressed across sites. In particular, when policy changes occurred early in the demonstration, partners sometimes learned about changes at different times. This raised the question of how and when partners would share information with each other.   Some partners occasionally expressed discomfort with information sharing.

Communication issues were particularly salient in two sites.   In one site, the state workforce partner was hesitant to share DOL-provided information about policy and procedural changes directly with the military for fear of overstepping organizational boundaries. As a result, the military staff became frustrated that information reached them

haphazardly, often through informal communication with out-stationed workforce staff. Another site described concern over a lack of consistency in guidance from one partner to the next. For example, front-line staff would hear from the military partner that a CAA could be issued for a particular field, program, or school, but the workforce partner would later disagree. This naturally caused confusion. In these two sites, the communication issues were not resolved to the satisfaction of all partners at the time of the implementation study site visits.

In contrast, partners in sites that reported positive partnerships typically developed strategies for addressing communication concerns. For example, in one site, military and workforce front-line staff attended monthly meetings, along with the state demonstration leads, to discuss the demonstration. This provided a structured forum to share changes, discuss concerns, and resolve unclear messages. Sites also learned over time to work through their communication issues. In at least two sites, partners reported that to resolve early communication lapses, they made an explicit rule to share new information immediately with other partners.

4.   Sites with Less Stable Partnerships Exhibited Tension and Inconsistent Views About Partnership Strength

Partnerships in three sites appeared particularly strained, and the partners reportedly did not develop mutually beneficial ways to resolve issues as they emerged. Two common features of these partnerships became evident: (1) ambiguity about which partner should be leading the demonstration, and (2) inconsistent views of the partnership and its strength.

Each of the three exhibited evidence of tension between partners. The reported tension emerged in the absence of a clear site leader for the demonstration. For example, in one site, high-level military administrators sought clarification on who had leadership authority between workforce and military and within the military between the education center and the family support center. Further, the military partner questioned whether the workforce partner should be involved in the demonstration at all. This was in sharp contrast to other sites, such as one in which the partners indicated that the demonstration would not have been nearly as successful if it had been handled by a single entity.

Also, interview respondents in these three sites (unlike respondents in the other eight sites) did not describe their partnerships or their strengths consistently. In these three sites, some partners described the partnership as strong, while others questioned whether the challenges outweighed the benefits. While sometimes it was partners who expressed different views, at other times the inconsistency was between levels of staff. For example, in one site, the partners' administrators described the partnership as adequate, but line staff described it as poor. Administrators described differences in how partners approached their work but reported that the issue was manageable. The military and workforce staff highlighted communication concerns as contributing to the weakness of the partnership.

B. Partners' Collaborations with Education Institutions

In all sites, the demonstration benefited from the long-standing pre-existing relationships that partners had with local schools. Schools often had on-base representatives at the education centers, on a full-time or weekly basis, to provide educational assistance to military members and their families. Some schools even offered classes on base. The workforce partner also had pre-existing relationships with schools, primarily through the experience of the WIB and the One-Stop Career Centers in funding WIA customers' training opportunities through ITAs.

Two benefits of these pre-existing relationships were (1) partners' in-depth knowledge about local educational programs, and (2) existing staffing and support that could be used to help CAA participants. When pre-existing relationships with schools were in place, partners understood the schools' program offerings, entrance requirements, enrollment steps, key contacts, and processes (such as paperwork and payment processes). For example, one or more partners were likely to have information about which schools offered programs in certain fields, and could provide comparisons in terms of cost, waiting lists, and other pertinent information. If waiting lists, location of schools, or other issues were of concern to a potential CAA participant, partners could provide information about similar alternative programs that might meet their needs (for example, a radiology program with no waiting list instead of a nursing program with a waiting list). In addition, in at least one site, as illustrated in Box II.1, a strong pre-existing relationship between a local school and the One-Stop Career Center helped CAA participants receive intensive followup—assistance with enrollment problems, issues with participants' performance in their courses, and so on—which they would likely not have received with demonstration staff alone.

**Box II.1. Jacksonville, Florida: Strong Collaborations with Local
Schools Appear to Benefit Participants**

In Jacksonville, Florida, the local workforce system had a long-established relationship with a local community college. WIA customers frequently elected to attend programs on one of this college's several campuses. Prior to the CAA demonstration, the One-Stop Career Center out-stationed staff at the college to provide on-site assistance to WIA customers and to help graduates with job placement. These on-site staff provided similar services to CAA participants who attended the school, completing monthly followup from enrollment through job placement and beyond.

Another benefit was the connections that partners' staff could make between potential CAA participants and school staff. For example, in two sites—Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and Georgia—representatives from some local schools were available at the CAA orientation/briefing. This was helpful because, after learning about the CAA demonstration, applicants could inquire immediately about the programs of one or more schools and, if appropriate, begin discussing an education plan. This added a degree of seamlessness to the process in that applicants did not have to wait to make an appointment with school staff but could instead have many of their questions answered right away. Partners in another two sites also used their connections with schools to provide detailed information to potential CAA participants or to create linkages between participants and schools. In Maine, for

example, school staff noted that sometimes workforce staff, in the process of working one on one with a CAA customer, would contact them to ask specific questions about a program of interest or to arrange for the customer to meet with them. Interview respondents thought the link to school staff was helpful because, rather than merely being sent to the school, a potential CAA participant was given a point of contact.

While school involvement has benefits, it can also have drawbacks. For example, while a military partner at one site indicated that it would be useful to have schools attend orientations and briefings, this was not done, because a military administrator was concerned about the implications of inviting some schools but not others. In addition, some schools took the initiative to specifically market the CAA demonstration on their own, which, because of concerns over the accuracy of the information that schools provided, was not always welcomed by the military and workforce partners (see Chapter IV for further discussion about outreach).

CHAPTER III
START-UP AND STAFFING

DOL and DoD expected the CAA demonstration to begin soon after sites were notified that they would be participating. An analysis of the start-up phase, which included developing a staffing structure and quickly putting implementation plans into action, provides important information about the successes and challenges sites faced during this time. Section A of this chapter provides information about demonstration start-up, including a comparison of the speed of start-up in different sites, common and site-specific challenges faced during start-up, and how early start-up pace related to later implementation progress. Section B describes demonstration staffing, including a brief description of demonstration staff, the allocation of partner staffs' time, and challenges in staffing related to resources.

A. Demonstration Start-Up

DOL and DoD conducted on-site training in October 2007 to clarify demonstration details and encouraged sites to begin implementation soon after. The goal was for sites to commence awarding CAAs quickly so participants could begin attending their education and training programs for the semester starting in January 2008. While some sites met this expectation, others required more time to become fully operational.

To assess start-up pace, the implementation study team categorized states as quick, moderate, and slow starters based on the percentage of their total state grant obligated as of February 4 and March 17.[6] States with a high percentage of funds obligated at each point

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[6] Demonstration states began reporting their grant obligations to DOL and DoD in February 2008 through the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration weekly report. When initiating this report, DOL and DoD asked states to provide data on all CAAs awarded since the demonstration's inception. Initially, data on CAA awards were available only by state. DOL and DoD asked states to report the cumulative dollar amount for all accounts obligated by the reporting week. Obligations reflect funds spent and anticipated for all accounts. States varied in their definition of when an account was reported obligated. Figures on actual spending were not available.

(relative to other states) were classified as quick, while states with a low percentage obligated at each point were classified as slow. All others were classified as moderate.

States varied in their start-up pace. Two states had a quick start-up phase, obligating nearly 6 percent of their total grant award as of February 4, 2008, the first date for which data on CAA awards were available (Table III.1). They continued at this rapid pace, with nearly 20 percent of funds obligated only one month later. On the other hand, two states had a slow start-up phase, obligating 1 percent of their total grant award by February 4, and they did not gain momentum over the following month. The third group of four states implemented the demonstration at a moderate pace. These sites had awarded a relatively modest number of accounts by early February, but all gained momentum by the next month. This section describes the experiences of the quick-starter sites and then discusses the common start-up challenges faced by most sites, as well as certain site-specific challenges.

Key Findings on Start-Up and Staffing

- Two states experienced a quick start-up, four followed a moderate pace, and two were initiated at a slow pace. Sites with quick start-ups benefited from early planning.

- Both military and workforce demonstration staff often had a military connection—usually as a military spouse—which was reportedly useful in bridging the military and workforce cultures.

- Workforce and military partners devoted significant staff time to the demonstration, though there were site-by-site differences depending on site needs, contextual factors such as the size of the grant or the number of participating bases, and the amount of time staff had available. Military partners typically identified existing staff who could take on demonstration responsibilities in addition to their existing workload. Workforce partners typically identified existing staff or hired new staff who could focus mostly, if not entirely, on the demonstration.

- Workforce partner staff generally spent more time on the demonstration than military partners as a result of their access to grant funds for demonstration staffing, as well as the nature of their administrative responsibilities.

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1.   Quick-Starter Sites Benefited from Early Planning

Administrators from the two sites with quick start-ups attributed their pace to early planning facilitated by two key factors: (1) pre-existing relationships between military and workforce partners, as well as educational institutions; and (2) an early and active interest in the demonstration. As described in Chapter II, partners and collaborators at each site had different degrees of prior interaction with one another. Partners in these two quick-starter sites had a long and formal history of working together. They also exhibited an early interest in the demonstration, either by actively seeking out the demonstration grant or by displaying a pre-demonstration interest in specifically serving military spouses. Staff from these partners reported that these two factors made it easier to begin planning with each other,

and to make decisions about how the demonstration would operate, thus contributing to a quick start-up.

Table III.1.   **Average Grant Obligations for States Exhibiting Quick, Moderate, and Slow Start-Up at Three Points in Time**

Category of States	Number of States	Average Percentage of Each State's Total Grant Funding Obligated by:		
		2/4/08	3/17/08	10/27/08
Quick	2	6%	19%	66%
Moderate	4	2	8	42
Slow	2	1	1	19
Total	**8**	**3%**	**9%**	**42%**

Source: Calculations based on MilSpouse CAA Demonstration weekly report data submitted by states.

Interview respondents at one of the two sites, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, said that prior partnerships between military and workforce entities, as well as with local educational institutions, were key to their quick start. Military and workforce partners had a close relationship prior to the demonstration, primarily as a result of a local effort that allowed One-Stop Career Center staff to be out-stationed on base to provide services to military spouses. The military bases reportedly had a very close relationship with a number of local schools owing to their full-time presence on base. With these established relationships in place, the site was able to convene planning workgroup meetings with all partners—military, workforce, and education—before the demonstration grant was officially awarded. During early planning efforts, partners agreed on how the demonstration would operate. According to site staff, involving all partners from the very beginning helped staff "hit the ground running" as soon as grant funds were awarded. Interview respondents at the workforce partner also indicated that start-up was made easier because of past planning for another DOL grant. Although this grant was not specifically targeted to military spouses, the partners had brainstormed about how they would serve military spouses as part of the grant and included this plan in their proposal. While this past grant did not come through, the planning and relationship building served them well during start-up.

In the other site, Maine, strong pre-existing partnerships between the military and workforce entities were also evident. In anticipation of an impending BRAC, a mini One-Stop Career Center had been set up on base in 2006 to help military families plan for the upcoming base closure. Because the center was already known as a trusted resource for military families, staff at this center took on the responsibilities associated with the demonstration. In addition, while other sites were selected by DoD and DOL to participate without an application process, one partner in this site actively sought inclusion in the demonstration. Knowing that BRAC would significantly affect the military spouses who would soon be transferred to other bases (one of which was already selected as a demonstration site and would be receiving many of these families), partners completed up-

front planning to demonstrate why they needed the grant and how they would implement the project. As part of their planning, partners traveled to the military base where many of their families would be transferring to discuss how the two sites could work together to implement the demonstration. Once awarded the grant, this pre-planning proved beneficial. For example, partners had developed a relationship with a well-known school in the other site, which allowed participants to begin their training program via distance learning and then continue their education in classrooms once transferred. Finally, this site also had an added incentive to start up quickly. Because military families were due to transfer to other bases, partners tried to front-load their use of demonstration funding to give participants enough time to begin (and, ideally, complete) their selected programs before transfers occurred.

2. Delays in Receiving Demonstration Guidelines and Lack of Staff Resources Were Common Start-Up Challenges

All sites faced challenges, at least to some degree, in the start-up phase. One that reportedly affected most sites regardless of start-up speed was the delay in receiving final demonstration guidelines. Sites with moderate or slow start-up speeds also reportedly faced site-specific issues, such as the lack of staff resources.

A key start-up challenge, whether or not it significantly delayed start-up in a given site, was that the demonstration began without final guidelines. Interview respondents from at least six sites noted that the start-up phase was difficult because clear demonstration rules had not yet been established, although DOL and DoD were responsive to issues or questions during weekly phone calls. The Desk Guide—which was meant to provide background information and implementation guidance for the demonstration—was still in draft form at the time of start-up and was not finalized until February 2008. Despite this situation, sites moved forward with implementation, some with great success. Staff from three sites, for example, reported initiating their publicity efforts before grant funds were officially available or holding orientations before final guidance was provided. Sites faced further challenges during early implementation when DOL and DoD made changes to the initial demonstration guidance to add to the list of acceptable fields/industries and expand military eligibility, which sometimes highlighted communication difficulties within sites.

Site-specific challenges posed problems for at least four sites, two of which had a moderate start-up pace. In one of these moderate-paced sites, interview respondents reported that the military lacked sufficient resources and staff to work on the demonstration immediately; although workforce partners had access to some demonstration funds for staffing, military partners had to leverage existing resources. This in turn delayed the initiation of outreach and recruitment efforts. Interview respondents in this site also reported that more coordination time between partners was needed prior to start-up. In another moderate-paced site, the staffing structure appeared to delay start-up. The state workforce agency contracted with two One-Stop Career Centers to provide services to spouses at four participating bases, and the contract negotiations with one center took longer than anticipated. Although other workforce staff were able to provide services to some of that base's customers in the interim, demonstration start-up could not fully begin until the contract was finalized.

Circumstances at two sites resulted in particularly slow start-up periods. One site did not officially begin start-up until April 2008, awarding relatively few accounts up to that point. Each partner—military and workforce—suggested that the delay occurred because of issues with the other partner's available resources or processes, which raised questions about the true reasons for delay. In the other site, which awarded only 21 accounts by the end of March 2008, each partner faced challenges acquiring staff for the needed level of time. Interview respondents also described limited initial interest among military spouses in the CAA, most likely due to a large number of deployments at the time of start-up, and this reportedly resulted in fewer spouses wanting to pursue the CAA at that time or remaining on base to hear about the demonstration. More intensive marketing was also reportedly needed to pick up the pace of awarding CAAs to spouses who remained on base.

3.　Early Start-Up Pace Was Associated with Later Implementation Progress

The pace of start-up in states was generally consistent with later implementation progress. Table III.1 presents the average percentage of grant funding obligated by October 27, 2008. A comparison of the late-October data and early start-up data suggests that states with a quick start-up maintained that rapid pace at later stages of implementation, still continuing to obligate their funds relatively quickly. Three of the four states that started up at a moderate pace gained ground in the months after initial start-up, obligating more than two-fifths of their demonstration funds by October 2008. The fourth state in this group appeared to slow in their pace of obligating grant funding, but this may be related to their definition of when grant funding was obligated. Slow start-up sites continued to lag behind in their obligations.

B.　Staffing the Demonstration

To get the demonstration operational as soon as possible, sites had to determine a staffing approach and get staff in place quickly. Decisions about how to select demonstration staff varied by site and by partner. Demonstration staff, though, tended to be experienced in their field and often had a direct connection to the military—usually as a military spouse.

Staff from workforce and military partners each devoted time to the demonstration. However, during early implementation, the amount of time spent by partners depended at least in part on the needs of the site, contextual site factors (such as the size of the grant or the number of participating bases in a site), and the amount of time staff had available. The workforce staff tended to spend more time on the demonstration than military partners because of the nature of their demonstration responsibilities as well as their access to administrative funds that could be used for staffing purposes.

1.　Demonstration Staff Often Had a Military Connection That Was Reportedly Useful in Bridging the Military and Workforce Cultures

One commonality in staff selection across sites was that in at least eight sites, one or more of the workforce partner staff were prior military members or current/former military spouses. This was the case mostly among front-line staff but also sometimes among

administrators. A similar pattern emerged for many of the military demonstration staff. A common reason for this approach was that it was seen as a means to bridge the "cultural divide" between the military and workforce systems, and a way to offer military spouses the most appropriate service. Administrators or staff in five sites discussed the following benefits of using staff with a personal military connection:

- Knowledge of how to navigate military culture

- Personal understanding of military life for military spouses (especially if the staff were military spouses themselves)

- Ability to connect personally with potential CAA participants

- Sense of commitment to their demonstration work

CAA participants interviewed during some discussion groups highlighted the work of certain demonstration staff—often current or former military spouses themselves. As illustrated in Box III.1, a key characteristic of staff is that they showed respect to the people they served.

Box III.1. One CAA Participant's Appreciation of Demonstration Staff

"You know the thing about it . . . that will make or break a person [is] that initial contact. So you know when [One-Stop staff person who was also a military spouse] comes out, she's like 'It's all going to be OK. Come here,' . . . so when you come up to someone and they treat you so warmly and with so much respect and so much dignity, it makes a huge difference. Because I can tell you, there will be other people who are not as dedicated, who are not as strong as others, who would come up and be treated with some disdain, and that will ruin them. . . . It will ruin them. They'll walk out and never look back." (CAA Participant Group Discussion)

In at least one site, this staffing strategy extended to other demonstration partners. In Georgia, where the chamber of commerce was a key partner, responsibility for marketing was assigned to a current military spouse on staff at the chamber, reportedly because she was knowledgeable about the appropriate avenues for marketing to the military.

2. Military and Workforce Partners Had Different Staffing Approaches

Military and workforce partners took different approaches to staff selection. From the military perspective, staffing the demonstration generally meant identifying existing staff who could perform demonstration duties in addition to their normal workload. From the workforce perspective, this typically entailed identifying or hiring staff that could devote significant time to the demonstration, often to the exclusion of any outside responsibilities (meaning they were assigned solely to the demonstration). This difference in approach was due primarily to the fact that workforce partners had access to demonstration funds for staffing purposes, while those funds were not available to military partners.

3.   Partners' Staffing Decisions Depended on Their Responsibilities, Available Resources, and Grant Size

Military and workforce partners had to make decisions about how much time selected staff, particularly front-line staff who worked directly with CAA applicants and participants, would spend on the demonstration during early implementation. They typically based these decisions on a few key factors, including the range of assigned responsibilities for each staff, the amount of time staff could devote to the demonstration given other non-demonstration responsibilities, and the particular staffing needs of the site. The size of the grant awarded to a site was an important consideration in determining the extent of staffing need. Two sites using a large amount of total staff time represented some of the larger grants awarded. The number of bases covered by the grant was another key factor in determining the extent of staffing needed. One site using a large amount of total staff time covered four bases in their grant, each from a different military branch. Thus, greater staff participation was needed to cover all bases.

The staffing patterns that sites established during early implementation, which are discussed here, will likely change over the life of the demonstration. As workforce staff continue to open accounts and manage the accounts that have already been opened, and the focus moves away from the early tasks of marketing and recruitment, it is anticipated that workforce staff will be allocating an even larger proportion of their time to the demonstration while the military staff will likely be devoting somewhat less.

Overall, more than half the sites allotted a total of more than 2 full-time equivalents (FTE), when accounting for both military and workforce front-line staff's total reported time spent on the demonstration.[7] The average combined FTE for the demonstration was 2.7, with sites ranging from about 1 FTE to more than 5 (Table III.2).

While the total number of FTE is helpful in understanding the total front-line staffing levels—that is, workforce plus military—in each site, examining staffing of each partner separately provides additional information. Both workforce staff and military partner staff devoted time to the demonstration. However, the workforce partners typically devoted more, presumably because of their access to earmarked funding that could be used for staffing and because of the wider nature of their responsibilities. Workforce and military partners had shared responsibilities (such as verifying applicant eligibility and providing education and career services) as well as separate responsibilities. Military partners, for example, were generally responsible for taking the lead in conducting marketing and recruitment. Workforce partners were responsible for opening, administering, and managing accounts, which, as discussed further in Chapter V, was often a time-consuming task.

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[7] FTE was calculated based on information reported by local staff and staff supervisors on the amount of time actually spent on the demonstration by each front-line staff person, defined as any staff regularly working directly with CAA applicants or participants or doing administrative data entry or other similar activities for the demonstration. As a result, a reported staffing level of 2 FTE does not mean that a total of 2 staff were assigned to the demonstration, but rather that the total staff time for the demonstration amounted to 2 FTE.

Table III.2.   FTEs Allocated to the Demonstration, by Type of Partner

	Average FTE	Lowest Staff Allocation in Any Site	Highest Staff Allocation in Any Site
Workforce and Military Partners Combined	2.7	1.0	5.5
Workforce Partner Staff Only	1.6	0.7	3.8
Military Partner Staff Only	1.1	0.3	2.1
Education Center Partner Staff	0.7	0.0	1.8
Family Support Center Partner Staff	0.5	0.0	1.5

Source: Analysis of staffing information provided by the 11 sites.

Note: N = 11 sites.

On average, workforce partner front-line staff reported allocating about 0.50 of an FTE more to the demonstration than military partner staff. Workforce partner staff reported allocating an average of 1.6 FTE to the demonstration, while military partner front-line staff reported about 1.1 FTE (Table III.2). The FTE range varied for both workforce and military partner staff. Workforce partner front-line staffing ranged from 0.7 to 3.8 FTE. Military partner front-line staffing ranged from 0.3 to 2.1 FTE.

Finally, staff from education centers and family support centers reported a similar average level of staffing, 0.7 and 0.5 FTE, respectively (Table III.2). However, across sites, staffing patterns at these centers indicated varying levels of time committed to the demonstration (not shown). Education center partners were reportedly staffed at a higher level than family support center staff in six sites, the reverse was true in four sites, and in one site there was no difference. Overall, there were four sites in which the difference in staffing levels between these two military offices was between 1 FTE and 2 FTEs. In two of these four sites, this reflects that both centers did not provide staff for the demonstration. In one of these sites, staff from the family support center provided no time, while in the other site, staff from the education center provided no time.

Information collected through site visit interviews provided insight into how staffing decisions were working at an operational level. Sites sometimes learned during implementation that their planned staffing level was insufficient. This occurred in the site reporting total military and workforce staffing of less than 1 FTE. Here, military staff devoted limited time to the demonstration. However, the primary workforce staff person had to devote much more time to the demonstration than was originally agreed upon by the site's workforce partner. In another site, where workforce staff were already contributing double the amount of time as their military partners, the workforce staff capacity was expanded even further when they hired two temporary full-time staff to assist with processing their backlog of CAA applications.[8]

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[8] These new staff are not reflected in Table III.2, because they had not begun working with customers at the time of the site visit.

4.   Military Partners Lacked Resources, as Did Some Workforce Partners

Challenges existed in staffing, primarily as a result of resource issues—which affected mostly the military partners. In at least five sites, the military partners reported that the demonstration overburdened staff. Because military staff involved in the demonstration had to divide their time between their regular work and demonstration work, staff reported being overloaded and having to make accommodations, sometimes significant, in their workflow to complete CAA work. In one site, while the demonstration was reportedly valued and seen as important, it was also seen as directly taking staff time away from their main mission: serving military members. At least four other sites indicated that military staff were facing an increased workload, but they did not believe that this was directly taking services away from active duty members.

It appeared that while staffing issues were of concern to military partners in general, there was a difference in perspective and impact across the participating military centers. This was seemingly due to variation in the perceived mission of the involved centers. Family support centers viewed their mission and goal as serving the military family as a whole (including members, spouses, children, and so on). Staff from education centers described their primary focus as serving military members, though not to the exclusion of military families. This difference likely explains, at least in part, why partners from the education centers were more likely to report workload conflicts related to serving military spouses as part of the demonstration. It is also possible that staffing decisions and perceived challenges in staffing from the education center and family support center perspective may have varied according to the branch of service involved, but not enough information is available to draw a conclusion.

Another staffing challenge, in at least one state, was that the staff from military partner expressed resistance to taking on the demonstration work, primarily in the beginning stages, because the workforce partner received funds for staff and administrative work, but the military did not. Here, the workforce partner explored restructuring its own budget so some of their funds could cover tasks assigned to the military partner, thereby reducing any possible tensions between partners.

Finally, workforce partners in at least four sites also described staffing challenges. Staff from the workforce partner in one site indicated that, from the beginning of the demonstration, they believed the resources available to them were not sufficient for the work they were being asked to do. Military partner staff in this site noted that, in response, the workforce partner initially pressured them to take on certain roles that they were not expecting and the military staff have been fulfilling those roles ever since. Interview respondents in at least three other sites reported hiring additional workforce staff during implementation because of the workload involved.

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CHAPTER IV
INTRODUCING CAREER ADVANCEMENT
ACCOUNTS TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

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T he MilSpouse CAA Demonstration offered a new training opportunity to military spouses. Staff at the demonstration sites expressed excitement about this, but faced the challenge of building awareness and stimulating demand among eligible military spouses. Thus, publicizing the demonstration and educating spouses about the availability of brand-new training funding, eligibility requirements, and the enrollment process were critical early steps for each site. To introduce potential participants to the demonstration, sites conducted marketing efforts (Section A) and convened orientation sessions to share details with potential participants through group and individual sessions (Section B).

Key Findings on Introducing Participants to CAAs

- Introducing potential participants to the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration was a two-step process involving broad marketing efforts and formal, in-depth orientation sessions.

- Military partners were consistent players in, and often led, publicity efforts to market the demonstration, though word of mouth emerged as a desired strategy.

- Orientations occurred primarily on military bases and were held mostly in group settings. They provided potential participants an opportunity to learn about the eligibility requirements and enrollment process and, in seven sites, to begin or complete the enrollment process.

A. Broadly Marketing the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration

Staff at each of the demonstration sites faced the initial, and the ongoing, task of informing potential participants about this new opportunity for training funding. Military partners often led this effort through broad marketing to inform their military community about who was eligible, what training programs would be funded, and the timing of available funds. A variety of marketing efforts was used, including disseminating written materials on

bases and placing advertisements in base newspapers and on base television broadcasts. Military partners also began describing the demonstration during base briefings for new and existing families. With time, site staff viewed word of mouth as an increasingly helpful marketing approach.

1. Marketing Efforts Involved Multiple Partners, but Were Often Led by the Military

In all 11 sites, military partners participated in the sites' publicity and marketing efforts, because of their knowledge of and access to the target population. Their level of involvement varied, however. In 7 of the 11 sites, the military partner was either the only or the primary partner involved in marketing efforts (Table IV.1). In these sites, if the workforce partner participated in publicity, it was typically in a passive, secondary role, such as posting pamphlets at the One-Stop Career Center.

Table IV.1.   **Varied Role of Partners in Marketing Efforts**

Partners' Role in Marketing	Number of Sites
Military Sole Responsibility	3
Military Lead Role, Workforce Secondary	4
Military and Workforce Share Lead	1
Workforce Lead Role, Military Secondary	2
Other Partner Lead, Workforce and Military Secondary[a]	1

Source: Analysis of site visit interview information and other written documents provided by the 11 sites

Note: N = 11 sites.
[a]In one site, the other partner was the chamber of commerce.

If the military did not lead marketing, the responsibility was (1) shared by both the military and the workforce partner, (2) assumed by the workforce partner, or (3) assumed by another partner. The workforce partner in North Carolina led marketing by developing materials describing the demonstration, then shared the materials with their military partners, who distributed them on base and off. In Maine, the workforce partner was operating on base before the demonstration was introduced, and this pre-existing presence positioned them, with support from their military partners, to take an active role in building awareness for the demonstration. Georgia included a unique partner, the chamber of commerce, in its publicity efforts. The chamber's strong community presence, on base and off, and its long-standing knowledge of community marketing allowed it to develop targeted strategies to spread the word. The base's education center also participated in publicity efforts.

2.   Education Institutions Sought a Role in Marketing, Which Not All Sites Welcomed

As key demonstration collaborators in many sites, education institutions were positioned to participate in marketing through their ready access to potential participants already attending their institutions. In about two-thirds of the demonstration sites, education institutions advertised the availability of the CAAs to their student population. This was helpful, as staff at some sites initially viewed spouses already attending local education institutions as solid targets for early participation, and several employed strategies to reach this population. Their direct marketing strategies included advertisements in course catalogs and discussions during staff interactions with potentially eligible students.

A challenge for the staff from workforce and military partners when education institutions marketed the demonstration was ensuring that the institutions provided current and accurate information about which spouses were eligible and what training programs were appropriate. Military and workforce partners had to remain in frequent communication with education institutions to ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date information was shared. Another means of dealing with this matter, though not used by all sites, was asking the education institutions to cease their independent publicity efforts.

3.   Varied Marketing Strategies Spread the Word About the Demonstration

Demonstration sites engaged in a variety of marketing approaches to spread the word about the demonstration, including written and verbal efforts on base and in the surrounding communities. Over time, staff at sites developed a belief that word of mouth was productive, and possibly the most useful means of marketing to military spouses. However, the only evidence to support this assertion was anecdotes from interviews with respondents.

One common marketing strategy was to develop materials for broad dissemination. Sites created brochures and flyers that were posted in common areas and distributed in offices frequented by spouses, such as the education center or family support center. Many of the military newspapers prepared stories, often quoting the staff of the demonstration partners. In addition, sites placed advertisements about the demonstration in the base newspapers. At least two bases attempted to build early awareness of the demonstration by holding large-scale kickoff events that informed spouses, as well as the broader community associated with the base, about this new opportunity exclusively for military spouses. These events were sponsored by the commanding officer or someone else in

Marketing Strategies
• Flyers and brochures
• Newspaper advertisements
• Newspaper articles
• Advertisements in course catalogs
• Emails to groups on base
• Announcements during base briefings
• Targeted demonstration kickoff events
• TV advertisements
• Word of mouth
• Ombudsmen and spouse clubs

a leadership position, and occurred early in the demonstration period, typically in November 2007.

Information about the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration was also shared during the bases' regular activities, especially when large gatherings were convened. Staff from the education centers and family support centers frequently conducted briefings to educate service members about available programs and opportunities, or to welcome new personnel to the base, and shared details of the CAA opportunity with service members as an indirect means of getting the information to their spouses.

Staff in more than half the sites cited word of mouth as a critical way of stimulating demand for the demonstration. In at least two sites, staff reported conducting only limited ongoing marketing, as sufficient demand for the demonstration had been generated through their initial efforts and the ongoing word of mouth. Demonstration staff in Jacksonville, Florida, did not plan to embark on additional marketing efforts until they began seeing a decline in interest from potential participants, and Maine demonstration staff did not anticipate additional marketing efforts, as the level of demand was on par with the funding available for the demonstration.

While word of mouth can be a fruitful means of reaching the target population, it is often necessary to devise ways to stimulate sharing through this means. Several sites networked with on-base groups that interacted with military spouses on a regular basis. For example, they reached out to bases' ombudsmen programs and then used the ombudsmen to spread the word to spouses in the groups they represented, or they connected with military spouse clubs to share information. Using this sort of network allowed mention of the demonstration during one-on-one conversations, when people may be more receptive.

B. Orienting Spouses to the Demonstration and Its Expectations

After introducing spouses to the demonstration through marketing efforts, sites held formal, in-depth orientations where spouses could get answers to questions and, potentially, speak individually with military or workforce demonstration staff. Orientations were usually held at the military bases and involved staff from both the base and the One-Stop Career Center. In a small number of sites, representatives from education institutions also attended group orientations to serve as a resource for spouses. At some sites, orientations could also serve as the beginning step in getting a CAA approved, though it was unlikely that all the required steps could be completed to fully open an account. Formats included group and individual settings, and many sites offered group orientation on a set schedule along with opportunities for individual orientation to address scheduling needs for some participants.

1. Orientations Introduced the Demonstration to Military Spouses and Often Began the Approval Process

All sites used their orientation sessions to introduce potential participants to the demonstration (Table IV.2). This introduction typically consisted of a formal group presentation that focused on the demonstration's guidelines by reviewing who could participate, what career fields and training programs were eligible, and how to progress

through the enrollment process. The workforce partner in one site also used the orientation to explain the emphasis on obtaining employment after receiving a degree or credential: Colorado's orientation staff presented the demonstration as a "Jobs First" program where participants are expected to seek employment right after finishing the training program. While other sites may have mentioned employment, this site appeared to have a particularly strong emphasis on employment, beginning with the message they provided at orientation.

Table IV.2.　　Format, Frequency, and Purpose of Orientation Sessions

Orientation Sessions	Number of Sites
Purpose of Session	
Introduction Only	4
Introduction and Begin CAA Approval Process	5
Introduction and Complete CAA Approval Process	2
Format of Sessions	
Group	10
Individual	4
Frequency of Sessions	
Weekly	7
One to Two Times per Month	5
Other	3

Source:　Analysis of site visit interview information and other written documents provided by the 11 sites.

Notes:　N = 11 sites. Number of sites using a strategy may sum to more than 11, as demonstration sites may use more than one approach for conducting orientation sessions.

A range of staff, including staff from the One-Stop Career, education center, and family support center, participated in these presentations, which were often guided by a set of slides that followed a template provided by DOL/DoD. In seven sites, staff from both the workforce and the military partners consistently attended orientations. Of the remaining four sites, three did not have consistent attendance at orientation by staff from both partners, but it did occur on occasion. The fourth site was the only one to not offer a group orientation format. In a small number of sites, partners invited representatives from local education institutions to attend orientation to serve as a resource for participants looking to learn about available programs.

Some sites also viewed the orientation as a venue for either starting or completing the approval process to open a CAA. Five demonstration sites had potential participants begin the enrollment process, but enrollment required additional steps following orientation. In these sites, the orientation involved a formal presentation describing the demonstration, and included time for potential participants to be approved for the demonstration from the military's perspective. This primarily involved checking the potential participant's military ID and ensuring that the service member spouse of the potential participant had sufficient time remaining at that base. During these orientations, potential participants often had an

opportunity to speak one-on-one with workforce demonstration staff about specific questions relating to the demonstration or to clarify expectations and next steps in the enrollment process. Georgia implemented strategies during their orientation to streamline the initial steps for receiving account approval, such as simplifying the military's review and inviting education institutions (see Box IV.1).

Box IV.1.   Georgia: Streamlining Enrollment Through the Orientation

Partners in Georgia schedule weekly group orientation sessions on base at Fort Bragg. Representatives of all partners attend, including staff from the education center, the One-Stop Career Center, the local WIB, and several schools. Georgia implemented two strategies at orientation with the goal of streamlining the enrollment process for participants.

First, as potential participants sign in for the orientation, a staff member from the education center reviews each individual's military ID, their primary document to certify military eligibility. This staff person then completes the military sections of the process form, enters the date on the form, and provides the signed form to the potential participant who is ready to enroll.

Second, the site invites representatives from local education institutions to attend orientation. The representatives observe the formal orientation presentation and are there to answer questions about available programs and to discuss training options.

The two demonstration sites in California used orientation as the place for applicants not only to begin, but also to complete the enrollment process. Potential participants were to select their career field and intended training program at the orientation, information needed for completing the standardized process form. Many participants had to attend an orientation more than once, as they were unprepared to identify a career field and training program at the first session. To address this, military partner staff tried to prescreen potential participants during telephone conversations to inform them of orientation expectations and help them to be prepared. When potential participants needed to return to the orientation to complete enrollment, they skipped the group presentation segment and were first in line to meet one on one with workforce partner staff.

2. Orientations Occurred in Locations Convenient for Potential Participants

Sites aimed to hold orientations in a convenient location for the spouses. The majority conducted them on base or at base housing, but in a few instances they held them in other locations. In Bremerton, Washington, orientations were initially held at a community center located within base housing for Kitsap NAS, but demonstration staff quickly realized this location had insufficient parking and was inconvenient for many spouses, and subsequently moved orientations to the One-Stop Career Center, which was centrally located between the participating bases, had ample parking, and provided computer access. Originally, North Carolina held two types of orientations for spouses in different locations. The orientations held at Fort Bragg and Pope AFB served as an introduction to the demonstration, while the orientation at the One-Stop Career Center, occurring after potential participants received military approval, discussed workforce expectations for the demonstration and served as a

first step in obtaining workforce approval. At the time of the site visit, interview respondents disclosed plans to merge the two orientations into one, because attending two orientations is inconvenient for potential participants.

3. Most Sites Held Group Orientations; a Few Held Individual Sessions

Nearly all demonstration sites arranged for group orientation sessions on a regular basis (Table IV.2). Group orientations offered an efficient process for informing potential participants about eligibility requirements, allowable career paths and training fields, and the enrollment process. The frequency of group orientation sessions ranged from monthly to weekly, depending on the demonstration site, attendance at orientations, and the number of bases participating at the site. For example, in Colorado the two lead bases recruited potential participants from three nearby military bases, so five bases were involved in the demonstration. Staff convened orientations on a regular basis at three of them, and potential participants could attend an orientation at any location. Fort Carson orientations were held weekly, Peterson AFB orientations semi-monthly, and Air Force Academy orientations monthly.

A small number of demonstration sites used individual orientation sessions either as their primary format or as an alternative format to accommodate participants' schedules. In Maine and at the Kaneohe Marine Corps Base in Hawaii, after an initial large-scale briefing to introduce the demonstration to the community, all orientations with potential participants were conducted individually. In Maine, they took place at the BRAC Transition Center or the base's family support center, and at the Marine Corps Base in Hawaii, they were held primarily at the base's family support center (see Box IV.2 for more on Hawaii's orientation formats). In one Florida site, individual orientations were held at NAS Jacksonville's education center. Through the individual format, center staff not only introduced the demonstration, but also provided education counseling focused on the potential participant's career and training goals. In this site, the lead base also recruited military spouses from another nearby base, where staff convened weekly group orientations to potential participants.

Box IV.2.   Hawaii: Conducting Orientations Through Alternative Formats

The four military bases in Hawaii each decided on their approach for introducing the demonstration to potential participants. While each of them included standard approaches of group and individual introductions to the demonstration, two also developed alternative methods for orienting spouses.

The base's education center at Pearl Harbor Navy Base developed a self-briefing option. Potential participants can listen to an audio recording of the briefing session and simultaneously scroll through presentation slides describing the demonstration and enrollment process. Potential participants who remain interested can schedule an individual appointment to discuss schools and training programs.

Military staff from the Kaneohe Marine Corps Base emphasize flexibility when introducing potential participants to the demonstration. Recognizing the potential schedule conflicts with an in-person orientation, this base also uses email to assist spouses interested in learning about the demonstration. The key staff person at the family support center corresponds with spouses through email to provide a short, informal introduction to the demonstration.

CHAPTER V
OPENING AND MANAGING ACCOUNTS

W hile the demonstration intended that participants self-manage the way they use their CAAs, staff at both workforce partners and military partners reported expending significant effort opening new accounts and managing existing ones. Responsibilities for opening an account were typically shared between the workforce and military partners, and once the account was opened, the workforce partners assumed most, if not all, of the responsibility for managing it. This chapter discusses the processes used by states and sites to open and manage CAAs and the roles that each partner played in account operations. Section A covers the steps associated with opening an account, and Section B discusses the steps for managing accounts.

Key Findings on Opening and Managing Accounts

- Opening an account was guided by the demonstration-specific process form, which military partners were responsible for approving and workforce partners reviewed as part of their enrollment process.

- Career and education counseling was available from multiple sources, including workforce and military partners and educational institutions. Generally, potential participants could work with the staff person with whom they felt most comfortable.

- Using the flexibility allowed for account creation, some sites developed processes that placed extra burdens on participants, such as requiring them to provide substantial documentation or to complete multiple steps prior to approval of their accounts.

- Ten sites used vouchers to issue payments to training programs, following the WIA model. One site used a reimbursement process.

- Sites asked participants to engage in regular followup on their progress in training programs, typically by providing their grades after each term.

A. Opening a Career Advancement Account

Before a potential participant could receive education and training funds through this demonstration, workforce and military demonstration staff worked together to review each candidate's eligibility and approve the account's opening.   The implementation study identified four steps that sites consistently followed when completing this process:

1. Potential participants attended a formal orientation session to learn about the demonstration and the process for opening an account.

2. Following (and in some cases, during) orientation, potential participants provided requested information to help complete the demonstration-specific process form developed by DOL and DoD.

3. Next, potential participants met with workforce partner staff to review the approved process form and finalize demonstration enrollment.

4. During this account opening process, potential participants had access to career and education counseling from a variety of sources.

This section discusses the second, third, and fourth steps in opening an account, as well as the definition of an open account. Chapter IV discussed the first step, orientation.

1.   Military Partners Were Responsible for Approving a Standardized Process Form That Guides Account Establishment

DOL and DoD developed a standardized process form that guided the steps to enroll in the demonstration and open a CAA. The process form required that participants provide identifying information about themselves and their service member spouses, whom the form refers to as their "military sponsor." It also required that they identify their intended education plan, including career goal, intended program of study, and intended education institution. The form also included sections for identifying each participant's military education center and servicing One-Stop Career Center; at many sites, these sections were completed before participants received them. Also, the form included a section to verify military eligibility by requesting the signatures of the voluntary education officer and the wing/base/garrison commander. Base leadership had the option of designating the signature authority for military verification to other persons.

As DOL and DoD intended, staff with the military partner began the review and approval of the process form. This included certifying that the potential participant met military criteria, and on some bases it included reviewing the selected career field and education or training program. Staff at the education centers or the family support centers asked potential participants to provide their military identification, and in some sites their service member spouses' military orders, to document eligibility. The process of reviewing potential participants for military eligibility was simplified in April 2008 when participation criteria were expanded to include spouses married to service members of any rank.

While the process form listed the voluntary education officer and wing/base/garrison commander for approving the form, in practice the sites had flexibility to designate approval authority to other persons. Most bases delegated such authority to either the education center (done at five sites) or the family support center (two sites), and one base maintained a review by the base leadership's office. The remaining three sites allowed flexibility by sharing this responsibility between the education center and family support center, though in different ways (Box V.1).

Box V.1. Implementing Flexibility in Approving the Process Form

Three sites shared responsibility for approving the process form between the education center and the family support center. Sites took different approaches when sharing this responsibility.

- The two sites in California asked their family support centers to review the process form for military eligibility, while the education centers ensured that the selected career field and training program met demonstration requirements.

- In the Hawaii site, each of the four participating bases determined the military office responsible for approving the process form. Two bases assigned process form approval to the education center, one assigned it to the family support center, and one allowed either the education center or the family support center to approve. The base that allowed either office to approve the form required that all participants meet with an education center representative, even if the form was approved at the family support center, to discuss the suitability of their training plans.

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2. Workforce Partners Reviewed the Process Form and Completed Enrollment

The process form guided the workforce partner's enrollment of the participant. When the One-Stop Career Center received the military-approved process form from the applicant or military center, its role was to fill in information on the servicing One-Stop Career Center, note whether the account was awarded and if so for what amount, and finally fax the completed form to the education support office for DoD, known as Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). In determining the participant's eligibility, One-Stop Career Center staff also reviewed the participant's selected career goal, education goal, and training program as listed on the form to ensure that they were appropriate to the demonstration and for the individual.

In all sites, the workforce partner was responsible for officially enrolling participants in the demonstration. This responsibility was typically allocated to the workforce staff member(s) assigned to the demonstration, an arrangement that allowed staff to work with participants from their enrollment and continued throughout their education or training program. However, in three sites, it was eligibility specialists from the One-Stop Career Center who approved the process form, though they did not have a subsequent role working with or tracking participants. While front-line staff reviewed and approved participants' eligibility, they did not always have final signature authority. A few sites required review and

approval not only from front-line staff but from supervisors and/or the One-Stop Career Center Director, depending on the site.

Workforce partners asked potential participants to provide a variety of documentation to enroll in the demonstration. Frequently, these papers mirrored what was asked of people receiving an ITA. At a minimum, applicants were asked to document their citizenship or right to work and to show proof of selective service enrollment. At the extreme, one site asked potential participants to provide their social security card, birth certificate, marriage license, military orders, driver's license, verification of residence, and military identification. In a few sites, the military partners considered the extent of paperwork requested excessive and duplicative. Staff at one site noted that because military spouses must provide a good deal of documentation when they receive their military identification card, asking them to provide those documents again just to enroll in this demonstration was unnecessary. In their view, the military identification card should be sufficient.

One-Stop Career Centers in at least seven sites required that applicants submit an education plan in addition to what was provided on the process form. The format of the education plan was not standardized, and content could vary across sites. However, providing the plan allowed the workforce partner not only a chance to review the selected career field and education or training program but also the opportunity to ensure that the participant applied for enrollment in the education or training program (and potentially was accepted)

Information Requested in Education Plans

- Selected education or training program

- Documentation that participant applied to, or was accepted by, the educational institution

- Program start date

- Anticipated program end date

- Total program cost

and that the program could be completed within the demonstration's 24-month time frame. One-Stop Career Center staff at one site said that they used the provided education plan to discuss the program's appropriateness with the potential participant. For example, if the education plan noted that four classes per term were required to complete a program, the workforce partner staff person could explore whether the potential participant had the needed supports, such as child care, to make that possible.

3. Participants Guided Whether They Received Career or Education Counseling

In accordance with the demonstration's principle of self-management, potential participants could receive career or education counseling, although they were not required to. If interested, participants could receive guidance from demonstration staff in selecting a career field of interest or in identifying a suitable education or training program. Counseling typically occurred when the potential participant was working on the process form, but it could also be provided if the participant wanted to switch career fields or training programs or when a participant's education plan was being discussed.

When requested, staff of military and workforce partners were willing to provide in-depth counseling to potential participants. Staff at all the demonstration sites indicated that a portion of their potential participants needed at least some guidance in selecting a career path and education or training program. Across sites, staff estimated that the portion of participants who needed and received any counseling ranged from 15 to 85 percent.

A unique aspect of this demonstration was that staff from multiple organizations were qualified to provide career or education counseling to potential participants. Many of the staff at the education centers and family support centers on the bases and One-Stop Career Centers had experience outside or before the demonstration in providing the types of counseling that some participants needed (see Box V.2). In addition, staff at the education institutions that participants attended also had skills in counseling people on career paths and training options. This common counseling skill set likely contributed to demonstration sites' sharing the responsibility of providing career or education counseling (Table V.1). At all sites, staff from the military bases, in particular from the education center, provided counseling on career selection or education programs. Illustrating the fact that multiple entities participated in counseling, potential participants at five sites could receive counseling from either the military or the workforce partner or from counselors at educational institutions. Staff at sites reported that participants usually sought counseling from the demonstration partner or collaborator they were most comfortable with.

Box V.2.   Bremerton, Washington: Flexibility and Consistency in Counseling

In Bremerton, Washington, all partners had experience providing career and education counseling and agreed to serve in this capacity. Participants needed to request assistance from a partner, and typically the partner approached by a participant then provided counseling. Recognizing that different systems adopt different counseling approaches, the partners agreed to follow the operating rule of the education center and provide the participant with three choices for training programs. In addition, the partners embraced the self-managed account approach by encouraging the participant to make training decisions. Beyond these common operating principles, counseling varied by provider.

- The *education center* guided participants to a military-sponsored online interest inventory, called the Discover® Assessment. This tool takes about one hour and helps people identify a career path. In addition, education center counselors worked with spouses to identify available training programs and the pros and cons of each, including cost factors.

- NAS Kitsap's *family support center* had the smallest role in counseling. When provided, counseling tended to consist of talking with potential participants about career fields during orientations. Family support center staff recommended their available resources, including a range of interest inventories such as the Myers-Briggs®.

- Staff from the *One-Stop Career Center* provided the most consistent career and education counseling to participants when reviewing the demonstration process form. All potential participants obtained an education plan from their selected training program, which identified their start date, the courses to be completed, the estimated completion date, and the total program cost.

The nature of the counseling provided to potential participants depended on which partner was providing it. Military partners tended to offer participants a set of tools different from those offered by workforce or education partners, as different resources were available to them. For example, participants could complete the Discover® Assessment, as education centers covered the cost of completing the assessment for service members and their families. However, all counseling and related tools focused on identifying career interests, determining an appropriate career path, identifying available training opportunities in the chosen career field, and navigating education enrollment.

Across demonstration sites, staff reported a wide range in the typical amount of time spent with a participant. Someone needing little counseling or guidance might have spent a few minutes with staff from the military base on eligibility matters and less than an hour with workforce staff completing enrollment tasks. In comparison, a participant who was unsure of his or her career or training interests might have spent up to 10 hours with staff from the military base and/or workforce center.

Table V.1.   Partners Involved in Career and Education Counseling

Partner or Collaborator	Number of Demonstration Sites
Only Military Partners	2
Military or Workforce Partners	3
Military Partner or Education Institution	1
Military or Workforce Partners, or Education Institutions	5

Source: Analysis of site visit interview information and other written documents provided by the 11 sites.

Note: N = 11 sites.

4.   Sites Varied in the Time Needed to Complete the CAA Approval Process

Among the sites, the report time needed to complete the full approval process varied from one day to several weeks or more. The length of time required to receive approval comprised two components. First was the time potential participants needed to gather their required documents and make specified decisions. Second was the time used by either the military or the workforce partner for reviewing the process form, receiving required signatures, and completing additional enrollment steps. Some sites developed an approval process in which, once potential participants had the required documents, they could receive approval in one meeting. As discussed in Chapter IV, the two sites in California adopted this approach; participants were able to complete the approval process during their weekly orientations, though they often attended orientation more than once since they often did not have all the documentation completed at their first orientation. The Georgia site and the two sites in Washington also emphasized speedy approval once documents were gathered.

Sites that were not able to complete enrollment during a meeting tended to need about two weeks from the time the process form and additional materials were submitted to the receipt of final approval. In one site in Florida, the potential participant provided the completed and military-approved process form and supporting documentation to the One-Stop Career Center. The center then needed two weeks to complete its internal review, which also included a review by the WIB. In North Carolina, applicants provided the completed process form and supporting documentation to the education center on base. The education center reviewed the form and transmitted the application to the One-Stop Career Center, which then scheduled a meeting with the potential participant to complete the approval. Staff in North Carolina estimated that it took about two weeks from the time the potential participant submitted the form to the education center to final approval. The Hawaii site would not complete a demonstration enrollment, including final approval of the process form, until the payment arrangements with the selected education institution were in place. This led to a potentially long waiting period, especially if the selected institution was new to the One-Stop Career Center or not located in the local community.

5.   Sites Did Not Use a Consistent Definition for Approving or Opening an Account

All sites faced the challenge of defining when a CAA was officially open. Most often, participants completed the approval process prior to starting an education or training program, which led to a gap between the time when a site obligated CAA funds for a participant and when a site actually paid an institution on behalf of a participant. The general rule implemented by DOL and DoD was that an account could be approved prior to the start of education or training but was to be considered open only when the participant began attending the program.

In reality, however, sites defined when they considered a CAA to be open differently. To some extent, these differences reflected varying expectations for what participants were to complete during the CAA approval process. Examples of this variation may be illustrated through four sites and what they completed as part of that process, as follows.

In the two California sites, participants were asked to select a career field and available education or training program in order to complete the approval process, but they were not required to complete the application or enrollment process for their selected program. With this definition, the California sites did not expect all participants who completed the process actually to follow through with enrolling in an education or training program and opening an account. The looseness of this approval approach made it challenging to manage the amount of grant funding obligated. To address this, these two sites instituted a rule that all approved CAAs would expire in 90 days unless the participant enrolled in an education or training program. The California workforce partner sent each participant a letter as the expiration date approached, specifying steps to take if the participant was still interested in using the CAA. If a participant had not started using the CAA by the expiration date, or had not contacted the workforce partner about the situation, the account was closed and obligated funds were re-entered into the pool of available resources.

Two other sites were more stringent about when they approved a participant's CAA. The Georgia site asked that interested participants bring in documentation of their

acceptance into and enrollment in their selected education or training program. This meant that the only remaining step once they approved a CAA was to establish a payment system with the selected institution to pay the participant's training fees. The other site, Hawaii, actually completed this step of establishing a payment system with the chosen education institution before approving a participant's CAA.

B. Managing Open Accounts

Once approved and opened, the CAA then progressed to the management stage. Since accounts can remain open for up to two years, the account management process transitions through different phases. At the time of the site visits, some phases, particularly those occurring when participants renew a CAA for year two, were just being defined. Managing open accounts involved (1) developing systems for issuing payments to education institutions; (2) tracking participants with open accounts to ensure that they remain in good standing with their training program; and (3) handling processes such as renewing accounts for a second year, closing accounts when participants either drop out of or complete training, and de-obligating funding when participants use less money than was originally obligated.

1. All but One Site Used Vouchers to Guide Payments to Education Institutions

After approving the participant's CAA, the workforce partner issued payment to the participant's selected education institution. Depending on the length of an education or training program, sites issued payment either for the entire program or for only the first term. All but one of the demonstration sites used their existing processes for WIA and ITAs for issuing payments. With the speedy start-up required for the demonstration, using these systems allowed sites to enroll participants quickly and begin issuing training funds.

Paralleling the ITA system, the most common approach for issuing payment was through vouchers. Typically, the workforce partner would provide the participant with a voucher that the participant would in turn provide to the selected education institution. To receive payment, the education institution would invoice the workforce partner, who would then submit payment. Education institutions would often need to provide their tax status and tax identification number to allow the workforce partner to process the transaction.

The one site that did not use an existing process was in Georgia, the only state participating in the demonstration where the grant from DOL and DoD did not go to the state Department of Labor. In Georgia, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development, the grant recipient, did not have experience issuing payments of this nature to educational institutions. Ultimately, the state developed a reimbursement system that asked participants to pay invoices first. Georgia then issued payment to the school, and the school in turn issued a reimbursement to the participant. When reflecting on the process of developing their system, grant staff in Georgia did not think it was overly difficult for them or participants. Two particular staff challenges mentioned were (1) understanding the paperwork each institution required for processing invoices, and (2) identifying the appropriate people to work with at the institutions. As the number of open CAAs in Georgia grows, the process of issuing payment to institutions is becoming easier, a message

echoed by many sites, regardless of their process for issuing payments. As in other sites, they have developed clear processes with the most commonly attended schools and need only to identify a new path when a participant selects an education institution that no other participant has selected.

Sites did not issue direct payments to participants for other expenses covered by the demonstration. Instead, sites would develop payment systems similar to those used for paying tuition, which allowed participants to use CAA funds for these expenses. Often, sites had separate transactions to pay for tuition and for books or supplies, since different departments or offices were responsible. Some participants described these processes as taxing, but they followed the procedure to receive the assistance.

2. Most Sites Easily Established Payment Arrangements with New Education Institutions, but Two Faced Challenges

Many sites appeared open to developing payment arrangements with any eligible school. Anecdotes from across the sites mentioned isolated payment problems that often seemed quickly resolved. However, at least one site appeared unable to resolve its payment challenges with new schools, and staff there described a reluctance to build new arrangements. At this site, discussion group participants reported delays in receiving approval for their CAA, particularly if they were trying to attend an unfamiliar school. In response, staff at one of the participating military bases informed potential participants about the schools that would be quickly approved by the One-Stop Career Center. Typically, these were familiar local schools, and staff encouraged potential participants to select from them (without explicitly prohibiting attendance at other schools). Thus, potential participants were told of the delays that might arise if they tried to go to a school for which payment arrangements had not already been negotiated. While this might have affected the range of programs selected, it also helped spouses avoid unnecessary delays if they were satisfied choosing a school that was already approved by the workforce partner.

Interview respondents in another site described a challenge with issuing payments to the community colleges in their area. Initially, community colleges were not participating in the demonstration, as they had a preferred payment process that was different from what the One-Stop Career Center required for a CAA. Eventually, the workforce partner met with some of the community colleges to resolve differences in language that were reportedly part of the problem. For example, while community colleges were unaccustomed to invoicing for tuition costs, they did have a process that allowed for payment deferment. Once the One-Stop Career Center and schools came to the understanding that these were essentially the same processes, the schools often agreed to participate.

3. Sites Expected Participants to Maintain Regular Contact with Staff

Staff at demonstration sites emphasized their need to remain in contact with participants while they attended their education or training programs. The purpose of this ongoing contact was to monitor a participant's progress in training, often ensuring that the participant remained in good academic standing from one term to the next, and to maintain a relationship that would allow demonstration staff to assist in job searches and track the

participant's subsequent employment status. DOL and DoD did not establish expectations for how frequently demonstration staff were to followup with participants or to define what, if anything, was to be provided as documentation of continued involvement in training. Without clearly stated expectations, sites developed their own processes, which differed from one another in intensity.

Demonstration sites asked that participants maintain regular contact with demonstration staff, typically from the One-Stop Career Center. Followup contact gave One-Stop Career Center or military center demonstration staff an opportunity to hear how the participant was doing in training and to assess if there were emerging barriers that might impede continued progress. Across the demonstration sites, One-Stop Career Center staff typically led in encouraging and conducting this ongoing contact. However, at least two sites explained that staff at their bases' family support center took on this role.

The general expectation was that followup would be informal and that participants would initiate contact either by emailing demonstration staff or by calling the office. At the time of the site visits, demonstration staff appeared to have limited knowledge of how closely participants adhered to followup expectations and could not comment on whether they would need to implement procedures for ensuring that followup occurred. However, the ongoing nature of the education and training programs gave participants a strong incentive to adhere to followup expectations; they would not receive their next payment if they did not followup. Staff generally reported that most participants were still attending school and therefore had not completed their programs, not even short-term ones. These staff did not yet appear to be making a significant effort to track participants' outcomes. A longer-term study would be able to gather more information on participants' outcomes and efforts to track them.

The required regular contact with demonstration staff ranged from monthly to once per term (Table V.2). Some sites that asked participants to maintain frequent contact used their experience working with this population to guide their expectations for followup frequency. At one site, military and workforce staff described many of their participants as young, naïve, and in need of ongoing "hand-holding," which led them to ask that participants contact staff every 60 days.

One site did not specify a frequency for participants to maintain contact with demonstration staff, but the workforce staff at this site described having regular ongoing contact with participants. Interview respondents from this site mentioned that one challenge in following up with participants on their training was the heavy workload associated with enrolling participants in the demonstration, which limited the time available for followup.

Table V.2.   Expectations for Frequency of Participant Followup

Expected Followup Frequency	Number of Demonstration Sites with Expectation
Monthly	3
Every 60 Days	2
Each Term	5
Not Specified	1

Source: Analysis of site visit interview information and other written documents provided by the 11 sites.

Note: N = 11 sites.

Sites expected participants to provide ongoing documentation of their progress in training. Many participants selected education and training programs that continued over multiple terms, which led sites to require that they provide grades to the One-Stop Career Center in order to continue receiving CAA funding. Interview respondents from at least one site also mentioned receiving grades from some educational institutions to document participant progress. When receiving grades directly from participants, staff reviewed whether the participant was in good academic standing with the institution; they generally did not implement specific expectations as to what grades were to be maintained.

Requested Followup Documentation from Participants

- All sites asked participants to provide *grades* at the end of each term

- Three sites asked participants to provide *time sheets* that reported on their class attendance

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However, three sites described specific expectations regarding grades. One of these sites encouraged participants to maintain at least a *C* average across classes and required that participants pass all their classes. Another site required that participants maintain a 2.0 average in their education or training program. A third site had the most stringent expectation: participants had to receive at least a 2.0 in *all* classes. This last site claimed that most schools had the same expectation, so it was a reasonable policy.

Beyond grades, three sites asked participants to provide attendance records or time sheets as part of their monthly followup. One-Stop Career Center staff from one site explained that their attendance sheets showed the number of hours the participant attended class over the month and asked the instructor to confirm that the participant was maintaining satisfactory grades, conduct, and attendance. At two of the sites that requested attendance records, One-Stop Career Center demonstration staff explained that participants were to submit them monthly and in person to the One-Stop Career Center. Both these sites asked that the professor sign the time sheet before it was submitted, and participants were expected to obtain that signature. The third site did not describe such a requirement.

This site allowed flexibility in the way time sheets were submitted, accepting them by fax, by email (scanned), or in person.

4. Ongoing Account Management Involved Tracking Funds and Renewing and Closing Accounts

As participants continued to attend education and training programs, demonstration sites managed a growing number of open accounts. The tracking of participants and the ongoing progress reports made by participants supported this account management by allowing demonstration staff to remain aware of participants' program status. Key actions when managing accounts were as follows:

- Tracking spent training funds and evaluating outstanding training costs

- Closing accounts when participants stopped attending training

- Renewing accounts for a second year[9]

Tracking Funds and Evaluating Outstanding Training Costs. Tracking available demonstration funds was a critical, if complicated, process for sites. In planning, sites estimated the number of CAAs they anticipated funding over the course of the demonstration, based on a set of assumptions about how much funding each participant would receive. Sites calculated the average amount of funding they would provide a participant each year and estimated the percentage of participants that would renew their account for a second year.

While these estimates provided sites with a guess at the number of CAAs they would issue, site staff still needed to maintain an accurate tracking of (1) their obligated funding, and (2) their actual payments to education institutions. Tracking obligated funding, which some sites referred to as "soft obligations," offered a picture of the resources that sites anticipated providing to education institutions for the participants with approved or open CAAs. This was critical for sites, since the programs that participants attended often lasted multiple semesters. By tracking obligated funding, sites were able to calculate the outstanding demonstration funding that could be provided to future participants. Recognizing that obligated funding was an estimate of the actual funding that participants would need to complete their education or training programs and achieve certifications, sites also needed to track their actual payments to assess outstanding demonstration funding for future participants. Site staff reported that there were often differences between the initial amounts documented and the final amounts actually invoiced by the institutions. In

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[9] At the time of the site visits, existing policy allowed participants to spend up to $3,000 in each of two years. Since then, a December 2008 policy change allowed participants in five states to spend up to $6,000 over the course of the two years. Thus, the concept of *renewing an account* might no longer be applicable in these states.

addition, staff in some sites indicated that they had apparently underestimated the average funding per participant and the percentage of participants seeking a CAA for a second year.

Sites tracked CAA funds using two systems, developing their own tracking mechanisms to supplement their existing fiscal management tools. Demonstration staff often developed internal files, typically Excel spreadsheets, that tracked obligated and actual payments issued for each participant the first year of their CAA and estimated payments for their second year if their education or training program would last more than 12 months. Workforce partner staff from several sites also mentioned tracking funds through their state or county financial systems, but this tracking was external to the demonstration program. These systems did not consistently offer sufficient tracking, however, and created problems for sites. The dual-systems sites were limited in how well they could track funds paid out for a participant, or for the demonstration as a whole, which created a challenge when calculating remaining funds for new participants. For example, One-Stop Career Center staff in one site reported that their county financial system allowed them to enter obligations only one quarter ahead. Here, staff had to maintain separate tracking to ensure that all obligated funding was accounted for.

Closing Accounts. At the time of the visits, sites had little if any experience with closing accounts, since their participants were still in training. In fact, at the time of data collection, sites had very little experience with closing accounts for any reason, and about one-third of the sites mentioned that they had no process in place for attending to this.

A few sites did have limited experience in closing accounts when participants did not successfully complete their selected education or training programs, having been forced to drop out either because their academic performance had been poor or because their service member spouses had been unexpectedly transferred. In the latter cases, participants had the option of continuing training in their new locations; demonstration sites worked with these participants to make arrangements with education institutions at the new locations. Not all participants took this option.

Sites described three plans for when and how they would close participants' accounts. One plan mentioned by the largest number of sites was to close accounts after the participant used the available funding and obtained their certification/degree. A second plan that sites mentioned was to not close the CAA until the participant was employed; the third plan was to not close the account until the site completed followup on the participant's employment outcomes.

Renewing Accounts. CAAs have a maximum account value of $6,000, as participants can renew their CAA for a second year. Demonstration sites would begin renewing accounts one year after they issued their initial accounts—early 2009 for most sites. At the time of the site visits, sites had started planning for their renewal process but did not have concrete plans in place. Staff reported that they generally planned to institute few additional steps for renewal but expected participants to be in good academic standing. Workforce staff in four sites offered the following about their renewal plans:

- One site explained that their renewal decisions will be made by One-Stop Career Center case managers and will depend on the participants' grades and their regularity in meeting followup expectations.

- Another site planned to follow their procedures for providing installment payments during the school year when considering account renewal. This entailed documenting that the participant was enrolled in training and was in good academic standing; this site said they anticipated a higher rate of renewal than initially anticipated, as participants were selecting longer training programs than expected.

- A third site noted that participants must be passing their program to receive a renewal.

- In yet another site, staff stated that they had not thought about the renewal process, other than that they would authorize a voucher when the second year began.

CHAPTER VI
EXPERIENCES OF CAA PARTICIPANTS

T he insights and experiences of military spouses participating in the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration help to complete the picture of the demonstration's early implementation experiences. While previous chapters provided the perspective of workforce and military leaders and staff, some information can be provided only by demonstration participants. For example, participants can inform us about how they experienced aspects of the demonstration, from first hearing about the CAA to interacting with demonstration staff. Without participants' perspective, this report would be telling only half the story about the demonstration's implementation.

This chapter relies on group discussions held at each site to report on participants' perspectives. However, before presenting these perspectives, the chapter first describes the data collection method and its limitations (Section A) and then provides the background characteristics of those who attended the discussions (Section B). Section C describes participants' experiences with key aspects of the demonstration, from why they decided to

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Key Findings on Participants' Experiences

- Participating spouses were overwhelmingly positive about the demonstration and the opportunity it gave them to obtain more productive employment and improve their family life. They also expressed interest in attending education or training because it kept them occupied during their spouses' deployments.

- Participants reported learning about the demonstration through the military's outreach efforts. The most common source of information appeared to be the service member spouse, who learned about the demonstration through emails and other forums.

- Given that most participants were still attending their education and training programs, the effect of participation in the demonstration on families' future attachment to the military was unclear. While some participants felt their improved career prospects could encourage their spouses to remain with the military, others were preparing for their spouses' retirement from the military.

participate to what their overall experience was, and Section D summarizes how participants see the CAA affecting their future lives. Finally, Section E provides participants' recommendations for improving the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration.

A. Data Source and Limitations

During each site visit, military or workforce partner staff convened a group of military spouses who were participating in the demonstration. Implementation study team members asked partner staff—usually staff from one of the military bases—to recruit about eight participants with diverse experiences, such as participants married to service member spouses from across the ranks and pursuing different careers allowed under the demonstration. Since the site visit schedule did not allow for group discussions with participants on each of the 18 lead bases, each lead implementation study team member worked with the site contacts to identify the base that would host the discussion. As shown in Table VI.1, the implementation study team held group discussions on each of the five lead naval bases but on only one of the six lead air force bases.

Table VI.1.   Military Service Branches in the Demonstration and Participant Discussions

	Number of Bases	
Branch	In Demonstration	In Participant Discussions
Air Force	6	1
Army	5	4
Navy	5	5
Marine Corps	2	1
Total Number of Bases	**18**	**11**

Source: MilSpouse CAA Demonstration site visits, 2008.

Across the 11 sites, 53 military spouses attended these group discussions. The size of the groups ranged from 1 to 9 military spouses, and the average length of each group discussion was 70 minutes. At the start of each discussion, participants completed a short form about themselves and their families. The group discussion leader also informed them that their responses on the form and their comments during the discussion would remain confidential.

While participants across sites often expressed similar views, these views are not conclusive findings about military spouses' experiences, for three reasons. First, the 53 participants who joined in these discussions were not randomly sampled, so their views cannot be considered representative. In addition, those who participated make up only a small fraction of all participants. According to the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration weekly report, the 53 participants represented only 2 percent of all participants as of August 18, 2008 (DOL/DoD 2008).

Second, the experiences of military spouses who might have been interested in a CAA but did not receive one—perhaps because they decided against opening an account or possibly because they were denied—are also important to learning about spouses' experiences. Although the design for the site visits included group discussions with nonparticipating military spouses who had expressed interest, only three sites were able to gather nonparticipants together. In total, nine nonparticipating military spouses participated in these discussions. Thus, most of this chapter provides the participant perspective.

Finally, almost all the participants were still in their education and training programs, so they could only surmise how they might use their credentials and degrees and how the CAA would affect their family's future.

B. Background of Discussion Group Participants

Based on discussions with military and workforce demonstration staff, the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration participants who attended the group discussions appeared to be typical of the spouses served by the demonstration. The average discussion participant was a 31-year-old woman with an average of 1.8 children (Table VI.2). Most of the participants with children had at least one child under age 13 (not shown). A majority (60 percent) were married to military personnel whose ranks were included in the demonstration's initial eligibility criteria (E1 through E5 and O1 through O3). All the participants had at least a high school diploma, as required by the demonstration, and a quarter of them also had a four-year college degree or higher. About half of them had service member spouses in the Navy, and a third had service member spouses in the Army; the rest were affiliated with the Marine Corps or the Air Force.

Most participants were using their CAAs to pursue careers in the education or health care fields (not shown). About 40 percent of them indicated that they were working toward a certificate or credential in the health field. Examples of chosen occupations in this field were nursing, medical billing, and dental assistance. Early childhood education was a common career choice for the 30 percent of participants pursuing a career in the education field. Other participants were pursuing careers in other fields, such as business, finance, and human resources. These patterns mirror those emerging across the demonstration. According to the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration weekly report for August 13, 2008, the health care field is the most popular, with just over half of all CAA recipients pursuing a degree or credential in this field, followed by education, which was selected by about a fifth of the participants (DOL/DoD 2008).

C. Military Spouses' Participation in the Demonstration

While previous chapters discussed the demonstration's implementation, from sites' initial recruitment efforts to their account management processes, this section provides the participants' perspectives on four aspects of the program: (1) reasons for participating, (2) initial awareness of the program, (3) satisfaction with the allowed career opportunities, and (4) general experience with the demonstration and staff.

Table VI.2.   Characteristics of Military Spouses in CAA Participant Discussions

	Percentage of Participants (unless otherwise noted)
Gender	
Female	91%
Male	9
Average Age	30.8
Service Branch	
Navy	49%
Army	34
Marine	9
Air Force	8
Rank	
E2-E5	49%
E6-E8	34
W1-W5	2
O1-O3	11
O4-O10	4
Spouses with Children	72%
Of Those with Children, Average Number of Children	2.5% (1.8 averaged across all 53)
Education	
High school/GED	21%
Some postsecondary education	45
Associate's degree	9
Bachelor's degree	23
More than bachelor's degree	2

Source: MilSpouse CAA Demonstration site visits, 2008.

N = 53 participants.

1.   Spouses Participated to Improve Themselves and Their Families

Across the discussion groups, reasons CAA participants gave for participating in the demonstration often focused on improving themselves or their families' circumstances. Five categories fully describe participants' reasons, as expressed during the discussions.

To Further Career and Job Prospects. Demonstration participants appreciated the opportunity to use their CAA to further their job prospects or to avoid the temporary, low-paying jobs that many often had to take. The CAA provided hope to participants, especially those without advanced education credentials, that they would be able to use the CAA to avoid a low-wage, dead-end job. One participant said she has been "working dead-end jobs and two jobs, and surviving" without making any progress in her employment or financial prospects.

Five Common Reasons for Participating

- ***To Further Career and Job Prospects.*** Military spouses participated to jump-start their careers or avoid temporary low-paying jobs.

- ***For Self-Improvement.*** Participants appreciated the opportunity the demonstration provided to do something for themselves and their own self-esteem.

- ***To Attend School.*** Participants were interested in using the CAA to pay for school because (1) they were already attending school, (2) they had always wanted to return to school but lacked the finances, or (3) they wanted to make use of the "free money" the military was offering.

- ***To Contribute to the Household.*** Participants felt that their CAA-financed degree or credential would enable them to find better-paying jobs so that they could contribute to their families' financial well-being.

- ***To Ease the Stress of Military Life.*** Attending school was a positive distraction during deployment of service member spouses, and also eased their concerns.

In addition, the CAA could help participants pursue a career that they could take with them on their next permanent change of station (PCS) and could improve their resumé. These participants expressed frustration with the disruptions of their frequent moves and the effect this had on their job opportunities. For example, one participant mentioned that while her service member spouse easily slips into his military job at each new station, she has to start again from the bottom. Another participant mentioned how her family's frequent moves affect her resumé and how potential employers perceive her (see Box VI.1).

Box VI.1. One Participant's Erratic Work History

". . . and the lady actually asked me over the phone, 'Can you guarantee me you'll be here three years from now?' I said, 'No, of course not, I'm a military spouse.' . . . And she said, 'You know, honestly, I'll tell you right now, we're not in a position to hire you. We need someone that we know is going to be here.' And that's another problem. You know my resumé looks like a Stephen King horror novel—six months here, a year here, so on and so forth—so when you put that in front of an employer, even though they know you're a military spouse, nine times out of ten they don't want to take a gamble on it. Because I can't tell them I'll be here a year from now. I don't know."

For Self-Improvement. In most of the discussions, at least one participant expressed the view that they had put their lives on hold while they supported their service member spouse's military careers and, in many cases, raised their children. In the military, one participant said, "Your spouse's career comes first—always—so that means that in a lot of ways you do a lot of sacrifices where you end up putting yourself last and you kind of forget about yourself." Participants felt that the CAA was finally a chance to do something for themselves. The benefits ranged from improving one's self-esteem to having the opportunity to do something just for oneself (Box VI.2).

Box VI.2. The CAA Can Improve a Participant's Self-Esteem

"[As a military spouse,] you lose your identity and everything that you become is defined by your spouse . . . so that's been the biggest struggle for me, trying to find my own niche and my own identity. And a lot of people have the common misconception that military spouses want to work for money . . . but my reason for wanting to work is for my own passion and my own identity."

To Attend School. Generally, the participants were grateful for the opportunity offered by the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration. The demonstration was especially attractive to those participants who were already in school or had hoped to go to school but lacked the resources to pay tuition. Education costs were prohibitive either because their service member spouses made too much to qualify for financial aid or because the family struggled to make ends meet as it was. Those participants who were in school before the demonstration began indicated that they had paid for most of their education out of their pockets or through private or student loans. Participants praised the demonstration for offering much needed financial assistance toward their continued education (Box IV.3).

Box VI.3. The CAA Provides Spouses the Opportunity and Motivation to Attend School

Financial aid makes schooling possible for some military spouses.

"[What I wanted to do] . . . required [me] to have a real estate license, but I just couldn't at this point—with paying for my son's day care and the cost of living and everything—couldn't afford to do it out of our own paycheck. So thank goodness [the CAA] was here for me . . . to get the education that I needed."

"What appealed to me? Oh, the fact that it wasn't going to be coming out of my pocket appealed to me a great deal. Because I was going to come over to [school] and go to school anyway. . . . When I saw that, it was honestly like a mirage. It was too good to be true."

The short time period and the timing allow military spouses to participate.

"I had started going to school when my husband first entered the army. And, due to PCSing, I had to stop going to school, I had to stop working. My life kind of just came to a stop, so I could go on with my family. And so, it's kind of hard trying to juggle the military life and trying to be a spouse of a military [personnel]. Because as soon as you pick up something, it's time to go. And it's very difficult to even get done with anything. So, with the CAA coming around, it's actually really great, 'cause it shortens your program [time] quite a bit."

"I feel it was like that last push that finally got me to do it . . . because I feel like a lot of times I was like putting myself to the side in a lot of ways, because I wanted this for a long time but I kept working and I kept doing this, I kept doing that . . . so then when this came up, I felt like no more excuses, just do it!"

Not only did the financing help, but the CAA, with its offer of $3,000 and prospects of a credential in a short time, provided spouses with an opportunity they could not ignore (see Box VI.3). Some participants said they could no longer put off going to school because of

finances, and others said they could not pass up an opportunity that the military was offering.

To Contribute to the Household. Whether they planned to return to the workforce or were looking forward to higher-paying jobs, many participants saw the CAA as a way to relieve their spouses of the full responsibility of their family's financial well-being. One participant felt that her eventual income would bring more "balance to the household." Another said that the program would relieve service member spouses from "feeling like they . . . have to pay for everything."

To Ease the Stress of Military Life. Participants in a few of the discussions mentioned that enrolling in school relieved both them and their service member spouses of stress, especially during a deployment. As illustrated in Box VI.4, attending school could provide participants a constructive distraction from worrying about their deployed spouses, and participants' engagement in school could help deployed spouses feel assured that their spouses back home were keeping busy.

Box VI.4. The CAA Can Ease the Anxiety of Military Life

Provides a positive distraction during their spouses' deployments

"Having something like [the CAA] for me helps me cope with having [him] . . . on a detachment or a deployment. . . . I did the last one by myself, and so it definitely helps keep me happier, keeps [me] from focusing on something else besides, 'Woe is me, I'm lonely.'"

"I was going crazy. His last deployment was through this last Christmas. He was gone for six months, and it was just me and [my daughter] alone and he didn't want us traveling 'cause he was all worried that we were going to get hurt. . . . I would just go to Wal-Mart, I would dress up and just go to Wal-Mart, just to see if someone would talk to me or say hi or anything. . . . Since I've started school, I'm so much more normal now."

Relieves deployed spouses' concerns about leaving

"My husband wants to make sure I am taken care of. . . . He can go at any time. . . . He wants to know . . . that I'm not just sitting there."

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2. Participants Learned About the Demonstration Through the Military's Outreach Efforts

> **Six Main Ways Participants Learned About the Demonstration**
>
> - Service member spouse
> - Military club or office
> - Friends and family
> - Educational institution
> - Newspaper/flyer
> - Website

Participants learned about the demonstration through the strategies that sites employed to advertise it (see Chapter IV). Many participants said that they first heard about the demonstration from their service member spouses, who in turn had first heard about it from emails posted to their units or at the orientations for newly assigned military personnel. Another common source was the clubs and offices on base. For example, the participant might have heard the demonstration mentioned at a military spouse club meeting or picked up information at the base's education or family support center. Participants also stressed the importance of word of mouth, saying that they had heard about the program through a friend or extended family member and that they, in turn, do their best to spread the word about the program to others. According to one participant: "I went to my neighbors . . . people outside of my command. . . . I was knocking on the doors in my neighborhood saying, 'You have to go do this.'"

Another source of information was education institutions. As discussed in Chapter IV, some education institutions conducted their own publicity to attract possible CAA recipients to their degree programs. In other cases, participants were already enrolled at a school when informed of the financial benefit offered through the CAA.

A few participants said that they first heard about the program through a posting in the newspaper or flyers. During one discussion, participants suggested that newspaper postings are ineffective because military spouses do not often read the papers. Another source mentioned by a few participants was the Internet, as some came across the demonstration as they were exploring ways to further their education or training.

3. Participants Appeared Committed to Their Career Choice

Most participants were satisfied with the career paths allowed by the demonstration. They felt that the demonstration-defined careers would enable them to maintain productive employment through their spouses' frequent moves (Box VI.5). Several participants mentioned that they would not have just settled for one of the careers allowed under the demonstration. To succeed, one spouse said, you had to have a passion for the career.

Several participants said that they could not pursue the career field that they had initially desired because it was not allowed, according the demonstration guidelines, or because an appropriate education or training program was unavailable locally. Careers in the health field commonly fell into the latter category of an education or training program being unavailable in the area. For some participants, the education for their initial career choice would have

taken more than two years to complete. Two participants from one site said that they were initially interested in becoming registered nurses, but since the education program would have required longer than two years to complete (as required by the demonstration), they enrolled in a licensed practical nursing program instead. They plan to use this as a stepping-stone toward eventually becoming registered nurses. Nursing and other health programs also had a limited number of open slots and narrowly defined entry requirements, which caused participants to seek other careers. For instance, one military spouse had been interested in a training program to become an x-ray technician, but since the local program had a waiting list, she enrolled in a phlebotomy/EKG program instead.

Box VI.5. Participants Saw the Value in Pursuing Portable Careers

"You, as a spouse, cannot flop around from base to base with your significant other and get a job without having one of these [portable] jobs that's listed [in the demonstration materials]."

"These are high-demand career fields we're being trained in. It really kind of makes it a moot point where you're being stationed at. . . . I really have a definite career path I'm taking, and I can apply it anywhere we move."

A few participants mentioned that their first career choice was not permitted by the demonstration. For instance, one mentioned an initial interest in criminal justice but switched to the health field. Often, military or workforce demonstration staff helped these participants identify a program in an allowed field. The few nonparticipants who participated in discussions also mentioned the restrictiveness of the career options as one reason they did not have an account. Some of these spouses were interested in unpermitted career fields, such as cosmetology, psychology, and social work.

4. Participants Had Positive Program Experiences

With only a few exceptions, participants stated that their experiences with the demonstration had been positive. In most of the 11 discussions, participants mentioned how much they appreciated the attention, support, and professionalism of the demonstration staff—either at the One-Stop Career Center or at one of the military base centers. Apart from some glitches that the first participants encountered, they said the process was generally smooth.

However, in one discussion group, participants expressed frustration with the demonstration staff, saying that they could not get ahold of their assigned case worker. In this site, one participant said she was almost denied entry into her educational program because the staff did not make the payment to the school in time.

One aspect of the demonstration that received mixed reviews from participants was online courses. Not all spouses felt that they could learn well in an online community, and many preferred to take courses in classrooms. Other spouses could not have participated without the online courses, which allowed them to take care of their children and pursue

their degree or credential. According to one participant, military spouses are bound by moving and young children, "so being able [to get an education] online or in a classroom is really great."

D. Perceived Effects of the CAA on Their Families' Future

While participants could not predict how the CAA would affect their futures, most believed that their participation would have positive effects on their families. However, they did not share similar expectations for their spouses' future attachment to the military.

Echoing their reasons for participating in the demonstration, participants indicated that the demonstration and their eventual careers would be valuable to their families. Some spouses said that by attending education or training programs, they were setting a good example for their children: it was positive for their children to see them actively engaged. Others mentioned how hard military life can be on families and said that the demonstration was giving them a way to be valued and to keep busy. A few spouses mentioned how hard the military life can be on couples and mentioned the high rate of military divorces; one participant said that she and her husband "would've divorced without [the CAA]."

Spouses participating in the discussions did not offer consistent views on how they felt the demonstration would affect their families' decisions on whether or not to remain tied to the military. Certainly, participants were pleased that the military was recognizing them through the provision of the funds; many felt that this was needed recognition and reward for the sacrifices they make as military spouses.

However, the pleasure of being recognized in this way may not necessarily translate to longer-term attachment to the military. While the group discussions could not provide estimates of the number of participants likely to remain with the military or insights into the types of families that were most likely to remain, the discussions do illustrate the different attitudes held by participants and their families (see Box VI.6). For instance, in more than half the discussions, at least one participant said that the demonstration was a way to help the family prepare for a life outside the military. This was true for several participants whose service member spouses were already scheduled to retire. For them, the demonstration was unlikely to have any effect on their future attachment to the military. Other participants said that attending school and pursuing a career would enable their family to consider a life outside the military. They felt that having their own career and income could give their service member spouses more career options, so they would not have to feel compelled to continue their service in order to provide for their families. One spouse implied that while the money offered through the demonstration will help her family, it will not convince the family to remain in the military, given her spouse's multiple deployments.

For other participants, the opportunities provided through the CAA might make the decision to stay with the military easier. These participants felt that their increased satisfaction with their lives and careers would help their service member spouses continue their military careers.

> **Box VI.6. Two Views of the Effect of the Demonstration on Families' Future with the Military**
>
> *The service member spouse is likely to remain in the military due to the military spouse's new career possibilities.*
>
> > "He's thinking now of staying [in the military] 'cause he was worried. . . . He knew that I was not completely happy. . . . Now that he knows that I will have work, college, I think he will say, 'I will stay because I know you are happy too.'"
>
> *The military spouse's new career opportunity could make it easier for the service member spouse to leave the military.*
>
> > "My husband does not want to stay in the Army. . . . He is very adamant that he wants to leave the Army when his time is up. I do not want him to leave the Army, but this career move for me, this path, I'm hoping will at least enable him to leave the Army if he is really desiring to do that when his time is up."

E.   Recommendations for the Future

Across the sites, participants tended to share four suggestions for future improvements to the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration:

1.   Offer child care

2.   Expand the career fields

3.   Allow for flexibility in the length and cost of programs

4.   Include all bases

While many participants took advantage of online courses and thus did not need child care to attend classes, others mentioned that the lack of child care restricted their options. Because of military schedules and deployments, participants could not count on their service member spouses to assist with child care. And as a result of their frequent relocations, they rarely had other family members available to help with children. These participants said that child care was a major roadblock to their success and wished that a little of their CAA money could pay for child care expenses.

Participant Recommendations

- Provide child care support to help participants with young children.

- Expand the career opportunities to include other fields.

- Allow for flexibility in length of program or annual costs.

- Offer CAAs to military spouses of all service member personnel.

Participants also made recommendations that would expand the demonstration in multiple ways—to cover additional career fields, to cover more costs, and to be available at all bases. Across the discussions, they mentioned friends at other bases who could not participate, the restrictions to their career paths because of the need to format their education plans to fit within the $3,000 annual ceiling, and the need to rethink their plans based on the allowed career opportunities. Despite these drawbacks, participants' strongest recommendation was to continue the program. Almost universally, they felt that the demonstration was changing lives.

CHAPTER VII
SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

I n 2007, DOL and DoD began their joint initiative, the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration, to support military spouses in their pursuit of portable postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Across the 11 demonstration sites, participants and staff from site partners and collaborators voiced excitement about the opportunities offered. Indeed, according to the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration weekly report, the sites had awarded a total of 3,639 accounts in the demonstration's first 10 months (DOL/DoD 2008). This final chapter draws on information from across earlier chapters to discuss the lessons learned as a result of sites' early implementation experiences and challenges (Section A). It then discusses next steps for studying the demonstration and suggests further avenues for research (Section B).

A. Key Lessons

This report on the sites' early experiences implementing the demonstration offers several lessons for replicating the demonstration and forming future military and workforce partnerships. The lessons are intended for use by policymakers who may refine the current demonstration, by current grantees as their sites mature, and by new sites looking to implement similar partnerships. They draw on the analyses in the previous chapters.

1. Pre-established or Early Partnerships Implemented the Demonstration Quickly

Establishing partnerships and collaborations early fostered a quick start-up, which was one of the goals of DOL and DoD. In each site, the key partnership was between military staff from education centers and/or family support centers and workforce staff from local WIBs and One-Stop Career Centers. Sites also formed collaborative relationships with representatives from education institutions and, in some cases, with other institutions, such as the chamber of commerce. At some sites, these partnerships had already been formed through earlier joint efforts, and by using these existing relationships to plan proactively for implementing this demonstration, they were able to begin issuing CAAs quickly.

Similarly, other sites found that forging partnerships quickly contributed to success. Through face-to-face interactions during the grant's kickoff in Washington, DC, and after returning home, partnerships were solidified during discussions about how each entity would contribute to implementation and how workflow would occur. This early planning established communication channels that continued as implementation progressed, allowing sites to discuss emerging challenges and plan for modifications. Partners in sites that were unable to forge good working relationships and establish clear communication channels faced challenges that stalled their implementation.

2. Strong Partnerships Build on Each Partner's Skills and Experiences

Sites formed the needed partnerships between the military and workforce systems, using the strengths and experience of each partner. For example, building on their experiences working with military families to reach spouses, military partners conducted formal marketing efforts and also cultivated word-of-mouth marketing using existing networks on bases, such as military spouse groups or the ombudsman program; these strategies were also mentioned by participants in discussion groups. The workforce partner built on its experience providing training services to customers through WIA and ITAs, a system that was already understood by some of the main education providers in the affected communities.

3. The Demonstration Expanded the Number and Types of Education Institutions Partnering with Workforce Agencies

This demonstration included a broad definition of eligible training institutions. Participants could select any training institution as long as it was nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education (or an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education) or on the state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Eligible Training Provider List. One result of this broad definition was that sites, particularly the workforce partners, expanded the education institutions with which they had relationships to include online institutions and distance learning programs available through military bases.

Workforce partners learned how to work with these new providers, as they needed to develop procedures for paying for participants' training expenses. Most sites were open to creating these new relationships, although they required staff time up front to develop payment procedures. Often, once it was established, the system was in place for the next participant. A few sites exhibited reluctance to developing these new relationships, which was related to delays in negotiating a payment process with the new school. In one site, one of the participating military bases addressed this by informing participants about the institutions where bureaucratic delays would be minimal and accounts would usually be approved quickly.

4. Education Institutions That Conduct Outreach Require Oversight

In addition to training participants, educational institutions could also serve as collaborators by assisting with marketing efforts. While some sites viewed this approach as helpful, others dissuaded educational institutions from directly advertising the demonstration

to potential participants. When educational institutions marketed the demonstration, staff from either the workforce partner or the military partner needed to oversee their efforts to ensure that the demonstration was being portrayed accurately.

5.   Even with Account Self-Management, Intensive Staff Time Was Required

Workforce and military staff at demonstration sites found that the demonstration required significant time to fulfill the stated expectations. Participants appreciated this individualized attention, even if it was time-consuming for staff to provide. Partners required significant staff resources to support (1) marketing the demonstration, (2) assisting potential participants in selecting a career field or training program and opening accounts, and (3) carrying out ongoing account management. In some cases, the staff resources needed were greater than the workforce partner had initially planned for. In addition, staff from military partners expressed concern that they did not receive funding for the demonstration even though they needed to supply staff resources. While military sites met this request, it was by asking military staff to add demonstration responsibilities to their existing workloads.

6.   Managing CAAs Posed New Accounting Challenges for Workforce Partners

For the workforce partner, managing accounts introduced a new set of challenges, which required time to address and resolve. Most significantly, sites had to track the funds promised and provided to CAA participants so that they could determine how many more CAAs to fund. Because of the limited nature of the demonstration, the desire to open CAAs with as many participants as possible, and the need to ensure that grant funds are not over-obligated, sites had to have a good sense of their obligated, spent, and remaining grant funds.

To make sure they were not under- or over-obligating funds, sites needed to track two levels of funds—obligations and actual spending—and they often developed multiple systems in their attempt to track this information. While that was helpful, staff then had to spend time resolving differences between systems and ensuring that accurate and appropriate information was reported and recorded. Such account management challenges are not unique. Another DOL demonstration exploring the use of Personal Reemployment Accounts encountered similar problems that required staff attention to resolve (Kirby 2008).

B. Next Steps for the Current Evaluation and Suggested Further Research

This report has discussed the early implementation of the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration, drawing primarily on qualitative information gathered during site visits to each demonstration site. Because several questions remain about the success of the demonstration at meeting its objectives—assisting military spouses' entry into portable careers and retaining families in the military—a longer-term, quantitative study is required. As a first step toward assessing these objectives, this current study is collecting quantitative data from the demonstration sites. Sites are entering participant data into a data tool, developed by Coffey Consulting, LLC, which collects information on participants' characteristics, their use of the CAA, their program completion and credential attainment, and their subsequent employment and earnings. Data are being collected and entered for

participants who received a CAA after July 2008 through the end of the demonstration in June 2010. The final report of this current study will analyze the data collected through each site's data tool about spouses who opened CAAs between early August 2008 and early February 2009. Since many participants at that date will still be participating in their education or training programs, the report will most likely be limited to providing information on participants' demographic characteristics and, as the data allow, on their shorter-term outcomes, such as program completion, and longer-term outcomes, such as employment attainment.

Further research will be necessary to fully understand the short- and long-term outcomes for demonstration participants, including whether the demonstration has affected their ability to maintain their portable careers and their families' future with the military. Ideally, this research would collect information on participants' short-term outcomes, such as their success at completing their CAA-funded programs and obtaining their credentials, and their longer-term outcomes, such as their employment status, the relationship between their current job and the credential they earned, their longevity in that chosen career, and their families' attachment to the military. A longer-term study would also serve as an opportunity to learn from participants how their participation in the demonstration and their achievement of a credential affected their careers and their families' decisions about remaining attached to the military.

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PART II:

Additional Findings from the Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts Demonstration: Implementation Progress and Participants' Characteristics and Plans

December 21, 2009

Karen Needels
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007, the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) began a joint initiative to support the spouses of military personnel ("military spouses") in their pursuit of portable postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Although military spouses tend to have more education than their civilian counterparts, they are generally employed at lower rates, in part because of the deployments and frequent moves common to families with a member in the military (Harrell et al. 2004; Lim et al. 2007; Savych 2008).

Through the Military Spouse (MilSpouse) Career Advancement Account (CAA) Demonstration, eligible military spouses can obtain an account to pay for education and technical training that will aid them in their careers. The theory underlying the demonstration is that attainment of a portable degree or credential will help the spouses enter, and advance in, the workforce even as their family relocates to other duty stations. A longer-term goal of the demonstration is to encourage the retention of the service member by improving the spouse's job prospects and increasing the family's satisfaction with military life.

DOL contracted with Mathematica Policy Research and several other organizations to conduct an evaluation of the demonstration. Mathematica led the evaluation; Coffey Consulting LLC, (Coffey) supported the evaluation activities. With Mathematica's guidance, Coffey designed a data collection tool, provided technical assistance to demonstration sites on using the tool, and conducted several site visits to assess demonstration implementation. DTI Associates, Inc., (DTI) and its partner, SRI International (SRI), conducted telephone interviews with site staff in spring 2009 to supplement information that Mathematica and Coffey staff collected during summer 2008 about sites' experiences implementing the demonstration.

The Demonstration

In fall 2007, eight state workforce agencies received a grant to implement the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration: California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, North Carolina, and Washington. CAAs have been offered only in selected areas in these states, where the participating military bases and the One-Stop Career Centers, which provide employment and training services as part of the nation's public workforce system, are located. For this study, Mathematica identified 11 sites in which the 18 lead military bases partnered with One-Stop Career Centers to provide CAAs.

Seven of the eight states provided grant funding to the participating One-Stop Career Center(s) to fund and manage participants' accounts. In Georgia, the Governor's Office of Workforce Development maintained funding for the accounts, but provided grant funding to the One-Stop Career Center to work with demonstration participants. The participating military bases did not receive funding to support their role in the demonstration, although they were encouraged to leverage other resources to support the demonstration. They typically focused on marketing the demonstration, providing education and career counseling to interested military spouses, and confirming that applicants met the military criteria for eligibility.

In addition to directing the military and workforce entities to develop partnerships in the local area, DOL and DoD established six other demonstration guidelines:

1. **Eligibility focused on military spouses in need of credentials.**   Eligibility throughout the demonstration has been restricted to spouses with at least a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential at the time they have applied. In general, spouses who had at least a college degree were not eligible to use a CAA for additional education, although they could use one for the attainment of a credential, license, or certification. Initially, DOL and DoD also restricted eligibility to military spouses married to a service member/sponsor who was at the E1-E4 levels (junior enlisted service members), E5 level (noncommissioned officer), or O1-O3 levels (junior commissioned officers). (A "sponsor" is the service member through whom the military spouse could become eligible for a CAA.) In April 2008, this restriction was lifted, and military spouses of service members of all ranks became eligible.

2. **Selected training and education programs must meet demonstration criteria.** DOL and DoD required participants to pursue education and training programs, and, ultimately, careers, in nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields. Originally, five fields were identified. During the demonstration, DOL and DoD expanded the list of eligible occupations and industrial sectors to include some types of jobs in other sectors. Military spouse participants can select any education or training program within these occupations or sectors, as long as it is nationally or regionally accredited or on the state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Eligible Training Provider List.

3. **CAAs are to be used primarily for education or training.** CAAs are used only to (1) fund tuition for education and training programs and related expenses, such as books, fees, and equipment; and (2) pay for credentialing and licensing fees. CAAs cannot be used to fund supportive services, such as food, clothing, child care, or transportation. DOL and DoD encouraged One-Stop Career Centers and military bases to leverage other resources for supportive and other employment-related services.

4. **CAAs have a maximum value of $6,000 over two years.** At the start of the demonstration, the initial maximum amount of the CAA was $3,000 for one year, beginning from the date that a participant entered an approved education or training program. The CAA could then be renewed for a second year for up to an additional $3,000.   The actual value of a CAA is to be determined by the specific employment/training plan. In December 2008, DOL and DoD revised this policy so that participants in five states could spend the full $6,000 allotment at any time during the two-year period or by the end of the grant period in June 2010, whichever was first.

5. **CAA-funded training and education programs should lead to degrees or credentials.** The education and training provided through a CAA must result in a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized portable credential in a high-demand field within two years.

6. **Military spouses should manage their accounts.** Within the limitations set by the preceding principles, CAA recipients should make their own decisions, with limited staff involvement, about how they use their accounts. By self-managing their accounts,

military spouses have the flexibility to determine personal career goals and identify employment and training opportunities that support their individual preferences.

The Study

In conjunction with DOL and DoD, the evaluation team developed a two-pronged approach that consisted of an implementation study and a quantitative study. The implementation study has used qualitative information gathered about how the demonstration has provided services and developed strategies to overcome implementation challenges. An implementation report provides an overview of the demonstration and key findings about the demonstration's partnerships, early implementation experiences, marketing efforts, and other topics (see Part 1). The primary information sources for the implementation study were in-depth site visits conducted shortly after the start of the demonstration. At most sites, interviews were conducted with staff from the state labor or workforce department, the participating Workforce Investment Board and the local One-Stop Career Center, and the military partner, which usually consisted of the education and family support centers that provide support to service members and their families. When possible, evaluation team members also observed military spouses' interactions with demonstration staff, such as orientation sessions when military spouses learned about the requirements. Finally, they conducted group discussions with participants who had opened CAAs.

Additional information about the implementation experiences of sites was gathered through telephone interviews with demonstration representatives conducted by staff at DTI and SRI in June 2009, after the implementation report was written. These interviews were conducted with demonstration staff representing the workforce partner and the military partner. The discussions focused on their processes and systems for managing CAAs, including tracking and de-obligating funds and closing accounts, and providing participants with support after they had completed training programs. Because sites did not have much experience with these facets of the demonstration at the time of the implementation study data collection activities conducted during spring and summer 2008, the spring 2009 interviews were able to expand the information about sites' implementation experiences. The themes that emerged from these interviews are included in this report.

The second prong of the study is a quantitative analysis of two types of data. One is on the number of CAAs awarded through mid-May 2009, according to states' weekly reports to DOL. Using these data, an analysis provides information about the patterns over time in states' awards of CAAs to military spouses, for all states combined, by state, and by industry. This information supplements findings in the implementation report about sites' initial startups. The report also uses individual-level data for an analysis of the characteristics of the spouses and their sponsors, as well as spouses' education and training plans for using the CAAs. The data include spouses who began their involvement in the demonstration between July 14, 2008, and early 2009.

Because of timing issues related to data collection, the quantitative analyses contain information about a portion, but not all, of the spouses who ultimately will participate in the demonstration. In addition, because most spouses had not completed their training or employment by the time of the data collection, the individual-level data analysis does not contain information about spouses' outcomes or long-term satisfaction with their families' involvements in the military. Rather, it presents descriptive statistics on the characteristics of a sample of participants when they began their involvement in the demonstration.

Thus, this report supplements the implementation study report to provide additional information on implementation issues and quantitative information about the characteristics of participants, as well as their plans for using the CAAs for participation in education and training programs and the attainment of credentials, licenses, or certifications to support careers in high-wage, high-growth occupations. The findings from the study are useful for those who want to obtain timely information about the early experiences of demonstration sites, the characteristics of spouses who received CAAs and their military sponsors, and spouses' plans for using their CAAs as of when they enrolled in the demonstration.

Updates to the Implementation Study Report Findings

This report draws upon a two-pronged strategy of analysis of three types of data to provide an update to the implementation study findings presented in Part I. The qualitative data focuses on operational aspects of the demonstration that had not been fully experienced in the early part of the demonstration, such as the processes and systems for sites' management of CAAs and the support that sites provided to spouses after they completed their training programs. Additional qualitative information also was obtained about sites' efforts to sustain the partnerships established between military and workforce entities as part of the demonstration. Quantitative data have been used to describe the patterns over time in states' awards of CAAs to military spouses, the characteristics of the spouses and their sponsors, and spouses' education and training plans for using the CAAs. Here, the main findings are presented in four sections.

Sites' Management of CAAs and Support to Spouses

Tracking funds continued to be a complicated process for sites. As the demonstration progressed, sites developed processes for tracking and reconciling differences between obligated and expended grant funds, sometimes relying on more than one database. Some sites used one system for recording obligated funding for each participant, while another system tracked expended funds. Assigning fund management to one staff member (a strategy used by four sites) was reported to simplify the reconciliation process.

De-obligating funds became a priority for sites after they obligated all of their initial accounts. Through reconciliation of grant funds, sites were able to identify unused money in CAAs and de-obligate resources, freeing them to be allocated for use by other spouses. Two common reasons that some money was unused were that the participant did not complete a training program or that the training program cost less than originally anticipated. Four sites, all of which had waiting lists of interested spouses, described de-obligating funding as a top grant priority in the demonstration's second year. At least four other sites were still awarding initial CAAs and, consequently, did not identify de-obligating funds as a top priority.

Sites tracked participants during and after training programs, with varying degrees of intensity. All sites tracked participants while they attended their training programs, and about half the sites continued to track participants and offer support after they had completed their training program. To track training program progress, sites asked participants to provide, at a minimum, grades at the end of each semester or term. About half the sites also asked for midterm grades or reporting on attendance. Sites that provided support to participants who completed training programs typically offered the support through the One-Stop Career Center. Available services were similar to WIA supports, but several sites described their support as limited or less intensive due to lack of staff availability.

Sites defined different milestones for closing accounts after training programs. Demonstration sites varied in when they closed CAAs, particularly for participants who completed their training programs. Sites used one of three approaches: (1) close accounts upon program completion and/or receipt of credential, (2) close accounts after participants gain employment, or (3) close accounts 18 months after training program completion to allow time to follow up with participants regarding employment. One site reported that it kept accounts open until participants obtained employment so they could access the One-Stop Career Center's employment resources. Sites were consistent in closing an account immediately after they identified a participant who stopped attending his or her training program.

For most sites, the demonstration strengthened existing relationships, or facilitated new ones, between military and workforce partners.   However, staff recognized that, without future opportunities, the formal partnerships might dissolve. One site had formal plans for sustaining the partnership by establishing an affiliate One-Stop Career Center on the military base, but that site expressed concern about sustaining the current level of service available at the affiliate center after the demonstration ends.

Participants' Enrollment Patterns Over Time

MilSpouse CAA Demonstration sites faced competing pressures as they began and managed the provision of CAAs to military spouses. Some of these pressures are unique to this demonstration, while others are likely to be found in many types of demonstrations. Sites typically wanted to award CAAs quickly so that participants could have enough time to attend their chosen education or training program for up to two years, before the end of the grants in June 2010. However, many new programs and demonstrations, such as this one, have difficulty getting services up and running, marketing the program, and balancing the enrollment of new participants with services or followup to existing participants.   Additional challenges might arise if the sites need to incorporate modifications to policy and program rules or to take into account a scheduled end of the program or demonstration. In addition, site staff might want, or need, to spread work out so they can manage the workload effectively.

Analysis of the aggregate data that states reported weekly to DOL provides insights about the patterns in CAA enrollments over time, across states, and across industries. As of May 15, 2009, which is almost 17 months after MilSpouse demonstration states were to have begun providing CAAs, they had awarded 5,366 CAAs (Figure ES.1). This represents 72 percent of their targets for the full demonstration period. The proportion of the target number of CAAs that had been awarded ranged across states, from 52 percent in Georgia to 101 percent in North Carolina. During spring 2009, four of the six states had suspended the provision of new CAA awards for at least one month so they could manage their obligations to participants, assessing the amount of funds that could be allocated to new CAA awards after the de-obligation of funds from previously awarded CAAs. Two other states, Hawaii and Maine, had ceased awarding new CAAs before spring 2009.

Education, training, or credentialing in the health care field accounted for over 2,900 CAAs, more than half of all CAAs that had been awarded so far. The education field, at 937 CAAs awarded, accounted for at least one out of every six CAAs (17 percent). The next most common fields were finance (slightly less than 10 percent of all CAAs) and business administration, which averaged about 7 percent of all awards even though it was not allowed early in the demonstration.

Figure ES.1 Military Spouse CAA Cumulative Enrollments Over Time

Source: States' report to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded.
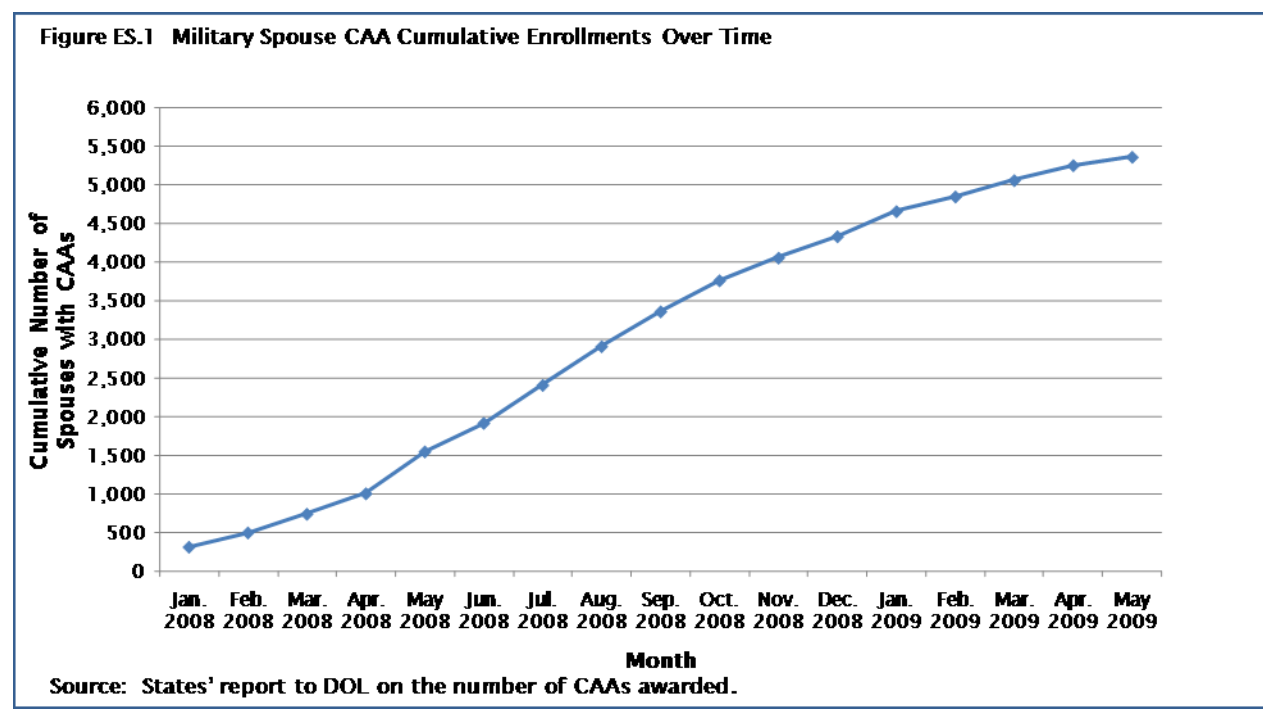
Characteristics of Sponsors and Participants

Examining the backgrounds of military spouses makes it possible to assess who has been served by the CAA program. Furthermore, information about the characteristics of the CAA participants provides a context for the analysis of the spouses' plans for their CAAs. This is especially important since, as the demonstration evolved, the grantees recruited, enrolled, and served military spouses with a wide range of characteristics and experiences.

Individual-level data that site staff collected and provided to Mathematica was used for the analysis of the characteristics of military sponsors (the military personnel through whom spouses became eligible for CAAs), and the spouses who received CAAs. Furthermore, the data was used for analysis of spouses' CAA plans. The analysis sample was restricted to spouses who enrolled in the demonstration between June 14, 2008, and when the data files were made in early 2009. Although the 2,630 included spouses are a large portion of all spouses who have enrolled in the demonstration as of early 2009, it is important to keep in mind that the set of spouses upon which the individual-level analysis is based differs from all spouses who received CAAs. Spouses from California and North Carolina were overrepresented in the analysis data, while spouses from Hawaii were underrepresented. Furthermore, no spouses from Maine were in the analysis sample. In addition, in some cases, the analysis needed to take into account that some information on the included spouses was missing. The discrepancies between the individual-level data and all spouses in the demonstration, as well as the prevalence of missing data, arise at least in part because the individual-level data collection began about six months after sites began awarding CAAs. Nevertheless, the analysis of the data can provide insights about the characteristics of sponsors and military spouses who received CAAs.

Based on program eligibility rules, a military spouse becomes eligible for a CAA based in part on the characteristics of the sponsors. Eighty-eight percent of all spouses in the analysis sample had sponsors who were enlisted (Figure ES.2). About two-fifths of spouses had sponsors whose ranks

would have made the spouses initially ineligible for a CAA (spouses with sponsors of rank E6 or higher, O4 or higher, or another type of rank). The average length of time that sponsors had remaining on base at the time of the CAA application was 2.5 years. The Marines were more likely than other branches of service to have sponsors of CAA recipients who were of junior enlisted ranks. The Air Force was more likely than other branches of service to have high-ranking officers as sponsors.

Overall, 97 percent of CAA participants were female (Table ES.1). Their average age was 29 years. Depending on how we handle spouses with missing information, we estimate that either 57 or 69 percent of spouses had young children under age 13; among those who had young children, the average number of young children was 2. Thirty-nine percent of spouses had a high school diploma or GED as their highest education level attained, while 33 percent had some college but no diploma or degree.

At the time of the spouses' applications for a CAA, around half to two-thirds were not working, and about one-quarter had never worked. Depending on how spouses with missing data compare to spouses with nonmissing data, the percentage who were formerly employed but not working when they applied for a CAA was either 28 or 36 percent of the sample, and those who had never worked was either 22 or 28 percent. The rest, those employed when they applied for a CAA, was either 29 or 37 percent.

FIGURE ES.2

SPONSORS' MILITARY RANK
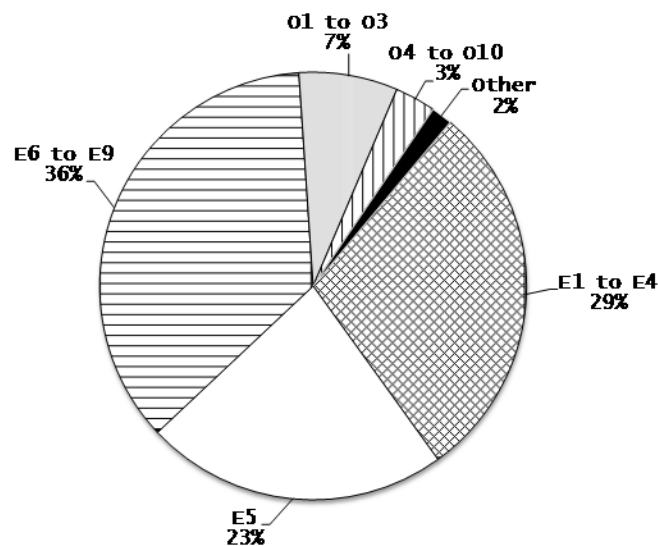
Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Table ES.1 Characteristics of Military Spouse CAA Recipients

Characteristic	Statistic
Percent Female	97.3
Highest Education Level When Applied	
High School Diploma, GED, or Equivalent	39.0
Some college but not diploma/degree	32.8
Vocational/technical/business diploma or Associate's degree/diploma	15.8
Bachelor's degree or other	12.4
Percent with Children Under Age 13	
Yes	57.3
No	26.1
Missing	16.6
Average number of children under age 13, if any	1.9
Employment Status at Intake	
Employed	28.9
Not currently employed but had previous employment	28.1
Never employed	21.9
Missing	21.0
Sample Size	**2,630**

Source:　Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes:　Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

The most common types of jobs for spouses who were currently or formerly employed when they applied for a CAA were office and administrative support jobs and sales-related jobs. However, spouses had been employed in a wide range of jobs. On average, spouses for whom data were nonmissing earned $10.74 per hour and worked 33 hours per week in their current or most recent job. Spouses who had worked, but who were no longer working, reported a wide range of reasons for no longer being at their former jobs. Having quit due to a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or for other reasons was common.

Spouses' CAA Eligibility and Plans

Based on an analysis of individual-level data, many spouses moved quickly through the steps in the CAA application process. Among spouses with nonmissing information, the average number of days between the intake date and the final eligibility determination was about seven. Spouses with Marine sponsors achieved eligibility especially quickly compared to spouses with sponsors from another branch of service, while the rank of the sponsor of a spouse does not seem to have had a strong influence on the speed at which the CAA application was processed.

Spouses typically planned to use their CAA for an Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or occupational skills certificate or credential. As was found in the implementation study and the analysis of aggregate data, planned careers in the health care and education fields were common. Among spouses who planned to participate in an education or training program, about two-fifths (42 percent) planned to use their CAAs to attend a community college (Figure ES.3). About one-quarter were expecting to receive their instruction through distance (Internet) learning, and about 55 percent planned to have their program last more than one year. Spouses with Air Force sponsors were more likely than other spouses to plan to attend a four-year university, to attend the program in person, and to attend longer. Marine spouses were more likely to plan to participate in a program offered from a propriety school and as distance learning, whereas Army and Navy spouses were more likely to plan to attend a community college. Spouses of officers were more likely to plan to attend a four-year university, but the rank of the sponsor does not seem to have a strong relationship to the delivery method or length of the planned program.

Figure ES.3 Type of Provider for CAA-Funded Education or Training Programs
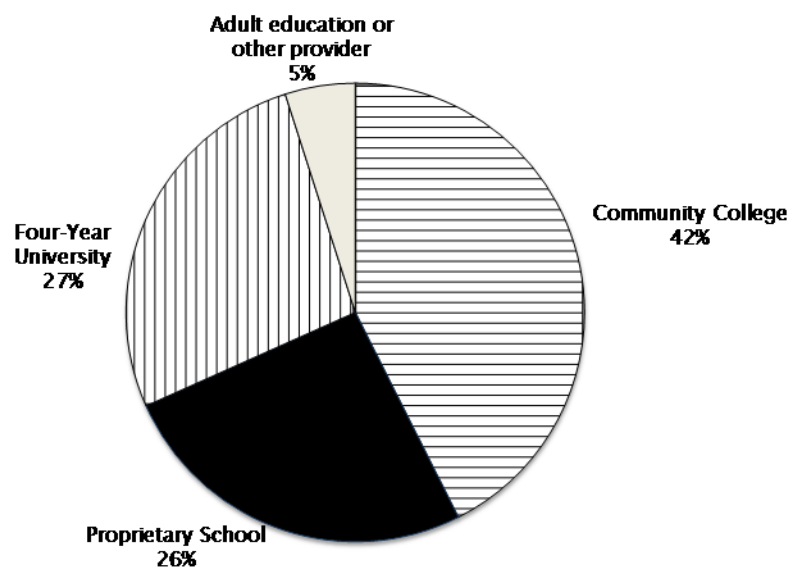
Adult education or other provider 5%

Community College 42%

Four-Year University 27%

Proprietary School 26%

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) began a joint initiative to support the spouses of military personnel ("military spouses") in their pursuit of portable postsecondary degrees or industry-recognized credentials. Although military spouses tend to have more education than their civilian counterparts, they are generally employed at lower rates, in part as a result of the deployments and frequent moves common to families with a member in the military (Harrell et al. 2004; Lim, Golinelli, and Cho 2007; Savych 2008).

Through the Military Spouse (MilSpouse) Career Advancement Accounts (CAA) Demonstration, eligible military spouses can obtain an account to pay for education and technical training that will aid them in their careers. The theory underlying the demonstration is that a portable degree or credential funded with a CAA will help military spouses enter and advance in the workforce even as they relocate when their service member spouses transfer to other bases. A longer-term goal of the demonstration is to encourage the retention of the service member by improving his or her spouse's job prospects and increasing the satisfaction of the entire family with life in the military.

DOL contracted with Mathematica Policy Research and several other organizations to conduct an evaluation of the demonstration. Mathematica led the evaluation; Coffey Consulting, LLC, (Coffey) supported the evaluation activities. With Mathematica's guidance, Coffey designed a data collection tool, provided technical assistance to demonstration sites on using the tool, and conducted several site visits to assess demonstration implementation. DTI Associates, Inc., (DTI) and its partner, SRI International (SRI), conducted telephone interviews with site staff in spring 2009 to supplement information that Mathematica and Coffey staff collected during summer 2008 about sites' experiences implementing the demonstration.

This introductory chapter provides an overview of the demonstration (Section A) and presents an overview of the evaluation and the research questions guiding it (Section B). Section C contains a brief explanation of the content of the remaining chapters of the report.

A. The Military Spouse CAA Demonstration

DOL and DoD designed the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration as a partnership between selected military bases and nearby One-Stop Career Centers that provide employment and training services as part of the nation's public workforce system. DoD identified military bases to participate and then DOL identified nearby One-Stop Career Centers that would serve as partners to recruit spouses and manage their CAAs. The demonstration officially began in fall 2007 when DOL awarded MilSpouse CAA Demonstration grants to eight states. In seven of them, the state's workforce agency received the award and, in turn, provided funding to the selected One-Stop Career Center(s) to fund and manage accounts. In one state, Georgia, the award went to the governor's office of workforce development. This office maintained responsibility for funding accounts, but provided grant funding to the One-Stop Career Center to work with demonstration participants. In all states, the participating military bases did not receive funding to support their demonstration role but instead were asked to leverage resources to support demonstration activities. The

participating One-Stop Career Centers worked with military spouses attached to one or several branches of the military, depending on the partnership. All participating One-Stop Career Centers and military bases implemented CAA guidelines aligned with the seven guiding principles discussed below, and all followed a common workflow. The demonstration ends in June 2010.

1.   Eight States Participating in the Demonstration

In fall 2007, eight states received a grant to implement the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration: California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, North Carolina, and Washington (Table I.1). CAAs have been offered only in selected areas in these states, where the participating military bases and the One-Stop Career Centers attached to them are located. In four states—California, Florida,

Table I.1 Military Spouse CAA Demonstration States and Sites

State	One-Stop Career Center/City	Lead Base(s)/Education Center
California	North County Coastal Center, Oceanside	Camp Pendleton/Joint Education Center
California	San Diego South Metro Career Center, San Diego	Naval Base San Diego/Navy College Office
Colorado	Pikes Peak Workforce Center, Colorado Springs	Fort Carson/Mountain Post Training and Education Center Peterson AFB/Base Education Office
Florida	Military Family Employment Liaison Jobs Plus, Fort Walton Beach	Eglin AFB/Education Office Hurlburt AFB/Education Office
Florida	Military Family Employment Advocate WorkSource One-Stop Center, Jacksonville	Jacksonville NAS/Navy College Office
Georgia	Columbus Career Center, Columbus	Fort Benning/Army Continuing Education System Division
Hawaii[a]	Oahu Works Links-Dillingham Office, Honolulu Oahu Works Links-Waipahu Office, Waipahu	Hickam AFB/Force Development Flight Kaneohe Bay/Joint Education Center Pearl Harbor/Navy College Office Schofield Barracks/Army Education Center
Maine	BRAC Transition Center, Brunswick	Brunswick/Navy College Office
North Carolina	Cumberland County Workforce Development Center (JobLink), Fayetteville	Fort Bragg/Education Services Division Pope AFB/Education Office
Washington	WorkSource Center Serving Kitsap County, Bremerton	Bremerton/Navy College Office
Washington	WorkSource Center Serving Pierce County, Tacoma	Fort Lewis/Stone Education Center McChord AFB/Education and Training Office

[a]The study is treating Hawaii as one site even though two One-Stop Career Centers provide services.

AFB= Air Force Base.

BRAC = Base Realignment and Closure.

NAS= Naval Air Station.

Hawaii, and Washington—two One-Stop Career Centers are participating in the demonstration; in each of the other four states, a single One-Stop Career Center is participating. One or two lead military bases are collaborating with each One-Stop Career Center. For purposes of the study, in all states except Hawaii, a "site" consists of a One-Stop Career Center and the military bases that collaborate with it for the demonstration. Although two One-Stop Career Centers have been participating in Hawaii, the study counts them as a single site because of the centers' proximity to each other on the island of Oahu. In total, the study has been examining the experiences at 11 sites.

Across these 11 sites, the One-Stop Career Centers partnered with 18 lead military bases (six Air Force, five Army, two Marine Corps, and five Navy installations).[1] Most installations involved, in some way, both their education center (which primarily helps service members further their education) and their family support center (which provides general and employment-related support services to service members and their families). These centers are referred to by different names, depending upon the branch of the service.[2]

The states involved in the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration received grants ranging in size from $10,115,998 (California) to $750,000 (Maine) (Table I.2). Each state projected the total number of CAAs that it planned to award throughout the grant period. The state with the largest grant, California, planned to award the most (2,466), while the state with the smallest grant, Maine, planned to award 250.

Table I.2 Military Spouse CAA Grant Funding and Target Number of Account Awards

State	Total Grant Amount	Target Number of CAAs to Be Awarded
California	$10,115,998	2,466[a]
Colorado	$2,193,870	643
Florida	$4,405,196	1,031[a]
Georgia	$4,593,276	719
Hawaii	$2,450,000	638
Maine	$750,000	250
North Carolina	$6,953,639	800[b]
Washington	$3,738,061	897[a]
Total	**$35,200,040**	**7,444[b]**

Source: State MilSpouse demonstration implementation plans, fall 2008.

[a]The target number of CAAs is an aggregation of the two sites in each of these states.

[b]In August 2008, North Carolina decreased its target number of CAAs from 1,000 to 800. The total number of CAAs to be awarded across all states reflects the lower number for North Carolina.

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[1] In some sites, nearby bases have had links to the lead base; families stationed at those installations also have been eligible to participate in the demonstration. In total, spouses from 36 bases have been eligible to receive a CAA.

[2] Each installation has an education center with professional staff who provide counseling and testing to service members and their family members to help them further their education. Each service branch uses a distinct name for its education center: Army Continuing Education System/Army Education Centers; Air Force Voluntary Education/Air Force Education Centers; Navy College Office; and Lifelong Learning/Lifelong Learning Office/Education Centers (Marines). Bases in each service branch also operate family support centers that offer transition support services, general employment services, resume and employment workshops, career interest inventories, and counseling and therapy for individuals and families. As with the education centers, the service branches use varying names for these family support centers: Army Community Services; Airman and Family Readiness Center (Air Force); Fleet and Family Support Center (Navy); and Marine and Family Services.

2.   Seven Principles Guiding MilSpouse CAA Implementation

States were encouraged to be innovative in their delivery of CAA services, but they were required to follow seven principles when implementing CAAs:

1. ***Collaboration Between Workforce and Military Partners.*** The demonstration is intended to be a partnership between the local public workforce entities—the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and One-Stop Career Center—and the military bases. The One-Stop Career Centers and the military bases are jointly responsible for conducting outreach to potential participants; using DoD and DOL criteria to screen for eligibility; and collaborating to provide coordinated workforce and economic information, career and education guidance, skills assessment, and other related resources and services.

2. ***Eligibility Focused on Military Spouses in Need of Credentials.*** Eligibility throughout the demonstration has been restricted to spouses with at least a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential at the time they apply. Generally, spouses who had at least a college degree were not eligible to use a CAA for additional education, except for the attainment of a credential, license, or certification. Initially, DoD and DOL also restricted eligibility to military spouses married to a service member/sponsor at the E1-E4 level (junior enlisted service members), E5 level (noncommissioned officer), or O1-O3 level (junior commissioned officers).[3] In April 2008 this restriction was lifted and military spouses of service members of all ranks became eligible.[4]

3. ***Selected Training and Education Programs Must Meet Demonstration Criteria.*** DOL and DoD required participants to pursue education and training programs, and ultimately careers, in nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields. Originally, five fields were identified: financial services, information technology, health care, education, and construction. In April 2008, DOL and DoD authorized the issuance of CAAs for specific occupations in four additional sectors: human resources, hospitality, homeland security, and business administration. DOL and DoD further expanded the list of eligible occupations in December 2008 to include new occupations under business administration and some occupations within a category of social work; these changes applied to California, Florida, Georgia, Maine, and North Carolina only.

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[3] The term "sponsors" pertains to the military service members through whom spouses became eligible for CAAs. Generally, enlisted services members have at least a high school diploma, or an equivalent credential, while officers have a bachelor's or graduate degree. For most military personnel, the monthly salary depends on the military personnel's years of service and rank. For example, as of April 2007, military basic monthly pay for active duty personnel was $1,301 for an E-1 with less than 2 years of tenure; it was $2,582 for an E-5 with over 20 years of tenure. Military basic monthly pay was $ 2,469 for an O-1 with less than 2 years of tenure and $5,356 for an O-3 with over 20 years of tenure (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007). In addition to a monthly salary, all service members receive benefits such as housing and subsistence allowance, medical and dental care, and annual vacations.

[4] With a few exceptions, eligibility for a CAA also was restricted throughout much of the demonstration to spouses whose sponsors had a minimum of one year of duty assignment left at the demonstration base. The initial rationale for this restriction was to ensure that spouses would have enough time to complete their education and training programs and attain their credentials before they moved from the area. However, the grants are scheduled to end in June 2010 and grantees cannot fund CAA activities past that point, so DOL eliminated this criterion in June 2009.

Military spouses in any of the demonstration states can select any education or training program appropriate for an allowed field or occupation, as long as the program is nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education (or an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education) or on the state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Eligible Training Provider List.

4. ***CAAs Are to Be Used Primarily for Education or Training.*** CAAs are used only (1) to fund tuition for education and training programs and related expenses, such as books, fees, and equipment; and (2) to pay for credentialing and licensing fees. CAAs cannot be used to fund supportive services, such as food, clothing, child care, or transportation. DOL and DoD encouraged One-Stop Career Centers and military bases to leverage other resources for supportive and other employment-related services.

5. ***CAAs Have a Maximum Value of $6,000 over Two Years.*** At the start of the demonstration, the initial maximum amount of the CAA was $3,000 for one year, beginning from the date that a participant entered an approved education or training program. The CAA could then be renewed for a second year for up to an additional $3,000. The actual value of a CAA is to be determined by the specific employment/training plan. In December 2008, DOL and DoD revised this policy so that participants in five states (California, Florida, Georgia, Maine, and North Carolina) could spend the full $6,000 allotment at any time during the two-year period or by the end of the grant period in June 2010, whichever was first.

6. ***CAA-Funded Training and Education Programs Should Lead to Degrees or Credentials.*** The education and training provided through a CAA must result in a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized portable credential in a high-demand field within two years.

7. ***Military Spouses Should Manage Their Accounts.*** Within the limitations set by the preceding principles, CAA recipients should make their own decisions, with limited staff involvement, about how they use their accounts. By self-managing their accounts, military spouses have flexibility to determine personal career goals and identify employment and training opportunities that support their individual preferences. This differs from the service delivery model for individual training accounts (ITAs), the predominant method One-Stop Career Centers use to fund eligible customers' education and training. Before receiving an ITA, customers participate in a sequence of WIA services, starting with core services, such as self-serve job information and workshops on resume writing, and then intensive services, such as comprehensive assessments and individual counseling. They then receive staff counseling to select ITA-supported training programs.

3. A Common Workflow Has Guided Opening and Management of CAAs

To implement the seven guiding principles of CAAs, sites used a common set of steps to open and manage accounts (Figure I.1). The first four—hold orientation sessions, assess for military eligibility, identify education needs, and complete the CAA approval process—comprise opening an account. The remaining three steps—perform ongoing followup, renew account, and complete education—occur throughout the period of account management. Additional information about these steps is given in Part I.

Figure I.1. MilSpouse Career Advancement Accounts Flow Diagram

Orientation Sessions

Introduce spouses to CAAs; explain eligibility requirements and expectations

Identify Education Needs in Selected Career Field

Identify career interest area

Research programs offering a degree or certification in field

Assess for Military Eligibility

Provide documentation to determine military eligibility Receive approved process form with military signatures

Complete CAA Approval Process to Open Account

Receive final approval for CAA from workforce partner

Enroll in selected degree or certification program

Begin attending program

Account Management Process by CAA Staff

Approve CAA for spouses

Establish payment system for education institutions

Process invoices from education institutions

Review spouses' standing at education institutions

Process invoices for additional courses/semester

Renew accounts for second year

Review spouses' standing at education institutions

Close account when spouses leave program or complete program

Ongoing Followup with CAA Staff

Complete expected followup with CAA staff

Provide requested documentation regarding program status

Renew CAA

When appropriate, complete steps to renew CAA for year 2

Complete Education and Obtain Employment

Complete certifications needed for selected career field

Obtain employment in selected career field

B. Overview of the Study

The evaluation's objectives, defined by DOL in collaboration with DoD, are (1) to inform DOL and DoD about early experiences, challenges, and promising practices for successful implementation; and (2) to provide information about participant characteristics, service use, and outcomes, as reported by grantees through a demonstration-wide data collection tool designed by the evaluation team. This section presents research questions that were developed early in the study and the design that was developed to provide insights to these questions; it also discusses the way in which this report contributes to the study objectives.

1. Research Questions and Study Design

During the early part of the study, four sets of research questions were developed to indicate the type of information that would be desirable to obtain from a comprehensive, long-term examination of the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration. It was recognized, however, that the study would not be able to answer these questions comprehensively because of the study's time frame and the resources available for the research. The four sets of questions of potential interest to policymakers who want to help military spouses to develop portable careers in high-demand fields are:

1. To what extent are sites implementing the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration according to the seven principles guiding military spouse CAAs. What successes and challenges are sites experiencing?

2. What are the characteristics of military spouses participating in the demonstration? How are participants using their accounts?

3. What are the education- and employment-related outcomes of CAA participants? What proportion of participants is enrolling in education and training programs, completing the programs, obtaining credentials, and finding employment related to their credentials?

4. What factors are associated with participants' successful outcomes?   How does participation affect their satisfaction with their spouse's military career? How are the sites and participants working to overcome any barriers to successful participation?

As explained above, fully answering these four sets of questions would require data and resources that are beyond the scope of the current study.   Most importantly, obtaining comprehensive answers to the questions would require waiting not only until the demonstration is over and the military spouses with CAAs have been able to complete their education and training programs, but also until spouses have had an adequate amount of time during a post-training follow-up period to achieve meaningful post-CAA outcomes. These data could be obtained in the future through interviews with spouses or by gathering administration records on spouses' outcomes from state agencies.

In conjunction with DOL and DoD, the evaluation team developed a more limited two-pronged approach—an implementation study and a quantitative study—to address the first two sets of questions as much as possible, given the constraints. The implementation study has drawn on qualitative information gathered about ways the demonstration has provided services and developed strategies to overcome implementation challenges.   The primary information sources for the

implementation study are in-depth site visits conducted shortly after the start of the demonstration. At most sites, interviews were conducted with staff from the state labor or workforce department, the participating WIB and One-Stop Career Center, and the military partner, which usually consisted of the education and family support centers that provide support to service members and their families. When possible, evaluation team members also observed military spouses' interactions with demonstration staff, such as orientation sessions in which military spouses learned about the program requirements. Finally, they conducted group discussions with participants who had opened CAAs. A report developed as part of the evaluation provides an overview of the demonstration and study, and key findings about the demonstration's partnerships, early implementation experiences, marketing efforts, and other topics (see Part I). Additional information about the implementation experiences of sites was gathered through telephone interviews conducted with demonstration representatives in June 2009, after the implementation report was written. The telephone interviews discussed a few topics that, because of timing, were not covered in detail during the site visits; they focused on how sites managed accounts over time and how they assisted participants after completion of training programs. The themes that emerged from these interviews are included in this report.

Although the implementation study report provides rich qualitative information and lessons about the experiences of site staff and participants, both DoD and DOL desired to supplement this information with the second prong of the study—a quantitative analysis about CAA participants. Results from the quantitative analysis are presented for the first time in this report. Using data reported by the states to DOL, this analysis provides information about the patterns over time in states' awards of CAAs to military spouses, for all states combined, by state, and by industry. The report also uses individual-level data for an analysis of the characteristics of the spouses and their sponsors (that is, the military personnel to whom they are married), as well as spouses' education and training plans for using the CAAs.

Like the implementation study, however, this portion of the evaluation has some limitations. For example, both types of quantitative data were collected in the first half of 2009, although the grants are not scheduled to end until June 2010. Therefore, because the data were collected while the demonstration was still enrolling spouses, the analyses do not contain information about all participants.[5] Information about spouses who began their CAA participation early in the program also is not included in the individual-level analysis. And, because most spouses had not completed their training or attained employment by the time of data collection, the individual-level analysis does not contain information about spouses' outcomes or long-term satisfaction with their families' involvement in the military. Rather, it presents descriptive statistics on the characteristics of a sample of participants at the time they began their involvement in the demonstration.

Ultimately, the study was not designed to answer the third and fourth sets of research questions, since doing so would require information that can only be observed after sites complete their CAA activities and spouses complete their education and training programs. Nevertheless, the findings from this study will be useful to policymakers who desire to obtain timely information about the early experiences of demonstration sites and the characteristics of spouses who received CAAs.

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[5] Chapter III provides further information about the weekly report data and analysis, while Chapters IV and V do so for the individual-level analysis.

2.   Contributions to the Study Objectives

This report supplements the implementation study report. To help meet the first study objective, it provides additional information on implementation issues. To support the second objective, it offers quantitative information about the characteristics of participants and their plans to use the CAAs for participation in education and training programs, as well as their attainment of credentials, licenses, or certifications to support careers in high-wage, high-growth occupations. This report summarizes findings from the implementation study report, but is based primarily on additional and updated information to provide further insights about the experiences of sites and military spouse participants in the demonstration. The analysis draws upon one qualitative and two quantitative data sources.

- **Telephone interviews.** Staff at DTI and SRI conducted telephone interviews in spring 2009 to supplement the information about sites' implementation of the demonstration. These interviews were conducted with demonstration staff representing the workforce partner—generally the state labor or workforce department and the participating local One-Stop Career Center—and the military partner, which was usually the education or family support center that provides support to service members and their families. The discussions focused on their processes and systems for managing CAAs, including tracking and de-obligating funds and closing accounts, and providing participants with support after completing training programs. At the time of the implementation study data collection activities conducted during spring and summer 2008, sites had not had much experience with these facets of the demonstration; the spring 2009 interviews were able to expand the information about sites' implementation experiences.

- **Weekly report data.** Participating states reported weekly data on the number of CAAs awarded. This information provides an overview of the patterns of CAA awards over time, thus supplementing the implementation findings about sites' initial start-ups.

    - **Individual-level data.** Sites collected individual-level data describing the characteristics of spouses who began their involvement in the demonstration on or after July 14, 2008, as well as their training plans for using the CAAs. Although DOL requested that sites gather information about spouses' training and employment outcomes, that information is not included in this report because many spouses were still involved in their CAA activities at the time that sites provided data for analysis.

C. Organization of the Report

The rest of the report is divided into four chapters. Chapter II presents a summary of the findings from the implementation study and supplements them with new information about how sites have managed accounts over time and how they have assisted participants after they completed their training programs. Patterns over time in grantees' awards of CAAs to spouses are presented in Chapter III.   Chapter IV presents information on the characteristics of spouses and their military sponsors. Finally, Chapter V presents information about the basic steps that spouses went through as they learned about and were determined eligible for a CAA, as well as information about spouses' plans for training and credential attainment and their receipt of non-CAA services.

II.   MILSPOUSE CAA DEMONSTRATION IMPLEMENTATION

The MilSpouse CAA Demonstration provided military spouses with a new funding opportunity for pursuing training and attaining certificates that may support their pursuit of employment and careers.   As part of the demonstration, sites needed to build partnerships between the selected military bases and associated local workforce agencies to support demonstration implementation.   In addition, sites needed to quickly develop processes and procedures for serving spouses. To document demonstration implementation, the evaluation included site visits to all demonstration sites, which occurred between six and eight months after the start of the demonstration. Information gathered during the site visits was updated in June 2009 through telephone interviews that staff at SRI International and DTI Associates, Inc., under a separate contract with DOL, conducted with key representatives from each demonstration site.   This chapter presents key findings on the implementation of the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration, with early findings discussed in Section A and additional findings discussed in Section B.

A.   Findings from Implementation Study Report

The implementation report for the evaluation (see Part I) presented detailed information about the early implementation experiences of the MilSpouse CAA Demonstration.   It described the demonstration guidelines provided to grantees, the partnerships and collaborations that were established, the early start-up experiences of the demonstration sites, sites' marketing and outreach efforts, and the administration and management of accounts.   It also presented information about participants' experiences and overarching lessons related to the implementation of the CAA program for military spouses.

The primary sources of information for the implementation study were in-depth site visits.   At most sites, interviews were conducted with staff from the state labor or workforce department, the participating Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the local One-Stop Career Center, and the military partner, which usually consisted of the education and family support centers that provide support to service members and their families.   When possible, evaluation team members also observed military spouses' interactions with demonstration staff, such as orientation sessions when military spouses learned about the requirements.   Finally, they conducted group discussions with participants who had opened CAAs.

A summary of the findings provided in the implementation study report is presented to provide context for the information in this report.   Key findings on implementation patterns through the first six to eight months of the demonstration are:

Building partnerships between military and workforce entities was a cornerstone of this demonstration from both a design and an operational perspective.   At the federal level, DOL and DoD partnered to design and carry out the demonstration.   At the local level, DOL and DoD emphasized military and workforce partnerships to capitalize on the specific skills, knowledge, concrete systems, and perspectives that each partner brought to the initiative, gained through their experience of providing education and workforce services.   While some of their areas of expertise overlap, each partner offered a range of relevant, and sometimes unique, experience and skills.   The military partners—that is, the entities of the military base involved in the demonstration—had experience serving military spouses.   The workforce system partners—that is, the entities of the workforce system involved in the demonstration—had experience providing employment and

training services. Both partners typically had prior knowledge of, and experience working with, eligible educational institutions.

Some sites that initially struggled with a lack of resources and staff, particularly by the military partners, had both slower startups and lower rates of funding obligations as time progressed. After on-site training from DOL and DoD in October 2007, sites were to have begun demonstration implementation quickly, with a goal of some participants attending education or training programs by January 2008. Two sites had a particularly quick start-up phase: they obligated nearly 6 percent of their total grant award as of February 4, 2008, and they continued at this rapid pace, with nearly 20 percent of funds obligated only one month later (DOL/DoD 2008). Administrators at these sites attributed their quick startups to preexisting relationships between military and workforce partners and an early and active interest in the demonstration. Among the other sites that initially proceeded at a more moderate or slower pace, there were reports that the military did not have enough resources and staff to begin work on the demonstration immediately. While workforce partners had access to some demonstration funds for staffing, military partners had to leverage existing resources and often divide their time between their regular work and demonstration work.

While military partners often led the effort to inform their military community about the program, orientations usually involved staff from both the military base and the One-Stop Career Center. Military partners typically led marketing efforts by disseminating information about who was eligible, what occupations would be funded, and what the timing of available funds would be. Information was shared through written materials on bases, advertisements in base newspapers and on base television stations, and briefings for families who were new to the base as well as those who had been at the base longer. Sites held orientations, either in individual or group settings, to provide potential participants with information about the demonstration. Staff from both the military base and One-Stop Career Center participated in group orientations. In 7 of the 11 sites, orientations served as the first step in receiving CAA approval, though it was rare that all steps to fully open an account could be completed during the orientation.

Responsibilities for approving an account application were typically shared between the workforce and military partners, while the workforce partners assumed much, if not all, of the responsibility of managing the account once it was open. A military spouse who wanted to apply for a CAA would complete a standardized form (the "process form") that asked about the spouse's background and plans for the CAA. A member of the military staff, typically the commander's designee, certified the potential participant's military eligibility for the demonstration. After that, One-Stop Career Center demonstration staff received the military-approved process form and completed the eligibility process, typically verifying that the spouse's plans for use of the CAA met the demonstration's requirements. They also documented whether an account was awarded and, if so, the award amount. As part of the review process, One-Stop Career Centers in at least seven sites required that potential participants submit an education plan to supplement information on the process form. In accordance with the demonstration's goal to have accounts self-managed, potential participants could—but were not required to—receive career or education counseling.   All demonstration sites suggested that some portion of their potential participants needed and received this guidance, although estimates of the proportion of spouses who needed this help ranged widely across sites.

Site staff needed to develop processes to manage CAAs, though processes evolved over time. Site staff needed to track participants with open accounts to ensure that they remained in good standing with their training program. They also needed processes to renew accounts for a second

year, close accounts after participants dropped out of or completed training, and de-obligate funding when participants used less money than was originally obligated. At the time of the site visit data collection for the implementation study, sites had little, if any, experience with renewing or closing CAAs, as participants were still in their first year of training. In summer 2008, when the implementation study site visits were conducted, all demonstration sites anticipated that they would need to begin renewing CAAs in early 2009 to allow participants to access their next $3,000. At that time, sites indicated they were likely to institute few additional steps for renewal, but participants needed to be in good academic standing before second-year CAA funds would be provided.[15]

Some sites experienced challenges in their efforts to monitor funding obligations and payments made. A critical aspect of account management was tracking both the funds that had been disbursed and the funds that remained available to serve additional spouses. Sites had to maintain an accurate tracking of both their obligated funding, and their actual payments to training institutions. The main reasons for these two levels of tracking were to ensure that prior obligations could be met and to monitor how many more CAAs could be awarded. Several sites tracked CAA funds with two systems: (1) they developed their own tracking mechanism (typically an Excel spreadsheet), and (2) they used their existing fiscal management tools. The dual-system sites were limited in how well they could track funds paid out for a participant, or for the demonstration as a whole. This created a challenge when calculating remaining funds for new participants. For example, One-Stop Career Center staff in one site reported that their county financial system allowed them to enter obligations only one quarter ahead. Here, staff had to maintain separate tracking to ensure that all obligated funding was accounted for.

Participants valued the education and career opportunities available through the CAA and thought that their improved career prospects would be beneficial for their families. We learned about spouses' perspectives through group discussions in each of the 11 sites. Although discussion participants were not randomly selected to participate, they appeared to be typical of spouses served by the demonstration. Spouses expressed their interest in improving their career options as they moved from base to base, and they were generally supportive of the demonstration's focus on portable careers, though some suggested that more flexibility should be given to participants' career interests. They also were glad to do something for themselves, to receive the financial assistance to further their education, and to relieve their service member spouses (sponsors) of the burden of being the sole financial support of the family. Finally, some spouses reported that participating provided a positive distraction from stresses while their service member spouses were deployed. While participants could not predict how the CAA would affect their futures, most believed that their participation would have positive effects on their families, setting a good example for their children and improving their relationships with their spouses.

Participants had mixed views about how the CAA and their new career opportunities would affect their families' continued involvement with the military. Some participants thought that the CAA would help them prepare for civilian life when their military personnel spouse retired. Others thought that their increased satisfaction from obtaining a credential and establishing a career would

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[15] In December 2008, DOL and DoD revised grant policy so that participants in five states (California, Florida, Georgia, Maine, and North Carolina) could spend the full $6,000 allotment at any time during the two-year period or by the end of the grant period in June 2010, whichever was first. This change decreased the relevance of account renewal for these five states.

enable their military personnel spouse to remain in the military. However, since almost all of the spouses who participated in the discussions were still in training, they did not have firsthand experience making decisions about their families' involvement in the military after receipt of the CAAs.

B. Updating Implementation Study Report Findings

To supplement the site visits conducted as part of the evaluation's implementation study, staff at SRI International and DTI Associates, Inc. conducted telephone interviews with all MilSpouse CAA Demonstration sites during June 2009. These interviews, held with demonstration staff representing the state labor or workforce department, the participating local One-Stop Career Center, and the military partners, were intended to update information gathered during site visits, as the early timing of the visits meant that sites had not experienced all operational aspects of the demonstration. During telephone interviews, site representatives discussed their processes and systems for managing CAAs, including tracking and de-obligating funds and closing accounts, and providing participants with support after completing training programs. Representatives also discussed their efforts to sustain the partnerships established between military and workforce entities as part of the demonstration. Key findings from these interviews are:

Tracking funds continued to be a complicated process for sites. As the demonstration progressed, sites developed processes for tracking and reconciling differences between obligated and expended grant funds. Sites often relied on more than one database. The system for obligated funding often reported funds at the participant level and aligned with a participant's initial education plan, until adjustments were made after payment to education institutions. In comparison, preexisting accounting systems often tracked expended funds. In about half the sites, more than one staff member at the One-Stop Career Center shared responsibility for tracking and reconciling grant funds. Interview respondents reported that assigning fund management to one staff member (a strategy used by four sites) simplified the reconciliation process.

De-obligating funds became a priority for sites after they obligated all of their initial accounts. Through reconciliation of grant funds, sites were able to identify unused money in CAAs and de-obligate resources.[16] Two common reasons for unused money were that the participant did not complete the training program or the training program cost less than originally anticipated. De-obligating funds became an important account management step for sites that had obligated all of their grant funds, as it allowed sites to award additional CAAs to interested spouses. Four sites, all of which had waiting lists of interested spouses, described de-obligating funding as a top grant priority in the demonstration's second year. At least four other sites were still awarding initial CAAs and, consequently, did not identify de-obligating funds as a top priority.

Sites tracked participants during and after training programs with varying degrees of intensity. All sites tracked participants while they attended their training programs, and about half the sites continued to track participants and offer support after training program completion. To track training program progress, sites asked participants to provide, at a minimum, grades at the end of

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[16] De-obligating CAA funds is the process of decreasing the amount of funding allocated to a participating spouse, so that unused funding will be available for other participants.

each semester or term. About half the sites asked participants to report on their progress more frequently through providing midterm grades or reporting on attendance. Sites that provided support to participants who completed training programs typically offered the support through the One-Stop Career Center. Available services were similar to WIA supports, but several sites described their support as limited or less intensive due to lack of staff availability. Most sites did not specify how long they planned to offer employment support to participants; the two sites that provided a time frame stated 6 and 18 months after the spouses completed training. The site saying it would follow participants for 18 months after training completion asked participants to follow WIA procedures that included required followup at 60, 90, and 180 days, and then at 12 and 18 months.

Sites defined different milestones for closing accounts after training programs. Demonstration sites varied in when they closed CAAs, particularly for participants who completed their training programs. Sites used one of three approaches: (1) close accounts upon program completion and/or receipt of credential, (2) close accounts after participants gain employment, or (3) close accounts 18 months after training program completion to allow time to follow up with participants regarding employment. One site reported that it opted to keep accounts open until participants obtained employment to allow participants to access the One-Stop Career Center's employment resources, including career counseling and resume assistance. Sites were consistent in closing accounts immediately after they identified a participant who stopped attending their training program.

Many formal partnerships will dissolve without future opportunities to collaborate. For most sites, the demonstration strengthened existing relationships, or facilitated new ones, between military and workforce partners. Sites were open to continuing these partnerships but recognized that, without future opportunities, the formal partnerships may dissolve. One site had formal plans for sustaining the partnership through establishment of an affiliate One-Stop Career Center on the military base, but that site expressed concern about sustaining the current level of service available at the affiliate center after the demonstration ends.

III. PARTICIPANTS' ENROLLMENT PATTERNS OVER TIME

MilSpouse CAA demonstration sites faced competing pressures as they began and managed the provision of CAAs to military spouses. Some of these pressures are unique to this demonstration, while others are likely to be found in many types of demonstrations. Both DOL and DoD strongly encouraged sites to award at least some CAAs quickly after the demonstration began, so that some military spouses could begin using them for education or training programs starting in January 2008. More generally, sites might have wanted to award CAAs quickly so that participants, even those awarded CAAs after January 2008, could have enough time to attend their chosen education or training program for up to two years, before the end of the grants in June 2010. However, many new programs and demonstrations, such as this one, have difficulty getting program services up and running, spreading the word about the services and sparking interest among their target populations, building outreach and referral networks, and balancing the enrollment of new participants with services or followup to existing participants. Additional challenges implementing the program might arise if the sites must incorporate modifications to policy and program rules or must take into account a scheduled end of the program or demonstration. Furthermore, demonstration sites might want to spread out the process of providing CAAs to eligible spouses so that staff can effectively manage the workload of determining spouses' eligibility and providing services to support them during and after their training and educational endeavors.

Although the MilSpouse demonstration ends in June 2010, it is valuable to take stock of how sites progressed during the first year of the demonstration in awarding CAAs to eligible spouses. This chapter discusses the patterns in the award of MilSpouse CAAs to participants over time. Section A includes an explanation of the data that are used, the analysis methods, and the limitations. Sections B, C, and D then present the findings about the patterns of award provision over time: overall, by state, and by spouses' target industry.

Key Findings About Participants' Enrollment Patterns Over Time

- As of May 15, 2009, which is almost 17 months after MilSpouse demonstration states were to have begun providing CAAs, they had awarded 5,366 CAAs. This represents 72 percent of their targets for the full demonstration period.

- By mid-May 2009, the proportion of the target number of CAAs that had been awarded ranged across states from 52 to 101 percent. During spring 2009, four (California, Colorado, Florida, and Washington) of the six states had suspended the provision of new CAA awards for at least one month so they could manage their obligations to participants, assessing the amount of funds that could be allocated to new CAA awards after the de-obligation of funds from previously awarded CAAs. Two other states, Hawaii and Maine, had ceased awarding new CAAs during summer 2008.

- Education, training, or credentialing in the health care field accounted for over 2,900 CAAs, more than half of all CAAs that had been awarded as of mid-May 2009. The education field, at 937 CAAs awarded by this time, accounted for at least one out of every six CAAs (17 percent). The next most common fields were finance (slightly less than 10 percent of all CAAs) and business administration, which averaged about 7 percent of all awards even though it was not allowed early in the demonstration.

A. Aggregate Weekly Report Data, Analysis Methods, and Limitations

Each MilSpouse grantee has been required to report to DOL on a weekly basis the cumulative number of CAAs awarded. The first of these reports was provided on February 4, 2008, a few months after sites began their CAA demonstration efforts. Reports have been provided each subsequent Monday, updating information to include awards from the previous week.[17] The data include the total number of CAAs awarded by each grantee, as well as the number of awards given for each of the target industries in which spouses are allowed to pursue training or a credential.[18] The early reports provided information for each state and for the entire demonstration; later reports also included information for sites within each state.

The analysis of the weekly report data is descriptive and includes data about CAA awards on or before Friday, May 15, 2009 (as reported in the Monday, May 18, 2009, weekly report). Because the early reports did not include substate information on the number of CAAs awarded, this analysis presents information for the demonstration as a whole and for each state, but not for sites within states. To present the information in a manageable way, the weekly data have been aggregated into months. For weeks that spanned across two months, the number of CAAs allocated to each month was based on the proportion of weekdays in each month.

While analysis of the data is generally quite straightforward, information about the number of CAAs awarded in California before April 14, 2008, was imputed for the analysis. Around this time, DOL clarified how to complete the report, and the state modified its count of the number of CAAs awarded.[19] The imputed data were based on the patterns in enrollments from other grantees, since the state's weekly report data before April 14, 2008, were not revised.[20]

As of mid-May 2009, when the weekly report data were received, there was still more than a year remaining in the grants, due to end in June 2010. Most grantees still planned to award new CAAs to spouses after this time. Thus, the analysis in this report provides a progression over time of CAA awards from February 2008, when the grantees began reporting the information to DOL, to mid-May 2009, but it does not include information about all awards provided as part of the demonstration.

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[17] To reduce the burden on grantees in the final year of the grant, DOL decided in June 2009 to no longer require grantees to submit weekly reports of awards, although they still must submit award information in quarterly reports to DOL.

[18] The reports also include information about funding obligations for the CAAs. A preliminary examination of the data on funding obligations indicates that the data on funding follow generally similar patterns to those on the number of awards. Therefore, the analysis presented in this report is restricted to the data on the number of awards.

[19] Other states also made revisions to their data over time. However, these revisions were much smaller than was the case for California. Thus, for these cases, the potential error due to imputation seemed to be at least as large as the error in the grantees' weekly report data, so no imputation was done.

[20] Individual-level data, which are described in detail in Chapter IV, were not systematically collected on or before April 2008 and, therefore, could not be used for the imputation process.

B. Patterns Over Time in CAA Awards

After on-site training from DOL and DoD in October 2007, sites were encouraged to implement the demonstration quickly so that some participants could attend education or training programs by January 2008. The weekly report data show that more than 300 CAA awards had been provided by the beginning of February 2008 (Figure III.1).[21] Across all states, the number of awards provided each month increased from February to May 2008.[22] The month with the largest number of awards was May 2008, with 543 CAAs, which is a spike compared to the number of awards in the other months in spring 2008.

The weekly report data do not provide explanations for changes over time in the number of enrollments in a month. However, there are several possible factors for the patterns in awards during spring 2008. First, during this time, states had been developing their approaches to getting the word out to potential spouses and serving spouses. Second, May 2008, the month with the big spike in enrollments, also is the month that might have most coincided with the time when spouses began thinking about summer and fall education plans. A third factor might be that this was the first month after policy changes that allowed (1) spouses with service members/sponsors of any rank to participate in the demonstration, and (2) CAAs to be used for more occupations. Before April 2008, eligibility was restricted to military spouses married to a service member/sponsor who was at the E1-E4 levels (junior enlisted service members), E5 level (noncommissioned officer), or O1-O3 levels (junior commissioned officers).

FIGURE III.1

MILITARY SPOUSE CAA ENROLLMENTS PER MONTH

Source: States' report to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded.

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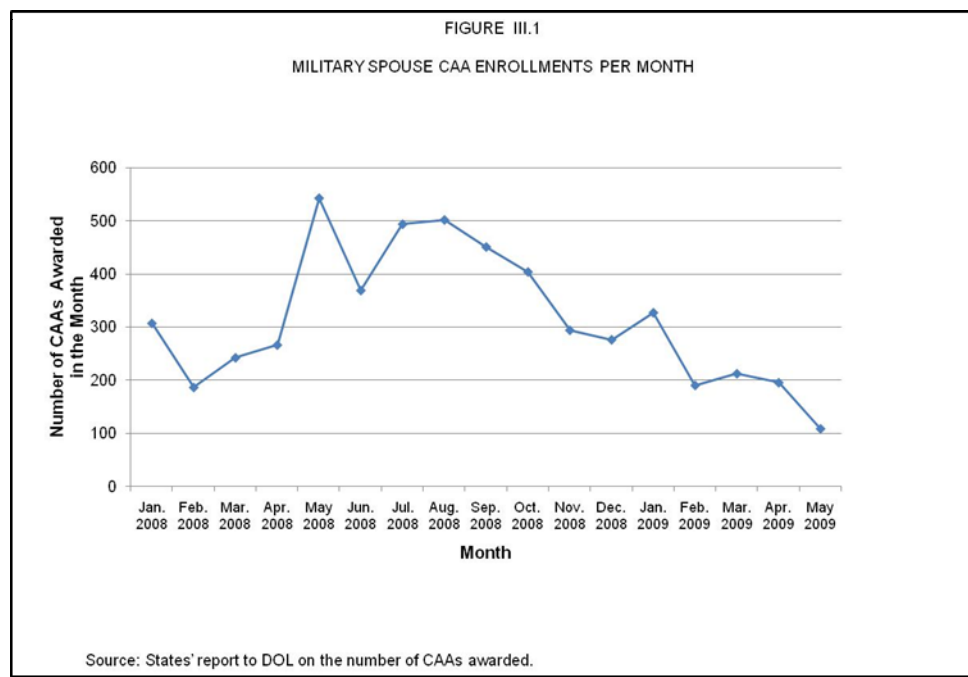
[21] Table B.1 in Appendix B shows the precise numbers for the points shown in Figures III.1 and III.2.

[22] To be precise, the information in Figures III.1 and III.2 for "January 2008" pertain to February 1, 2008, or earlier and the information for "February 2008" pertains to the rest of the month. This is because the first set of reports from states to DOL was on February 4, 2008, and covered all CAA awards on or before February 1, 2008.

FIGURE III.2

MILITARY SPOUSE CAA CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENTS OVER TIME

Source: States' report to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded.
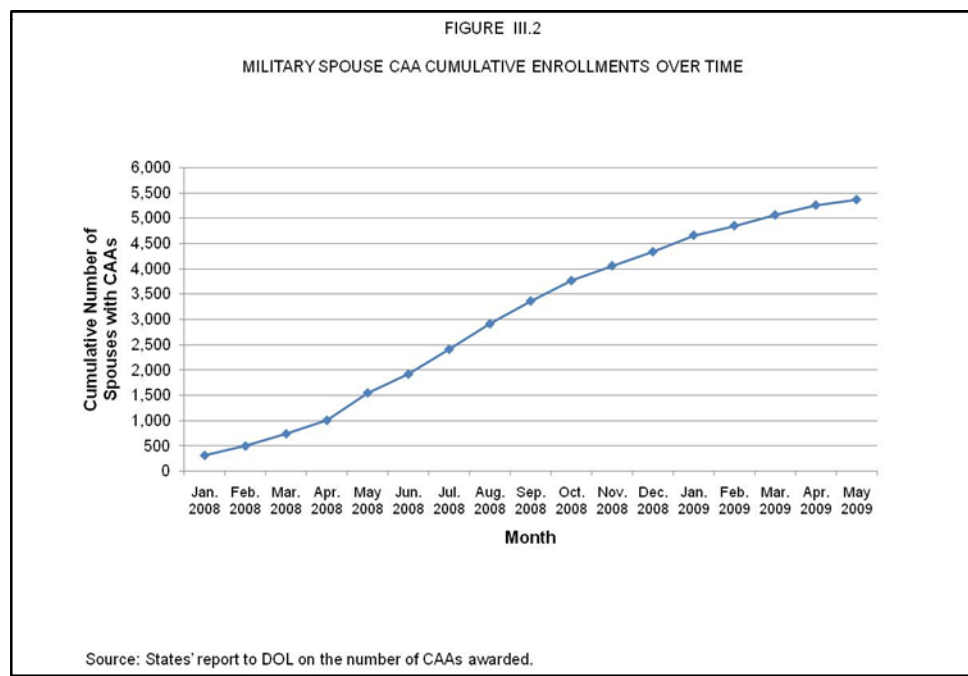
Although no other month had as high an award rate as did May 2008, the number of awards per month were high in some other months as well. July and August 2008—also months in which spouses might have been planning to enroll in school in the fall—were the months with the next highest numbers of awards, at 494 and 502, respectively. Award rates generally slowed down after October 2008, from monthly rates over 400 during the summer to rates under 300. However, January 2009 showed another spike in the number of awards, with 327, possibly as spouses were planning for the spring 2009 school semester.

As of May 15, 2009, the states had awarded 5,366 CAAs (Figure III.2). Overall, this represents 72 percent of states' target of 7,644 CAAs (not shown). However, these statistics, which combine across the state-specific numbers of CAAs that were targeted and actually awarded, mask the variation across states in awards. Therefore, the next section presents this information for each state.

C. Patterns Over Time in CAA Awards by State

The rates of awards and the paces at which states have approached their target number of enrollments have varied considerably across states (Table III.1).[23] In anticipation of the departure of spouses from Maine starting in summer 2008 due to an impending Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Maine already had a mini One-Stop Career Center on base to help military families plan for

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[23] The total number of CAAs that each state planned to award for the demonstration is reported in Table I.2 and, for convenience to the reader, is repeated in a note to Table III.1.

Table III.1 Cumulative Number of CAA Awards Over Time, by State

	California[a]			Colorado			Florida			Georgia		
	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards
January 2008 or Earlier	22	22	0.9	29	29	4.5	170	170	16.5	5	5	0.7
February 2008	10	32	1.3	1	30	4.7	22	192	18.6	6	11	1.5
March 2008	17	49	2.0	27	57	8.9	43	235	22.8	10	21	2.9
April 2008	43	92	3.7	47	104	16.2	20	255	24.7	3	24	3.3
May 2008	42	134	5.4	72	176	27.4	226	481	46.7	5	29	4.0
June 2008	58	192	7.8	38	214	33.3	49	530	51.4	20	49	6.8
July 2008	67	259	10.5	62	276	42.9	98	628	60.9	37	86	12.0
August 2008	65	324	13.1	80	356	55.4	125	753	73.0	44	130	18.1
September 2008	165	489	19.8	43	399	62.1	33	786	76.2	37	167	23.2
October 2008	140	629	25.5	53	452	70.3	54	840	81.5	23	190	26.4
November 2008	151	780	31.6	39	491	76.4	22	862	83.6	16	206	28.7
December 2008	48	828	33.6	21	512	79.6	30	892	86.5	26	232	32.3
January 2009	168	996	40.4	0	512	79.6	46	938	91.0	46	278	38.7
February 2009	124	1,120	45.4	0	512	79.6	16	954	92.5	30	308	42.8
March 2009	177	1,297	52.6	0	512	79.6	0	954	92.5	30	338	47.0
April 2009	79	1,376	55.8	0	512	79.6	0	954	92.5	21	359	49.9
May 2009[b]	0	1,376	55.8	22	534	83.0	0	954	92.5	14	373	51.9

Table III.1 *(continued)*

	Hawaii			Maine			North Carolina			Washington		
	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards	New Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of Targeted Awards
January 2008 or Earlier	19	19	3.0	11	11	4.4	10	10	1.3	41	41	4.6
February 2008	60	79	12.4	49	60	24.0	6	16	2.0	32	73	8.1
March 2008	39	118	18.5	14	74	29.6	19	35	4.4	73	146	16.3
April 2008	49	167	26.2	32	106	42.4	29	64	8.0	43	189	21.1
May 2008	66	233	36.5	25	131	52.4	38	102	12.8	69	258	28.8
June 2008	92	325	50.9	29	160	64.0	45	147	18.4	39	297	33.1
July 2008	87	412	64.6	12	172	68.8	82	228	28.5	50	346	38.6
August 2008	2	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	128	356	44.5	58	404	45.0
September 2008	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	63	419	52.4	111	515	57.4
October 2008	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	69	488	61.0	64	579	64.5
November 2008	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	27	515	64.4	39	618	68.9
December 2008	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	104	619	77.4	48	666	74.2
January 2009	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	39	658	82.3	27	693	77.3
February 2009	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	20	678	84.8	0	693	77.3
March 2009	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	5	683	85.4	0	693	77.3
April 2009	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	94	777	97.1	0	693	77.3
May 2009[b]	0	414	64.9	0	172	68.8	31	808	101.0	42	735	81.9

Source: States' May 18, 2009, reports to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009.

Notes: Occasionally, the cumulative number of awards by a state for a week was lower than the number for the previous week; this pattern suggests that the state made a correction to the prior count of awards. Because the corrections were small and could not be pinpointed to specific prior weeks, this analysis generally does not incorporate modifications to the states' data. The one exception, described below, is for California data prior to April 14, 2008, because the state's correction was large.

When a calendar week spanned the end of a month and the beginning of the subsequent month, the number of CAAs shown as having been awarded during that week is based on the proportion of weekdays that were in each of the two months. Due to rounding, the sum across states for a month might not sum to the total for the month.

The number of CAAs that have been targeted for award are 2,466 in California; 643 in Colorado; 1,031 in Florida; 719 in Georgia; 638 in Hawaii; 250 in Maine; 800 in North Carolina; and 897 in Washington (Table I.2).

[a]In the weekly report dated April 14, 2008, California made a large downward revision to its cumulative number of CAAs awarded. As a result, this analysis uses information from the weekly report data that were provided by other states to impute California's number of CAAs awarded during time periods including and prior to April 2008. Maine was excluded from these calculations, because its schedule for awarding CAAs differed greatly from California's. Individual-level data could not be used for the imputation process, because there are not many spouses in the California individual-level data file during the relevant time period.

[b]Because this analysis is based on May 18, 2009, weekly report data about the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009, the statistics reported for May 2009 might not include all CAAs awarded during the month.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

DOL = Department of Labor.

the base closure and their relocation from the area.[24]   Because military families were to be transferred from Maine to other bases, including one that was to participate in the demonstration, the Maine partners tried to front-load their use of demonstration funding to give participants enough time to begin (and, ideally, complete) their selected programs before transfers occurred. As a result, Maine stopped providing new awards by the end of July 2008.

In a similar way, Hawaii stopped providing new CAAs about one month later, in August 2008. Like Maine, its staff had focused on providing CAAs quickly. However, its reason for stopping the awarding of CAAs was different. Hawaii had initially anticipated that spouses would express interest in participating in short-term training programs that would not use the full $6,000 to which they were entitled. However, site staff learned that many spouses were interested in using the CAAs for two-year programs that would use all of the $6,000. Thus, during summer 2008, the state reassessed how many CAAs it could award after meeting its obligations to the current CAA participants. As a result, it suspended the provision of new awards.

Excluding Hawaii and Maine, four of the six remaining states had stopped providing awards at least temporarily between the start of the grant and mid-May 2009. Table III.1 shows that Colorado and Washington did not provide awards for at least three months during the first part of 2009, although both states resumed award provision in May 2009. Florida's last award was in February 2009; this state had not resumed award provision by mid-May 2009. Finally, California is not shown to have provided any awards during May 2009, although the available information pertains to the first half of the month only, since the most recent weekly report that is included in this analysis pertained to awards through May 15, 2009 only.

These temporary suspensions to the provision of new CAA awards arose because of states' efforts during spring 2009 to manage their obligations to participants. As discussed in Chapter II, states needed to assess the amount of funds that could be allocated to new CAA awards after the de-obligation of funds from previously awarded CAAs. This process was intended to ensure the states could award as many CAAs as possible but still keep their commitments to participants who had already been given CAAs.

By mid-May 2009, the proportion of the target number of CAAs that had been awarded ranged across states from 52 to 101 percent. Two states (California and Georgia) had awarded between 50 and 60 percent of their targets for awards; two (Hawaii and Maine) had awarded between 60 and 70 percent of their targets; and two (Colorado and Washington) had awarded between 80 and 90 percent. Florida had awarded 93 percent and North Carolina—at 101 percent—had awarded slightly more than its target.[25]   One possible reason some states had awarded fewer CAAs than initially planned was that, during the time serving spouses, they learned that the average expenditure per CAA was higher than the anticipated amount.

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[24] BRAC is the process DoD uses to reorganize its installation infrastructure to more efficiently and effectively support its forces, increase operational readiness, and facilitate new ways of doing business.

[25] In August 2008, North Carolina decreased its target number of CAAs from 1,000 to 800.

D. Patterns Over Time in CAA Awards by Industry

DOL and DoD required participants to pursue education and training programs, and, ultimately, careers, in nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields. Originally, five industry fields were identified: (1) construction, (2) education, (3) financial services, (4) health care, and (5) information technology. Military spouses could select any education or training program appropriate for an allowed field or occupation, as long as the program is nationally or regionally accredited by the U.S. Department of Education (or an accrediting body recognized by the Department of Education) or on the state's WIA Eligible Training Provider List.

In April 2008, DOL and DoD expanded the list of career fields allowable for CAAs to include occupations in targeted industries where there is a large demand in the DoD civilian and/or general employment sectors. Thus, they authorized the issuance of CAAs for specific occupations in four additional sectors: (1) human resources, (2) hospitality, (3) homeland security, and (4) business administration. The difference between the initial five broad occupations and the new industries is that, in the new industries, training would be allowable only in specific occupations.   The occupations within human resources that became allowed were (1) employment, recruitment, and placement specialists (employment interviewers and personnel recruiters); (2) interviewers, except eligibility and loan; (3) human resources assistants; (4) training and development specialists; and (5) compensation, benefits, and job analysis specialists. The occupations that became available within the hospitality industry included those in the culinary career ladder: (1) culinary arts, (2) chefs and head cooks, (3), meeting and convention planners, and (4) hospitality management. The allowable occupations within homeland security included (1) police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers; (2) security guards; (3) surveying and mapping technicians; (4) police and sheriff's patrol officers; (5) police identification and records officers; (6) police detectives; and (7) fire fighters. Within business administration, the allowable occupations were (1) cost estimators; and (2) insurance adjusters, examiners, and investigators.

DOL and DoD further expanded the list of eligible occupations in December 2008. New occupations under business administration included those within the secretarial and bookkeeping category (medical secretaries; legal secretaries; executive secretaries; and bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks). A new category of social work became allowed, including rehabilitation counselors; child, family, and school social workers; and social and human service assistants. These changes applied to California, Florida, Georgia, Maine, and North Carolina only.

Data from the weekly reports by states support the findings in the implementation report that health care and education occupations were the most common ones for CAA participants (see Part I). For each month from January 2008 to May 2009, Table III.2 shows (1) the cumulative number of CAAs awarded across all target industries; (2) the cumulative number of CAAs awarded in each target industry; and (3) for each target industry, the percentage of all awards that were in each industry.[26] For example, the first row of the table shows that 308 CAAs had been awarded by

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[26] For some months, the cumulative number of CAA awards in the "All Industries" column of Table III.2 differs slightly from the number in the "Cumulative Awards by the End of the Month" in Table B.1 in Appendix B. These small discrepancies are due to rounding that arises from the imputation of data from California.

Table III.2 Cumulative Number of CAA Awards Over Time, by Target Industry

		Industries Originally Specified as Acceptable								
		Construction Trades		Education		Financial Services		Health Care		Information Technology	
Month	All Industries	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards
January 2008 or Earlier[a]	308	9	2.9	77	25.0	43	14.0	167	54.2	12	3.9
February 2008[a]	492	10	2.0	101	20.5	76	15.4	281	57.1	24	4.9
March 2008[a]	735	15	2.0	143	19.5	115	15.6	425	57.8	37	5.0
April 2008[a]	1,001	19	1.9	190	19.0	145	14.5	577	57.6	53	5.3
May 2008	1,544	24	1.6	293	19.0	207	13.4	869	56.3	71	4.6
June 2008	1,913	29	1.5	357	18.7	247	12.9	1,045	54.6	101	5.3
July 2008	2,407	36	1.5	450	18.7	292	12.1	1,288	53.5	123	5.1
August 2008	2,909	43	1.5	571	19.6	327	11.2	1,500	51.6	146	5.0
September 2008	3,361	46	1.4	640	19.0	372	11.1	1,749	52.0	163	4.8
October 2008	3,764	50	1.3	704	18.7	411	10.9	1,950	51.8	181	4.8
November 2008	4,058	52	1.3	735	18.1	430	10.6	2,157	53.2	189	4.7
December 2008	4,334	53	1.2	770	17.8	457	10.5	2,322	53.6	194	4.5
January 2009	4,661	53	1.1	814	17.5	475	10.2	2,523	54.1	187	4.0
February 2009	4,851	56	1.2	855	17.6	475	9.8	2,627	54.2	193	4.0
March 2009	5,063	57	1.1	880	17.4	487	9.6	2,766	54.6	198	3.9
April 2009	5,259	57	1.1	904	17.2	505	9.6	2,869	54.6	203	3.9
May 2009[b]	5,366	60	1.1	937	17.5	518	9.7	2,913	54.3	195	3.6

Table III.2 *(continued)*

| | | Industries Specified as Acceptable After the Start of the Grants | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Business Administration | | Homeland Security | | Hospitality | | Human Resources | | Social Work | |
	All Industries	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards	Cumulative Awards	Percentage of All Awards
January 2008 or Earlier[a]	308	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
February 2008[a]	492	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
March 2008[a]	735	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
April 2008[a]	1,001	4	0.4	5	0.5	1	0.1	7	0.7	0	0.0
May 2008	1,544	29	1.9	21	1.4	5	0.3	25	1.6	0	0.0
June 2008	1,913	51	2.7	33	1.7	10	0.5	40	2.1	0	0.0
July 2008	2,407	100	4.2	46	1.9	14	0.6	58	2.4	0	0.0
August 2008	2,909	150	5.2	73	2.5	20	0.7	79	2.7	0	0.0
September 2008	3,361	180	5.4	89	2.6	29	0.9	93	2.8	0	0.0
October 2008	3,764	212	5.6	108	2.9	36	1.0	112	3.0	0	0.0
November 2008	4,058	228	5.6	110	2.7	39	1.0	118	2.9	0	0.0
December 2008	4,334	248	5.7	125	2.9	43	1.0	122	2.8	0	0.0
January 2009	4,661	280	6.0	138	3.0	52	1.1	139	3.0	0	0.0
February 2009	4,851	297	6.1	147	3.0	55	1.1	145	3.0	1	0.0
March 2009	5,063	309	6.1	157	3.1	60	1.2	147	2.9	2	0.0
April 2009	5,259	337	6.4	160	3.0	60	1.1	152	2.9	12	0.2
May 2009[b]	5,366	353	6.6	166	3.1	60	1.1	149	2.8	15	0.3

Source: States' May 18, 2009, reports to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009.

Notes: Occasionally, the cumulative number of awards by a state for a week was lower than the number for the previous week; this pattern suggests that the state made a correction to the prior count of awards. Because the corrections were small and could not be pinpointed to specific prior weeks, this analysis generally does not incorporate modifications to the states' data. The one exception, described below, is for California data prior to April 14, 2008, because the state's correction was large.

When a calendar week spanned the end of a month and the beginning of the subsequent month, the number of CAAs shown as having been awarded during that week is based on the proportion of weekdays that were in each of the two months. Due to rounding, the sum across states for a month might not sum to the total for the month.

The number of CAAs that have been targeted for award are 2,466 in California; 643 in Colorado; 1,031 in Florida; 719 in Georgia; 638 in Hawaii; 250 in Maine; 800 in North Carolina; and 897 in Washington (Table I.2).

[a]In the weekly report dated April 14, 2008, California made a large downward revision to its cumulative number of CAAs awarded. As a result, this analysis uses information from the weekly report data that were provided by other states to impute California's number of CAAs awarded during time periods including and prior to April 2008. Maine was excluded from these calculations, because its schedule for awarding CAAs differed greatly from California's. Individual-level data could not be used for the imputation process, because there are not many spouses in the California individual-level data file during the relevant time period.

[b]Because this analysis is based on May 18, 2009, weekly report data about the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009, the statistics reported for May 2009 might not include all CAAs awarded during the month.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

DOL = Department of Labor.

January 2008 or earlier. Of these, 9 had been awarded for training, education, or credential attainment in the construction industry; these 9 represent 2.9 percent of the 308 awards. In a similar way, the next row in the table shows that 492 CAAs had been awarded by the end of February 2008; 10 were in the construction industry, and these 10 represent 2.0 percent of the 492 awards. Because there are 10 industries for which awards could be made, the columns for the industries span across two panels in the table—with 5 industries shown in each panel. However, for each month for which data are reported, the percentages of CAAs awarded in each of the 10 industries sum to 100 percent.

During each month, education, training, or credentialing in the health care field accounted for more than half of all CAAs that had been awarded (Table III.2). As of mid-May 2009, more than 2,900 CAAs had been awarded to participants to develop careers in health care. The education field, at 937 CAAs awarded by mid-May 2009, accounted for at least one out of every six CAAs (about 17 percent). The next most common field was financial services, for which 518 CAAs had been awarded (slightly less than 10 percent of all CAAs). As of early 2009, business administration averaged about 7 percent of all awards, even though it was not allowed early in the demonstration. Fewer CAAs have been given out for education, training, or credentialing in the other fields (such as construction, information technology, and social work), either because they have been less popular choices for participants or because they were newly added fields.

IV. SPONSORS' AND PARTICIPANTS' CHARACTERISTICS

As the demonstration evolved, the grantees recruited, enrolled, and served military spouses with a wide range of characteristics and experiences. As described in more detail in Chapter I, eligibility for a CAA has been limited to military spouses with certain characteristics. Spouses must have had at least a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) credential when they applied for a CAA. Generally speaking, to be eligible for a CAA, the military spouses also must have been married to a service member (a "sponsor") with a minimum of one year of duty assignment left at the demonstration base. However, two exceptions for this eligibility criterion existed. One was for sponsor assignments that would require relocation as part of the Base Realignment and Closure Act of 2005 (BRAC). The other was if a spouse selected an approved training program that could be completed before departure from the assigned base and that would yield a license or certification. Furthermore, DOL and DoD initially restricted eligibility to military spouses married to a service member/sponsor who was at the E1-E4 levels (junior enlisted service members), E5 level (noncommissioned officer), or O1-O3 levels (junior commissioned officers). In April 2008, this restriction was lifted, and military spouses of service members of all ranks became eligible.

Understanding the backgrounds of military spouse participants in the demonstration makes it possible to assess who has been served by the CAA program. Furthermore, information about the characteristics of the CAA participants provides a context for the analysis of the spouses' plans for their CAAs (described in Chapter V). While the weekly report data used for the analysis in the previous chapter provides an overview of the patterns in CAA awards over time, these data cannot provide insights about the characteristics of the participating spouses and their families. Instead, individual-level data collected by grantees was used for an in-depth description of the CAA participants and their families.

This chapter begins with detailed descriptions of the individual-level data used in this chapter and Chapter V, the methods used for analysis, and the data's limitations (Section A). This section also presents information about how the individual-level data compare to the weekly report (aggregate) data discussed in Chapter III. Then, because of the strong influence of the characteristics of sponsors on the eligibility of the military spouses for a CAA, Section B begins with information about the sponsors. It also presents information about the spouses themselves when they applied for a CAA.

A. Description of the Individual-Level Data, the Analysis Methods, and Limitations

Evaluation partner Coffey Consulting, LLC, developed an Access data tool that site staff could use to record individual-level information on a broad set of topics. Data items focused on participants' characteristics, their planned use of the CAA, whether they completed CAA-funded programs in which they enrolled, whether they attained credentials, their receipt of other services from military or workforce investment staff as they attended education or training programs or worked, the total amount of CAA funds disbursed, and post-CAA subsequent employment and earnings. The list of data items included in the data tool was developed in an iterative process with input from staff at DOL, DoD, Mathematica, Coffey Consulting, and the sites.

Key Findings about Sponsors and Participants' Characteristics

- The set of spouses upon which the analysis of sponsor and spouse characteristics is based differs from all spouses who received CAAs. Spouses from California and North Carolina were overrepresented in the analysis data, while spouses from Hawaii and Maine were underrepresented. Nevertheless, the analysis provides some insights about the characteristics of sponsors and military spouses who received CAAs.

- The Marines were more likely than other branches of service to have sponsors of CAA recipients who were of junior enlisted ranks. The Air Force was more likely than other branches of service to have high-ranking officers as sponsors.

- Eighty-eight percent of all spouses had sponsors who were enlisted. However, about two-fifths of spouses had sponsors whose ranks would have made the spouses initially ineligible for a CAA (spouses with sponsors of rank E6 or higher, O4 or higher, or another type of rank). The average length of time that sponsors had remaining on base at the time of the CAA application was 2.5 years. The Marines were more likely than other branches of service to have sponsors of CAA recipients who were of junior enlisted ranks. The Air Force was more likely than other branches of service to have high-ranking officers as sponsors.

- Overall, 97 percent of CAA participants were female. Their average age was 29 years. Depending on how we handle spouses with missing information, we estimate that either 57 or 69 percent of spouses had young children under age 13; among those who had young children, the average number of young children was 2. About one-third of spouses had a high school diploma as their highest education level attained, while an almost comparable share had some college but no diploma or degree.

- At the time of the spouses' applications for a CAA, around half to two-thirds were not working, and about one-quarter had never worked. Depending on how spouses with missing data compare to spouses with nonmissing data, the percentage who were formerly employed but not working when they applied for a CAA was about 28 to 36 percent, and those who had never worked was about 22 to 28 percent of the sample. The rest, those employed when they applied for a CAA, was about 29 to 37 percent.

- The most common types of jobs for spouses who were currently or formerly employed when they applied for a CAA were office and administrative support jobs and sales-related jobs. However, spouses had been employed in a wide range of jobs. On average, spouses for whom data was nonmissing earned $10.74 per hour and worked 33 hours per week in their current or most recent job.

- Spouses who had worked but who were no longer working reported a wide range of reasons for no longer being at their former jobs. Having quit due to a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or for other reasons was common.

Individual-level information on spouses is available from all grantees except Maine. DOL did not ask Maine staff to record individual-level information on spouses in the data tool because Maine had stopped awarding its CAAs by the end of July 2008, around the time when sites were to begin using the data tool.

1. The Sample Frame for Analysis

DOL instructed sites (except Maine) to record in the Access data tool the information on participants who were approved for a CAA on or after July 28, 2008. Since sites began awarding CAAs around January 2008, they could choose whether or not to enter information on spouses who began their CAA participation before this date. Some sites chose to record information on the previously enrolled spouses, although obtaining all the information for these spouses was not

typically feasible because the data tool contained fields for information that the sites had not already collected. While spouses who began their CAA participation after late July 2008 might have different characteristics and experiences than those who began participation earlier, examining the information on CAA participants who began participation in or after late July 2008 still is useful for understanding who has participated in the program.

To avoid potential biases due to the optional nature of data entry about spouses who began CAA participation before late July 2008, it was important to determine the sample frame for analysis—that is, which spouses from among all spouses in the sites' data sets should be included in the sample used for the analysis of the characteristics of sponsors, spouses, and CAA plans. Because the data tool became available after sites began to award CAAs, and information is missing on some spouses, it was useful to investigate answers to two related questions. The first question was, "What information in the data tool should be used to determine the date when a spouse was approved for a CAA?" Although the data tool includes an item for a final eligibility date—on which a spouse was determined to have met all eligibility criteria for receipt of a CAA—missing information for this data item suggested that other data items should be considered as back-up dates for the CAA approval date. The second question was, "What, if any, cutoff date should be used to restrict the sample?" While sites were instructed to enter information about spouses who were approved for a CAA on or after July 28, 2008, an earlier or later date might be more appropriate on the basis of sites' use of the data tool.

Based on an exploration of the quality and completeness of the data, the analysis sample was restricted to spouses who had an enrollment date on or after June 14, 2008. This date was determined as optimal after an enrollment date was constructed through checking for nonmissing values of five CAA-related dates in the data tool.[27] This approach yields an analysis sample containing 2,630 spouses, a number that corresponds reasonably well to the weekly report information on the number of spouses who were awarded CAAs during the time from mid-July 2008 to February 2009, when extracts of the data in the Access tool were received for analysis.[28] Defining the analysis sample in this way also protects the analysis against possible biases due to gaps in information about spouses who were awarded CAAs before mid-July 2008.

2.   Analysis Methods

As with the aggregate weekly report data, the analysis of individual-level data about spouses and sponsors is primarily descriptive and does not take into account correlations or causal relationships among data items. Information is presented for all states combined, as well for two types of subgroups of spouses: (1) those based on the military branch of the sponsors, and (2) those based on the military rank of the sponsors.[29] For each topic that uses individual-level data, such as the

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[27] The term "enrollment date" is not officially used in the data tool. However, it was used for the purpose of restricting the analysis sample to mean the date in which a spouse was awarded a CAA. Appendix A describes in detail the process of constructing the sample frame.

[28] The precise number of spouses to be expected in the individual-level data depends on the specific dates that each extract was received; however, if one assumes that all extracts were received on February 27, 2009, an estimate of the expected number is 2,675.

[29] The branch of service is missing for a few spouses, so—for this subgroup analysis—the sum of the spouses shown for each subgroup is slightly lower than the total number of spouses in the analysis.

demographic characteristics of the CAA participant, there are two very similar tables. The first one reports statistics for subgroups by branch of service, while the second reports statistics for subgroups by military rank. However, because of the strong relationship between the information presented in each set of two tables, the discussion about each topic often intermixes findings from the two tables. In addition, results of statistical tests of differences across subgroups are not presented, since the analysis is descriptive only and since hypotheses about the differences between the subgroups have not been formed.

Ultimately, while this report presents differences by military branch in the characteristics of participating spouses and their sponsors, one cannot attribute these differences to inherent features of the branches of service. For example, a difference between the Army and the Navy in the speed with which CAA applicants were determined eligible for a CAA does not imply that this difference would persist in a CAA-like program implemented at other bases besides those in this demonstration. Likewise, differences between the characteristics of spouses with Army sponsors and those with Navy sponsors, for example, cannot be projected to all spouses with sponsors in those branches of service.

3. Data Limitations

Although extensive effort has been undertaken both to develop the data tool and to record information in it, the individual-level data and analysis of them have limitations. This section discusses two limitations and the strategies used in the reporting of the analysis to address them.

The individual-level data analysis is restricted to descriptive information about the characteristics of spouses, their families, and their CAA plans when the spouses began their involvement in the demonstration. When the data tool was being developed, it was understood that information on outcomes such as spouses' completion of their training programs, attainment of credentials, and post-training employment experiences would not be available for this report. This is due to a combination of (1) when the data tool became available to sites, (2) the schedule for the collection of the data for analysis, and (3) the lengths of the training programs in which spouses have been participating. Sites received the data tool in July 2008, and the evaluation schedule required collection of the data in the first quarter of 2009 so this report could be provided to DOL in summer 2009. Thus, at most, information would be available for the seven to eight months after spouses were approved for their CAAs. In many cases, the available information would cover a shorter period, since spouses were enrolling from July 2008 to early 2009. However, because CAAs can be used to pay for up to two years of training, it was expected that most spouses would still be in training when sites provided their data for analysis. These expectations were confirmed: very few spouses in the data extracts received in early 2009 had information on outcomes. Because the data show a large proportion of spouses had planned to participate in education or training programs that would last more than one year, it is likely that statistics about the outcomes of the few spouses with outcomes data would not be representative of the fuller set of spouses in the analysis. (See Chapter V for more details about spouses' training and education plans.) Therefore, results on the outcomes for these spouses are not presented.

Information on the data items that are included in the analysis is incomplete. Extracts of the data were made during fall 2008 to provide an early glimpse of the data. They showed high rates of missing information. Site staff provided several reasons for this. One that site staff frequently gave was that many spouses enrolled before sites had the procedures in place to collect the data. While this was expected to be true for spouses who began their participation before July

2008, some staff reported that this also was the case for spouses who began their participation after July 2008. Staff reported not receiving the systems to collect the information—namely, the paper-copy form and the Access data tool—until after they were expected to have begun recording information. Some staff tried to collect the missing information from spouses after they began their CAA participation. However, doing so proved to be challenging, time-consuming, and not fully successful. Staff also reported that some spouses declined to provide pieces of information, and some information (such as the O*Net codes for the occupation for which a spouse was training) was infeasible or extremely burdensome for site staff to collect. Furthermore, some site staff had to record similar pieces of information in both the demonstration-specific data tool and data systems routinely used to record information about customers. The need to record information in two separate systems is likely to have imposed additional challenges to the provision of high-quality, comprehensive data, especially for staff who already faced time pressure in their workloads. Between when test extracts of data in fall 2008 were provided and when the final extracts for analysis in early 2009 were provided, both DOL and Mathematica worked with a few sites to reduce the rates of missing data. However, while the quality of the data improved, gaps in the data remained in most cases.

To ensure that the quality of the data is clearly presented in this report, a guideline has been used for when to report the percentage of spouses with missing information on a data item. In most cases, the percentage of spouses with missing data for a data item is reported when this percentage is greater than 10 percent of the spouses in the analysis. The percentage of spouses with missing data is reported in these cases, to highlight the potential for the spouses with nonmissing data to be nonrepresentative of all spouses in the analysis data file. If no more than 10 percent of the spouses have missing data, the percentage typically is not reported. In these cases, the information based on nonmissing data is more likely to be representative of all spouses in the analysis file. However, in a few cases, a different threshold was used for determining whether information about the percentage of the sample with missing data should be reported because of variation across the subgroups in the sample. The 10 percent cutoff was selected to balance the competing desires to (1) clearly present information on the quality of the data when low quality might influence interpretation of the statistics, and (2) avoid distracting the reader or pointing out trivial weaknesses in the data when the quality of the data is high. However, this guideline means that there are tables in the report in which some data items have rows for missing data and other data items do not. In all cases, the reported statistics for the categories of the data item sum across the categories to 100 percent.

To help in the interpretation of the most important statistics when there is a high prevalence of missing data, the report occasionally presents statistics that adjust for the missing information. For example, a table might show statistics that indicate that 50 percent of the spouses were reported to have a certain characteristic, but only 80 percent of spouses had nonmissing information. In this case, the report might also indicate in the text that, after adjusting for the missing data, the percentage of spouses with that characteristic was 63 percent (= 50 percent divided by 80 percent). While the 63 percent statistic would not be shown in a table, it and the information that is in the table provide the reader estimates of the actual statistic based on different assumptions about the missing data.

4. Overview of the Analysis Sample

The focus of the individual-level data on spouses who were awarded CAAs in mid-July 2008 or later, coupled with the patterns of CAA awards in different states over time, means that information about the characteristics of spouses, sponsors, and CAA plans is based on a set of spouses who

differ somewhat from all spouses who have participated in the demonstration (Table IV.1). For example, California accounts for 34 percent of spouses in the individual-level data, whereas 26 percent of CAA awards were from California as of May 15, 2009, based on the aggregate weekly report data. North Carolina also comprises a larger percentage of the spouses in the individual-level data (20 percent), compared to its share of all CAA awards (15 percent). In contrast, Hawaii represents a smaller share in the individual-level data than in the aggregate data. As discussed above, Maine was not required to collect individual-level data. In addition, as shown in Chapter III, Hawaii discontinued enrolling spouses in August 2008, which means that most of the Hawaii spouses were awarded CAAs during the time before the frame for the individual-level data. The shares that each of the other states (Colorado, Florida, Georgia, and Washington) represents in each data source are within a few percentage points of each other. Thus, these four states are not significantly under- or overrepresented in the individual-level data compared to their shares of all awards as of mid-May 2009.

Regardless of the details of the data collection process, one could expect that spouses with military sponsors of a certain branch of service are concentrated in a few states. This is because of the sizes of the grants to each state and the branch(es) of service participating in each state. For example, California and North Carolina's grants are the largest, at $10.1 and $7.0 million, respectively; the smallest grant went to Maine, which received $750,000. Together, California and North Carolina received nearly half (48 percent) of the $35.2 million in grant funding awarded for the demonstration. Thus, one would expect that a large portion of all spouses who received CAAs would be from these two states. Furthermore, since California's grant focused on Marine and Navy bases and North Carolina's focused on Army and Air Force bases, one could expect that a large portion of spouses with Marine or Navy sponsors are from California and a large portion of spouses with Air Force or Army sponsors are from North Carolina.[30]

Data confirm that spouses with military sponsors of a certain branch of service are concentrated in a few states (Table IV.1). For example, almost all spouses with sponsors in the Air Force are in Colorado, Florida, and North Carolina. Spouses with sponsors in the Army are predominantly in Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, and Washington. Ninety-seven percent of spouses with Marine sponsors are in California. Spouses with Navy sponsors are primarily in California, Florida, and Washington. When reviewing the findings based on military branch subgroups, therefore, it is important to keep in mind that most of the spouses with sponsors from each branch of service are at only a few bases and in a few states.

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[30]The four branches of service are not uniformly represented in the grantee states, and the states concentrated their grant activities on a few bases within the state. Further detail about the bases included in each grant and the grant sizes is included in Part I of this document.

Table IV.1 Distribution of Military Spouses Across States and Sites, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

State and Site	Aggregate Data	Individual-Level Data				
		All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
California[a]	25.6	34.0	0.0	0.3	97.3	65.4
Camp Pendleton	--	18.1	0.0	0.1	97.3	5.5
San Diego	--	15.8	0.0	0.2	0.0	59.9
Colorado	10.0	10.3	19.8	17.5	0.0	0.6
Florida[a]	17.8	14.7	63.9	0.9	0.0	20.5
Fort Walton Beach[b]	--	9.3	63.9	0.6	0.0	0.3
Jacksonville	--	5.4	0.0	0.3	0.0	20.3
Georgia	7.0	8.6	0.0	20.2	0.0	0.1
Hawaii[c]	7.7	1.2	1.4	0.8	2.0	1.3
Maine	3.2	--	--	--	--	--
North Carolina	15.1	19.8	10.9	42.3	0.7	0.9
Washington[a]	13.7	11.2	4.1	18.1	0.0	11.1
Kitsap	--	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.1
Pierce	--	8.3	4.1	18.1	0.0	0.0
Sample Size	**5,366**	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**691**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees. Aggregate data from the May 18, 2009, grantees' reports to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

   The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]The sum of the statistics in the site-specific rows might not sum to the statistics in the row for the entire state. In California, Florida, and Washington, this pattern could arise due to rounding. An additional reason in California is that two spouses could not be assigned to either the Camp Pendleton site or the San Diego site. The data for both sites in California were provided in a single file.

[b]The Fort Walton Beach data were provided in two files, one for Eglin Air Force Base and one for Hurlburt. The data from these files has been combined for analysis.

[c]The Hawaii data were provided in three files: one for the Kaneohe Marine base, one for the Pearl Harbor Navy and Hickam Air Force bases, and one for the Schofield Army base. The data from these files has been combined for analysis.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

Likewise, CAA recipients with sponsors of a certain military rank are not represented across states in the individual-level data in the same way as they are in the aggregate data (Table IV.2). For example, while California awarded 34 percent of CAAs as of May 15, 2009, based on the aggregate data from states' weekly reports to DOL, 44 percent of spouses in the individual-level data with junior enlisted sponsors (of rank E1 through E4) are from California. In contrast, 22 percent of the highest-ranking officers (O4 through O10) are from California. Florida shows a different pattern. In the aggregate data, 15 percent of spouses are from Florida; at 13 percent, the state is very slightly underrepresented in the spouses with junior enlisted sponsors (E1 through E4). However, the state is responsible for 32 percent of the highest-ranking officers (O4 through O10). Section B shows there is variation across the branches of services in the proportion of spouses with sponsors of different military ranks. Because the branches are not uniformly distributed across states, the sponsors of different military ranks are not uniformly distributed across states.

Table IV.2　Distribution of Military Spouses Across States and Sites, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

		Individual-Level Data						
State and Site	Aggregate Data	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
California[a]	25.6	34.0	43.6	37.2	26.9	27.9	22.2	30.6
Camp Pendleton	--	18.1	27.2	20.5	11.0	16.2	4.9	16.1
San Diego	--	15.8	16.3	16.7	15.9	11.7	17.3	11.3
Colorado	10.0	10.3	9.4	9.4	9.9	15.2	14.8	16.1
Florida[a]	17.8	14.7	12.7	16.7	13.4	20.3	32.1	0.0
Fort Walton Beach[b]	--	9.3	8.9	9.3	8.9	10.7	21.0	0.0
Jacksonville	--	5.4	3.9	7.4	4.5	9.6	11.1	0.0
Georgia	7.0	8.6	6.6	7.7	11.2	10.2	2.5	4.8
Hawaii[c]	7.7	1.2	1.2	1.5	1.0	1.5	2.5	0.0
Maine	3.2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
North Carolina	15.1	19.8	14.3	17.5	26.0	13.7	18.5	37.1
Washington[a]	13.7	11.2	12.1	9.9	11.7	11.2	7.4	11.3
Kitsap	--	2.9	2.5	1.9	4.2	2.0	3.7	0.0
Pierce	--	8.3	9.6	8.1	7.4	9.1	3.7	11.3
Sample Size	**5,366**	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**62**

Source:　Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees. Aggregate data from the May 18, 2009, grantees' reports to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009.

Notes:　Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a]The sum of the statistics in the site-specific rows might not sum to the statistics in the row for the entire state. In California, Florida, and Washington, this pattern could arise due to rounding. An additional reason in California is that two spouses could not be assigned to either the Camp Pendleton site or the San Diego site. The data for both sites in California were provided in a single file.

[b]The Fort Walton Beach data were provided in two files, one for Eglin Air Force Base and one for Hurlburt. The data from these files has been combined for analysis.

[c]The Hawaii data were provided in three files: one for the Kaneohe Marine base, one for the Pearl Harbor Navy and Hickam Air Force bases, and one for the Schofield Army base. The data from these files has been combined for analysis.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

B.   Characteristics of the Military Sponsors and the CAA Participants

Based on program eligibility rules, a military spouse becomes eligible for a CAA based in part on the characteristics of the sponsors. Examining the proportion of spouses with sponsors from different branches and ranks provides information about the provision of CAA services to spouses based on the military affiliations of the sponsors. It also can provide indirect insights about the characteristics of the military families to which CAA recipients belong.

1.   Characteristics of Sponsors

Within the analysis sample, 43 percent of all spouses had Army sponsors (Figure IV.1). The next most common branch of service was the Navy, with 26 percent of sponsors. The Air Force and Marines represented 14 and 17 percent of sponsors, respectively.

About 88 percent of all spouses had sponsors who were enlisted (E-level sponsors) while almost all of the remainder were officers (O-level sponsors).[31] Twenty-nine percent had sponsors of rank E1 to E4, 23 percent had sponsors of rank E5, and 36 percent had higher-ranking enlisted sponsors. The rest consisted of spouses with officer sponsors (8 percent with rank O1 to O3 and 3 percent with rank O4 or higher) and sponsors of another type of rank (such as warrant officers, at 2 percent). For most military personnel, the monthly salary depends on the military personnel's years of service and rank. For example, as of April 2007, military basic monthly pay for active duty personnel was $1,301 for an E-1 with less than 2 years of tenure; it was $2,582 for an E-5 with over 20 years of tenure. Military basic monthly pay was $ 2,469 for an O-1 with less than 2 years of tenure and $5,356 for an O-3 with over 20 years of tenure (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007).[32]

About two-fifths of spouses in the analysis file had sponsors whose ranks would have made the spouses initially ineligible for a CAA (Figure IV.2).   As mentioned earlier in this chapter, DOL and DoD initially restricted eligibility to military spouses married to a service member/sponsor who was at the E1-E5 levels or O1-O3 levels. However, in April 2008, this restriction was lifted, and military spouses of service members of all ranks became eligible. The individual-level data used for the analysis of spouses' characteristics was restricted to spouses with enrollment dates after mid-July 2008.   Therefore, the distributions of sponsors' military ranks shown in Figure IV.2 are not influenced by the initial exclusion of spouses with sponsors of ranks E6 to E9 and O4 to O10. The percentages of spouses with sponsors of rank E1 to E4, E5, and O1 to O3 (which were the ranks that were originally targeted) were 29, 23, and 7 percent, respectively, yielding a total of 59 percent (after rounding is taken into account). Thus, the expansion in eligible ranks allowed participation by a large number of spouses with more senior enlisted or officer sponsors, as well as some spouses with sponsors of another type of rank.

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[31] Generally, enlisted services members have at least a high school diploma, or an equivalent credential, while officers have a bachelor's or graduate degree.

[32] In addition to a monthly salary, all service members receive benefits such as housing and subsistence allowance, medical and dental care, and annual vacations.

FIGURE IV.1

SPONSORS' BRANCH OF MILITARY SERVICE
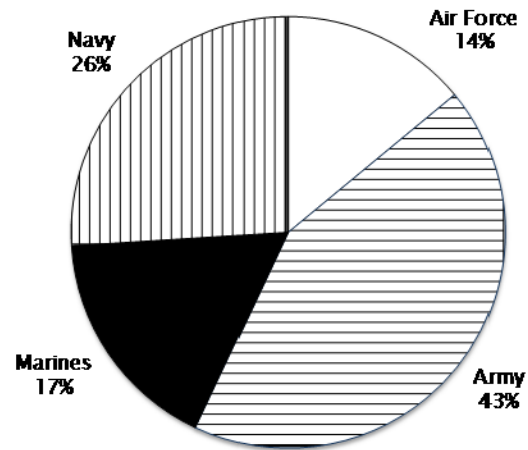
Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

FIGURE IV.2

SPONSORS' MILITARY RANK
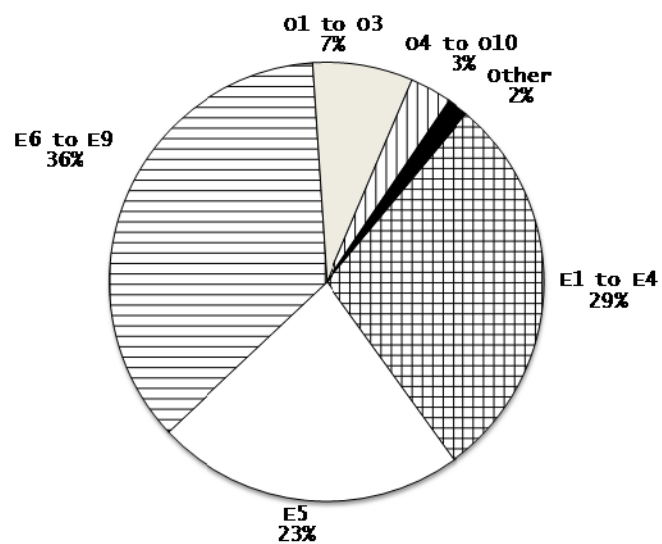
Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Across branches of service, the Marines showed the highest percentage of spouses with sponsors of lower-level enlisted ranks. Among spouses with Marine sponsors, 43 percent were ranked E1 to E4, and 8 percent were of an any officer rank (Table IV.3).[33,34] Other branches of service had higher proportions of spouses with sponsors who were officers or of higher enlisted ranks. For example, 25 percent of sponsors in the Air Force base had a rank from E1 to E4, while 20 percent were officers. This relationship between rank and branch of service can be viewed in

Table IV.3 Characteristics of Military Sponsors, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Military Sponsor's Rank					
E1 to E4	28.8	25.3	25.0	43.3	27.5
E5	22.7	19.6	21.7	25.7	24.3
E6 to E9	36.1	35.6	42.1	21.4	36.4
O1 to O3	7.5	11.7	6.7	6.5	7.4
O4 to O10	3.1	7.9	1.8	1.1	3.9
Other[a]	1.6	0.0	2.8	2.0	0.4
Length Remaining at Current Assignment[b]					
Less than one year	6.7	4.6	3.3	10.9	10.4
One to two years	26.7	22.0	16.9	34.0	40.4
Two to three years	29.0	18.8	31.9	27.6	30.8
More than three years	27.5	16.0	40.0	26.2	14.2
Missing	10.2	38.6	7.9	1.3	4.2
Average length[c] (years)	2.5	2.4	3.0	2.3	2.1
Sample Size	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**691**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]Almost all spouses in this category have sponsors who are warrant officers (W1 through W5). However, there is one spouse for whom the sponsor rank was listed in the Access data tool as an "other" rank.

[b]This is calculated using the enrollment date as the starting point for the length of time remaining in the current assignment. Appendix A describes how the enrollment date, which is not a term officially used in the Demonstration, is defined.

[c]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

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[33] The "All Spouses" column in Table IV.3 duplicates the information in Figure IV.2.

[34] Tables IV.3 and IV.4 differ slightly from each other, since statistics that would be primarily tautological, such as the percentage of Air Force sponsors that are in the Air Force, are deleted from each table. The information that is not tautological is presented in the figures in the chapter.

another way in Table IV.4.[35] While 17 percent of all spouses had Marine sponsors, 26 percent of spouses with sponsors of rank E1 through E4 and 6 percent of spouses with sponsors of rank O4 or higher were from the Marines. Fourteen percent of all spouses had Air Force sponsors, but 36 percent of spouses with sponsors of rank O4 or higher were from the Air Force. Navy sponsors also were overrepresented among the highest-ranking officers (at 33 percent), compared to the Navy's share of all spouses (26 percent).

The average length of time sponsors of spouses have remaining on base, based on spouses with nonmissing information, was 2.5 years (Table IV.3). Eligibility for a CAA was restricted throughout much of the demonstration period to military spouses with sponsors who had a minimum of one year of duty assignment left at the demonstration base, although an exception was when the spouse

Table IV.4 Characteristics of Military Sponsors, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Branch of Service							
Air Force	14.0	12.4	12.1	13.9	21.8	35.8	0.0
Army	42.5	36.8	40.4	49.4	37.6	24.7	69.0
Marines	17.1	25.8	19.4	10.2	14.7	6.2	19.0
Navy	26.3	25.1	28.1	26.5	25.9	33.3	12.1
Length Remaining at Current Assignment[a]							
Less than one year	6.7	6.2	8.4	5.9	6.6	9.9	3.2
One to two years	26.7	26.6	25.3	27.1	31.5	34.6	9.7
Two to three years	29.0	31.2	29.8	28.2	25.9	23.5	22.6
More than three years	27.5	26.7	27.8	29.0	23.9	12.3	41.9
Missing	10.2	9.3	8.8	9.8	12.2	19.8	22.6
Average length[b] (years)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.1	3.3
Sample Size	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**62**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a]This is calculated using the enrollment date as the starting point for the length of time remaining in the current assignment. Appendix A describes how the enrollment date, which is not a term officially used in the Demonstration, is defined.

[b]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

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[35] The "All Spouses" column in Table IV.4 duplicates the information in Figure IV.1.

selected training that could be completed before departure from the assigned base.[36] About 7 percent of sponsors had less than one year remaining on base. About equal percentages of sponsors had one to two years on base (27 percent), two to three years on base (29 percent), and more than three years on base (28 percent). However, 10 percent had missing information on this measure. Spouses with sponsors in the Army tended to have the longest time remaining on base, on average, at three years. Navy sponsors had the shortest average remaining time on base, at 2.1 years.

Across all the grouped categories of rank of sponsors, the average length of time remaining in the current assignment ranged from 2.1 years for officers of rank O4 or higher to 3.3 years for spouses with sponsors of an "other" rank, typically warrant officers (Table IV.4). Most of the other categories of rank averaged about 2.5 years remaining on base at the time of the CAA enrollment.

2. Demographic Characteristics of CAA Participants

Consistent with the information site staff provided during site visits (see Part I), high proportions of CAA recipients were female and young, and many had young children (Table IV.5).[37] Overall, 97 percent of spouses in the analysis sample are female, and 95 percent or more of the spouses affiliated through their sponsors with each branch of service are female. With an average age of 29 years, 35 percent were age 18 to 25 when they submitted the process form, 45 percent were age 26 to 35, and 19 percent were older. Spouses with Marine sponsors tended to be younger than those with sponsors from other branches of services: 56 percent of spouses with Marine sponsors were age 25 or younger. Depending on how we handle spouses with missing information, we estimate that either 57 or 69 percent of spouses had young children under age 13; among those who had young children, the average number of young children was 2.

Table IV.5 Demographic Profile of CAA Recipients, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Percentage Female	97.3	94.8	97.3	99.6	97.3
Age (years)[a]					
18 to 25	35.2	30.5	29.8	56.1	32.6
26 to 35	45.4	44.4	50.0	33.9	46.2
36 and older	19.4	25.1	20.2	10.0	21.2
Average age	29.3	30.4	29.9	26.3	29.9
Has Children Under Age 13?					
Yes	57.3	60.3	54.5	48.2	66.1
No	26.1	24.2	21.6	38.0	26.8
Missing	16.6	15.5	23.9	13.8	7.1
Average Number of Children Under Age 13, If Any	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.9

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[36] In June 2009, DOL eliminated the criterion that the service member needed to have a minimum of one year remaining at the demonstration installation duty assignment. This policy change did not affect the spouses in the analysis sample, since the data extracts were received before this change.

[37] Throughout this chapter, all findings from the implementation study are from Part I of this document.

Table IV.5 *(continued)*

	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Racial and/or Hispanic Status					
White, non-Hispanic	52.4	66.0	53.2	52.3	44.9
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	21.0	15.9	26.5	13.1	20.9
Asian, non-Hispanic	6.5	4.4	3.8	4.7	12.4
Other, non-Hispanic[b]	3.2	1.9	3.2	4.0	3.2
Hispanic[c]	17.0	11.8	13.3	25.8	18.6
Education					
High school diploma	35.0	28.8	24.9	53.9	40.9
GED or equivalent	4.0	3.7	3.8	6.5	2.8
Some college but no diploma or degree	32.8	37.0	43.8	23.7	19.9
Vocational/technical/business diploma	3.0	3.4	4.8	0.0	1.9
Associate's degree or diploma	12.8	13.8	12.4	6.7	16.9
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	10.8	11.0	8.8	7.6	16.0
Other[d]	1.6	2.4	1.5	1.6	1.5
Sample Size	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**691**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]Age is calculated as of the intake date. The average age is calculated based on spouses with nonmissing information on birth dates and intake dates.

[b]This category includes "American Indian and Alaskan Native" and "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander."

[c]The method for collecting information on whether or not a spouse is Hispanic did not distinguish between responses of "no" and missing responses. Furthermore, 81 percent of spouses in the sample for whom the Hispanic box was checked were missing race information. Thus, the information about racial status and the information about Hispanic status have been combined into a single categorical variable. Most of the spouses who were recorded as Hispanic and for whom race information is nonmissing were coded as White.

[d]This category includes "Master's degree," "Ph.D.," and "Other post-secondary degree."

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

GED = General Educational Development.

Although the data do not indicate why the differences in the average ages of CAA participants exist across branches of services, it is possible that the patterns relate to the differences in the rank of the sponsors. As discussed in the previous section, Marine sponsors were more likely to be of a lower enlisted rank than were sponsors in other branches of service, while Air Force sponsors were more likely to be officers, including high-ranking ones. This view is supported by the statistics in Table IV.6, which show that the average age of the spouse is correlated with their sponsor's rank. So, assuming that younger spouses are married to younger sponsors with more junior ranks among officers or enlisted personnel, it is not surprising that the spouses with Marine sponsors were, on average, about four years younger than the spouses with Air Force sponsors.

Table IV.6 Demographic Profile of CAA Recipients, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Percentage Female	97.3	96.9	96.8	99.2	92.9	93.8	98.4
Age (years)[a]							
18 to 25	35.2	71.2	41.4	10.2	21.2	1.2	8.3
26 to 35	45.4	25.8	52.1	55.2	58.2	30.9	50.0
36 and older	19.4	3.0	6.6	34.6	20.6	67.9	41.7
Average age	29.3	24.1	27.4	33.3	30.7	38.0	35.0
Has Children Under Age 13?							
Yes	57.3	41.0	62.5	67.3	47.2	72.8	62.9
No	26.1	42.6	22.2	16.2	28.9	16.0	17.7
Missing	16.6	16.3	15.3	16.4	23.9	11.1	19.4
Average Number of Children Under Age 13, If Any	1.9	1.6	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.1
Racial and/or Hispanic Status							
White, non-Hispanic	52.4	58.7	49.7	45.4	67.1	73.0	35.3
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	21.0	15.9	21.1	26.7	17.1	4.1	31.4
Asian, non-Hispanic	6.5	4.1	5.9	9.0	5.3	5.4	5.9
Other, non-Hispanic[b]	3.2	2.9	3.9	3.1	1.8	4.1	3.9
Hispanic, no race specified[c]	17.0	18.5	19.3	15.7	8.8	13.5	23.5
Education							
High school diploma	35.0	43.6	38.7	31.5	15.8	17.3	26.9
GED or equivalent	4.0	5.9	3.4	3.5	2.8	0.0	3.8
Some college but no diploma or degree	32.8	33.4	31.5	35.6	22.0	24.0	38.5
Vocational/technical/business diploma	3.0	2.7	2.7	3.6	2.8	1.3	5.8
Associate's degree or diploma	12.8	8.5	14.0	15.5	13.6	8.0	15.4
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	10.8	4.9	9.5	9.3	36.2	37.3	5.8
Other[d]	1.6	1.0	0.4	0.9	6.8	12.0	3.8
Sample Size	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**60**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a] Age is calculated as of the intake date. The average age is calculated based on spouses with nonmissing information on birth dates and intake dates.

[b] This category includes "American Indian and Alaskan Native" and "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander."

[c] The method for collecting information on whether or not a spouse is Hispanic did not distinguish between responses of "no" and missing responses. Furthermore, 81 percent of spouses for whom the Hispanic box was checked are missing race information. Thus, the information about racial status was combined with the information about Hispanic status into a single categorical variable. Most of the spouses who were recorded as Hispanic and for whom race information is nonmissing were coded as White.

[d] This category includes "Master's degree," "Ph.D.," and "Other post-secondary degree."

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

GED = General Educational Development.

The racial and ethnic composition of spouses varied across branches of service of the sponsor (Table IV.5). Overall, slightly more than half (52 percent) of spouses were described as white, non-Hispanic; another 21 percent were black or African American, non-Hispanic; and 17 percent were Hispanic.[38] However, across branches of service, the percentage of spouses who were white, non-Hispanic ranged from 45 percent with Navy sponsors to 66 percent with Air Force sponsors. The percentages who were black or African American, non-Hispanic ranged from 13 percent in the Marines to 27 percent in the Army, while the percent who were Hispanic ranged from 12 percent for the Air Force to 26 percent for the Marines.

Across ranks (Table IV.6), 73 percent of spouses with the highest-ranking officer sponsors (O4 or higher) were white, non-Hispanic, compared to 52 percent of all spouses. Among spouses with high-ranking noncommissioned officers (E6 or higher), 27 percent were black or African American, non-Hispanic, compared to 21 percent for all spouses.

All spouses who receive a CAA have been required to have a high school diploma or GED credential. About one-third (35 percent) had a high school diploma as their highest education level attained, while an almost comparable share (33 percent) had some college but no diploma or degree (Table IV.5). More than half (54 percent) of spouses with Marine sponsors and 41 percent of spouses with Navy sponsors had a high school diploma as their highest education level, whereas these statistics for spouses with Air Force and Army sponsors were 29 and 25 percent, respectively. Depending on the branch of service, the percentage of spouses with a GED as the highest level of education ranged from about 3 to about 7 percent.

Spouses with officer sponsors were more likely than spouses with enlisted sponsors to have a bachelor's degree (Table IV.6). Thirty-six percent of spouses with a junior officer (O1 to O3) as a sponsor, and 37 percent of those with a more senior officer as a sponsor, had a bachelor's degree or equivalent when they applied for a CAA, compared to 5 percent of those with a sponsor of rank E1 to E4. For both the spouses' education levels and the percentage of spouses with children, the differences across the rank subgroups might depend, in part, on the difference in average ages of the spouses in the subgroups. Other unknown factors might be important as well.

3. Prior Employment Experiences of CAA Participants

The CAA program did not impose any eligibility requirements related to spouses' prior employment experiences. However, site staff were instructed to collect information about different facets of each spouse's employment experience at intake (the time of application for a CAA). In Tables IV.7 and IV.8, this information is reported for three sets of spouses. The first panel of these two tables presents information for all spouses about whether they were currently employed, formerly employed, or had never been employed. The second panel presents information for spouses who, at the time of intake, were working or had previously worked. For these spouses, information was to be gathered about the occupation, the wage (or earnings) rate at the current or most recent job, and the hours worked per week. The third panel presents information for spouses who had previously worked but who were not currently working. For them, additional information

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[38] The data tool requested separate information about a spouse's race and his or her ethnicity (Hispanic status). As explained in a note to the table, information about spouses' race and ethnicity are combined in the table because of problems in the reporting of the data.

Table IV.7 Labor Market History of CAA Recipients, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
All Recipients					
Employment Status at Intake					
Employed[a]	28.9	44.6	32.2	27.6	15.9
Not currently employed but had previous employment	28.1	16.9	47.9	4.7	17.5
Not currently or previously employed	21.9	34.0	9.9	65.6	6.7
Missing	21.0	4.6	10.0	2.2	59.9
Sample Size	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**690**
Recipients with a Current or Former Job					
Occupation[b]					
Office and Administrative Support	18.2	8.9	21.9	2.8	22.1
Sales and Related	10.3	4.0	12.3	1.4	14.7
Education, Training, and Library	5.8	5.3	6.5	0.7	6.9
Food Preparation and Serving Related	5.1	1.8	6.3	0.0	6.9
Personal Care and Service	4.5	2.7	5.6	0.7	4.3
Health Care Support	4.3	2.2	4.9	0.7	6.1
Management	4.1	3.5	4.6	0.0	5.6
Health Care Practitioners and Technical	3.4	3.1	3.1	0.7	6.5
Business and Financial Operations	2.9	1.8	3.2	0.0	4.8
Other	9.7	5.3	12.2	0.7	10.0
Missing	31.8	61.5	19.4	92.4	12.1
Wage Per Hour					
$7.00 or less	17.1	10.6	23.0	4.9	8.2
$7.01 to $10.00	30.8	36.7	28.2	31.3	35.1
$10.01 to $15.00	24.5	15.9	24.3	34.0	27.7
$15.01 or more	15.3	11.5	14.0	20.1	21.2
Missing	12.3	25.2	10.6	9.7	7.8
Average wage per hour[c]	10.74	10.16	10.18	12.32	12.28
Hours Worked Per Week					
20 or fewer	19.1	11.1	20.8	26.4	16.0
More than 20, but no more than 30	14.8	9.7	16.9	18.1	10.0
More than 30, but less than 40	7.2	8.4	7.6	6.3	4.3
40	40.7	30.5	43.5	33.3	45.0
More than 40	3.6	3.5	4.3	3.5	1.3
Missing	14.6	36.7	7.0	12.5	23.4
Average hours per week[c]	32.6	34.0	32.6	29.7	33.1
Sample Size	**1,499**	**226**	**895**	**144**	**231**
Recipients Not Currently Employed, but Had Previously Been Employed					
Reason No Longer Employed					
Quit because of PCS move	32.6	40.3	34.2	28.6	22.3
Quit for other reason	23.8	11.3	22.8	4.8	38.0
Health problems or pregnancy prevent working	7.2	8.1	7.1	0.0	8.3
Temporary/contract work ended	6.4	3.2	6.7	4.8	6.6
Laid off	5.6	3.2	3.7	0.0	15.7
Child care issues prevent working	5.6	4.8	6.9	0.0	0.8
Other[d]	3.4	0.0	3.7	0.0	4.1
Missing	15.6	29.0	14.8	61.9	4.1

Table IV.7 *(continued)*

Characteristic	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Months Since Most Recent Previous Employment[e]					
3 months or less	14.8	4.8	16.1	14.3	14.1
More than 3 months but no more than 1 year	25.6	24.2	24.7	28.6	29.8
More than 1 year but no more than 2 years	13.4	9.7	12.7	23.8	16.5
More than 2 years but no more than 5 years	14.5	16.1	15.1	4.8	12.4
More than 5 years	10.2	6.5	10.1	0.0	14.1
Missing	21.7	38.7	21.3	28.6	13.2
Average time since last employment[c] (months)	24.6	25.8	24.7	12.3	25.6
UI Status at Intake					
UI claimant	3.7	1.6	4.5	0.0	1.7
UI exhaustee	1.9	1.6	2.2	0.0	0.8
Neither claimant nor exhaustee	56.6	41.9	50.7	38.1	93.4
Missing	37.9	54.8	42.6	61.9	4.1
Sample Size	**739**	**62**	**535**	**21**	**121**

Source:　　Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes:　　Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

　　　　　In the top panel of the table, the sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses. For a similar reason, the middle panel in the table shows a slight discrepancy between the sample size in the "All Spouses" column and the sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service.

[a] The data tool is designed to distinguish between an employment status at intake of "Employed" and "Employed, but received notice of termination of employment or military separation." These categories were combined because few spouses were reported as having the latter employment status.

[b] The data tool is designed to collect detailed O*Net information on occupations. The O*Net classification scheme uses 23 major groups to categorize occupations. The detailed codes were combined into the major groups. Major groups that were infrequently used were combined into the "other" category.

[c] This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[d] The data tool distinguished between "fired," "does not want to work anymore," and an other/specify category. These categories have been combined because the first two were infrequently used.

[e] The calculation of the months since most recent employment uses the enrollment date as the start date. Appendix A describes the construction of the enrollment date in more detail. For a few spouses, the number of months since most recent employment is calculated to be negative; these values have been set to 1 day.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

PCS = Permanent Change of Station.

UI = unemployment insurance.

Table IV.8 Labor Market History of CAA Recipients, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
All Recipients							
Employment Status at Intake							
Employed[a]	28.9	25.8	29.6	31.1	30.5	22.2	32.3
Not currently employed but had							
previous employment	28.1	23.5	25.3	32.3	31.5	33.3	29.0
Not currently or previously employed	21.9	28.4	24.4	16.0	19.8	22.2	16.1
Missing	21.0	22.3	20.7	20.6	18.3	22.2	22.6
Sample Size	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**62**
Recipients with a Current or Former Job							
Occupation[b]							
Office and Administrative Support	18.2	17.0	18.5	18.9	18.9	15.6	15.8
Sales and Related	10.3	11.9	10.8	11.0	4.1	6.7	5.3
Education, Training, and Library	5.8	2.7	4.3	6.4	10.7	24.4	2.6
Food Preparation and Serving Related	5.1	6.5	5.2	4.7	4.9	2.2	0.0
Personal Care and Service	4.5	6.2	5.2	4.0	0.8	0.0	5.3
Health Care Support	4.3	3.8	4.9	5.0	1.6	2.2	2.6
Management	4.1	1.6	2.8	5.5	7.4	4.4	7.9
Health Care Practitioners and							
Technical	3.4	2.4	3.1	4.0	4.9	2.2	2.6
Business and Financial Operations	2.9	0.8	0.9	4.5	4.9	6.7	5.3
Other	9.7	7.3	13.2	8.5	9.0	15.6	15.8
Missing	31.8	39.9	31.1	27.4	32.8	20.0	36.8
Wage Per Hour							
$7.00 or less	17.1	21.8	16.0	16.4	13.9	6.7	13.2
$7.01 to $10.00	30.8	39.6	28.6	27.9	27.1	24.4	26.3
$10.01 to $15.00	24.5	21.0	28.6	24.8	22.1	22.2	29.0
$15.01 or more	15.3	8.6	12.0	17.7	26.2	28.9	21.1
Missing	12.3	8.9	14.8	13.2	10.7	17.8	10.5
Average wage per hour[c]	10.74	9.17	10.77	11.07	12.42	14.55	11.43
Hours Worked Per Week							
20 or fewer	19.1	19.7	19.7	17.9	22.1	17.8	18.4
More than 20, but no more than 30	14.8	21.3	13.5	13.7	12.3	4.4	0.0
More than 30, but less than 40	7.2	9.4	5.5	6.2	5.7	6.7	21.1
40	40.7	33.2	41.9	43.8	40.2	48.9	47.4
More than 40	3.6	3.2	3.4	4.4	2.5	2.2	2.6
Missing	14.6	13.2	16.0	14.1	17.2	20.0	10.5
Average hours per week[c]	32.6	31.5	32.5	33.3	31.3	33.0	34.3
Sample Size	**1,499**	**371**	**325**	**598**	**122**	**45**	**38**
Recipients Not Currently Employed, but Had Previously Been Employed							
Reason No Longer Employed							
Quit because of PCS move	32.6	38.4	30.0	27.9	46.8	37.0	22.2
Quit for other reason	23.8	22.6	22.0	23.6	27.4	29.6	33.3
Health problems or pregnancy							
prevent working	7.2	8.5	8.0	6.9	6.5	0.0	5.6
Temporary/contract work ended	6.4	4.0	7.3	8.5	1.6	7.4	0.0
Laid off	5.6	4.0	6.7	6.6	1.6	3.7	11.1
Child care issues prevent working	5.6	6.2	6.7	4.9	1.6	3.7	16.7
Other[d]	3.4	2.3	2.7	5.3	1.6	0.0	0.0
Missing	15.6	14.1	16.7	16.4	12.9	18.5	11.1

Table IV.8 *(continued)*

Characteristic	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Months Since Most Recent Previous Employment[e]							
3 months or less	14.7	19.2	12.7	14.1	11.3	11.1	16.7
More than 3 months but no more than 1 year	25.6	35.0	28.0	19.0	27.4	22.2	22.2
More than 1 year but no more than 2 years	13.4	16.4	14.0	12.8	9.7	14.8	0.0
More than 2 years but no more than 5 years	14.5	9.0	16.0	18.4	14.5	0.0	11.1
More than 5 years	10.2	2.3	6.7	14.1	8.1	25.9	33.3
Missing	21.7	18.1	22.7	21.6	29.0	25.9	16.7
Average time since last employment[c] (months)	24.6	12.9	21.2	30.6	21.2	44.7	54.1
UI Status at Intake							
UI claimant	3.7	1.7	4.7	3.6	3.2	3.7	16.7
UI exhaustee	1.9	1.1	4.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Neither claimant nor exhaustee	56.6	61.0	55.3	54.4	67.7	59.3	16.7
Missing	37.9	36.2	36.0	40.0	29.0	37.0	66.7
Sample Size	**739**	177	150	305	62	27	18

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a] The data tool is designed to distinguish between an employment status at intake of "Employed" and "Employed, but received notice of termination of employment or military separation." These categories were combined because few spouses were reported as having the latter employment status.

[b] The data tool is designed to collect detailed O*Net information on occupations. The O*Net classification scheme uses 23 major groups to categorize occupations. The detailed codes were combined into the major groups. Major groups that were infrequently used were combined into the "other" category.

[c] This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[d] The data tool distinguished between "fired," "does not want to work anymore," and an other/specify category. These categories have been combined because the first two were infrequently used.

[e] The calculation of the months since most recent employment uses the enrollment date as the start date. Appendix A describes the construction of the enrollment date in more detail. For a few spouses, the number of months since most recent employment is calculated to be negative; these values have been set to 1 day.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

PCS = Permanent Change of Station.

UI = unemployment insurance.

is reported about the reason for the job separation from the most recent job, the length of time that had passed since that job, and whether or not a spouse was collecting, or had previously collected, unemployment insurance (UI) benefits.

However, the discussion about spouses' work experiences provides only a brief overview of the patterns in the data, without delving into many of the details or precise statistics, because all facets

of this topic are plagued by high rates of missing information (Tables IV.7 and IV.8).[39] Furthermore, the prevalence of missing data varies considerably by branch of service (Table IV.7).[40]

Differences across branches of service in the comprehensiveness of the data are likely to arise due to differences across specific military bases in the processes for data collection and data entry. Two common reasons heard from site staff for the missing information on spouses' employment histories were that (1) information was not initially collected from the spouses; and (2) the data entry process, particularly for occupation code, was time-consuming and inefficient. Given the high rates of missing data and the patterns in the employment status of spouses, there are few spouses for some military branch subgroups in the third panel of the table.

Unlike the wide variation across branches of service in the prevalence of missing data, however, the prevalence of missing data for the subgroups based on the sponsors' ranks is more uniform (Table IV.8). As Table IV.7 shows, for example, the percentage of spouses with missing data on their employment status at intake ranged from 2 percent for the Marines to 60 percent for the Navy. In contrast, as Table IV.8 shows, the percentages range from 18 percent for spouses with sponsors ranked O1 to O3 to 23 percent for spouses with sponsors of an "other" rank (that is, not enlisted or an officer). This pattern occurs because the rates of missing data depend heavily on the base in which the information was to be collected, and not on the rank of the sponsor. For example, if California had a high rate of missing data for a particular employment characteristic, then this information was missing at a high rate for all rank subgroups because—overall—California is a large portion of the sample. Alternatively, if California had a low rate of missing information for a data item, then the rate of missing data for each rank subgroup was more likely to be low.

Overall, despite the limitations in the information in these tables, some interesting patterns emerge (Table IV.7). Among all spouses with nonmissing information about the employment status at intake, about equal portions (about 28 percent of all spouses) were currently working and were not working but had previously worked. A somewhat smaller portion (22 percent of all spouses) had never worked. If these statistics are adjusted for the percentage of spouses with missing information, then the percentages of spouses who are currently employed, formerly employed, and had never been employed are 37, 36, and 28 percent, respectively.

Spouses with Air Force sponsors were the most likely to have been currently working at the time of intake. Spouses with Army sponsors were more likely than those with sponsors in other branches of service to have been previously but not currently employed, and about two-thirds of

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[39] For example, 21 percent of spouses have missing information on their employment status. Among spouses with a current or former job, occupation information is missing for almost one-third of spouses (32 percent), and wage and hour information is missing for between 12 and 15 percent. For those with a former job but no current job, information on the reasons for, and time since, the job separation is missing for 16 and 22 percent, respectively. In addition, information about the spouse's UI status at the time of intake is missing for more than one-third (38 percent) of formerly employed spouses.

[40] For example, spouses' employment statuses are missing for 2 percent of spouses with Marine sponsors and 60 percent of spouses with Navy sponsors. Among spouses with a current or former job, however, an opposite pattern exists: 92 percent of spouses with Marine sponsors and 12 percent of spouses with Navy sponsors are missing occupation information.

spouses with Marine sponsors had never worked. It is possible that this finding arises because, compared to spouses with sponsors from other branches, Marine spouses are younger on average.

Among spouses with a current or former job, the two most common occupations were office and administrative support and sales and related occupations (Table IV.7). These occupations were common regardless of the branch of service of the spouses' sponsor. Other common occupations were education, training, and library occupations; and food preparation and serving occupations.

Among spouses who had a current or former job and who had nonmissing information, the average wage per hour and hours worked per week were $10.74 and 33 hours, respectively (Table IV.7). Spouses with sponsors in the Marines and Navy had higher wages (about $12.30 per hour) compared to spouses with sponsors in the Air Force or Army (about $10.17 per hour). This variation in wages across branches of service might depend on the cost of living in the area in which the spouse lives, as well as the spouse's education, prior employment experiences, job opportunities on or near the military base, and other factors. About 41 percent of all spouses with a current or former job and 49 percent of those with nonmissing information (not shown) worked 40 hours per week.

Thirty-three percent of spouses who were not employed at the time of intake but who had a previous job (Table IV.7) reported that they were no longer employed because they quit due to a permanent change of station (PCS) move. After adjusting for spouses with missing information about the job separation reason, the rate is 39 percent (not shown). It also was common for spouses to report that they quit for another reason. (Details of these reasons for spouses having quit their jobs are not available.) These reasons for leaving the prior job were the most common ones, regardless of the sponsor's branch of service. The average time without a job for formerly employed spouses was a little longer than two years (25 months) among spouses with nonmissing information. This also was the case for spouses with Air Force, Army, and Navy sponsors. The average for spouses with Marine sponsors was about one year (12 months), although this average is based on few spouses.

Although information about spouses' UI status at intake is missing for 38 percent of spouses who had a former but no current job, the data show that few spouses were collecting or had exhausted UI benefits (Table IV.7). This is the case regardless of the branch of service. Information is not available on why most of these spouses were not currently collecting or had not previously collected UI benefits. Although quitting one's job is a common reason across states for disqualification for benefits, some states do not disqualify someone if he or she moves to follow a spouse who has relocated due to a job.

Examining the employment experiences of spouses across subgroups based on the rank of the spouse's sponsor leads to broad conclusions similar to those drawn from the full sample of spouses and from the subgroups by branch of service (Table IV.8). Themes that emerge based on these data are that (1) spouses with junior enlisted sponsors (E1 to E4) are less likely to have ever worked than are spouses with higher-ranking sponsors, and spouses with senior enlisted sponsors (E6 or higher) are the most likely to ever have worked; (2) spouses with sponsors who are officers are more likely to have or have had a job in an education, training, or library occupation; (3) currently or formerly employed spouses with sponsors of higher rank had higher wages, on average; and (4) formerly

employed spouses with sponsors of lower enlisted or officer ranks (E1 to E4 and O1 to O3) were more likely to report having left their prior jobs due to a PCS.[41]

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[41] The data also show that the length of time since last employment for formerly employed spouses with high-ranking officer sponsors (O4 to O10) was much longer than for spouses with sponsors of lower rank; however, this statistic should be treated especially cautiously since it is based on very few spouses.

V. SPOUSES' CAA ELIGIBILITY AND PLANS

The demonstration intended that spouses would self-manage how they used their CAAs. However, site staff were responsible for ensuring that spouses who received CAAs were eligible for the funding on the basis of their plans for using it. The main requirement was that the spouses must use their CAAs to pursue education and training programs, and, ultimately, careers, in nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields. Furthermore, staff had to ensure that other conditions for eligibility, such as the spouses' relationship to the military through their sponsors, were met before a CAA was awarded.

This chapter explores two aspects of spouses' involvement in the CAA program: (1) the process for determining their eligibility, and (2) the types of education or training programs that spouses planned to participate in.[42] Section A explains the key steps and dates in the eligibility determination process, then presents data on the speed at which spouses moved through these steps. Section B presents information about spouses' CAA plans, including the credentials they are planning to obtain and the characteristics of the training and education programs for those who planned to attend a program. As explained in Chapter I, the report does not examine spouses' outcomes after their initial CAA plans, because most spouses in the analysis data file were still involved in their programs when the data became available for analysis.[43]

Key Findings About Spouses' CAA Eligibility and Plans:

- Many spouses moved quickly through the steps in the CAA application process to determine their eligibility for a CAA. Among spouses with nonmissing information, the average number of days between the intake date and the final eligibility determination was about seven.

- Spouses with Marine sponsors achieved eligibility especially quickly compared to spouses with sponsors from another branch of service, while the rank of the sponsor of a spouse does not seem to have had a strong influence on the speed at which the CAA application was processed.

- Spouses typically planned to use their CAA for an Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or occupational skills certificate or credential. Planned careers in the health care and education fields were common.

- Among spouses who planned to participate in an education or training program, about two-fifths (42 percent) planned to use their CAAs to attend a community college. About one-quarter were expecting to receive their instruction through distance (Internet) learning, and about 55 percent planned to have their program last more than one year.

- Spouses with Air Force sponsors were more likely than other spouses to plan to attend a four-year university, to attend the program in person, and to attend longer. Marine spouses were more likely to plan to participate in a program offered from a propriety school and as distance learning, whereas Army and Navy spouses were more likely to plan to attend a community college. Spouses of officers were more likely to plan to attend a four-year university, but the rank of the sponsor does not seem to have a strong relationship to the delivery method or length of the planned program.

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[42] Chapter IV describes the individual-level data used in this chapter, including the methods used for analysis and the data's limitations.

[43] An exception is that Appendix C presents information from two sites (Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville) about spouses' receipt of WIA-funded services.

A. Overview of the Process and the Speed at Which Spouses Achieved CAA Eligibility

This section presents information about the pace at which spouses progressed through the steps to determine eligibility for a CAA and start using their CAA funds for training. The eligibility determination process is complex, with several steps to be completed and dates that sites record to keep track of spouses' progress through the steps. Therefore, before statistics based on the individual-level data are presented, this section gives an overview of the process and an explanation of the different dates.

1. Key Steps and Dates in the CAA Eligibility Determination Process

As described in detail in the implementation report, spouses had to follow certain steps before they could receive education and training funds through this demonstration.[44,45] First, they had to attend an orientation session to learn about the demonstration and the process for opening an account. Sites held these sessions so that spouses could get answers to questions and, in some cases, speak individually with military or workforce demonstration staff. Orientations were usually held at the military bases and involved staff from both the base and the One-Stop Career Center. The orientation was typically, but not always, a formal group presentation that focused on the demonstration's guidelines by reviewing who could participate, what career fields and training programs were eligible, and how to progress through the enrollment process. In a few sites, representatives from education institutions also attended group orientations. At some sites, orientations could also serve as the beginning step in getting a CAA approved, though it was unlikely that all the required steps could be completed to fully open an account. Five demonstration sites had potential participants begin the application process immediately following orientation.

DOL and DoD developed a standardized process form that guided spouses through the steps to enroll in the demonstration and open a CAA. The form required that participants provide identifying information about themselves and their sponsors. It also required that they identify their intended education plan, including career goal, intended program of study, and intended education institution. The date on which the CAA applicants signed and submitted the process form is referred to as the intake date. The intake date is missing in the data for 15 percent of the sample (Table B.2 in Appendix B.)

The process form also included a section to verify that the applicant met the eligibility requirements based on his or her relationship with the sponsor and the military. This portion of the form had space for the signatures of the voluntary education officer and the wing/base/garrison commander to indicate that the applicant met the military eligibility criteria for a CAA. Base leadership could designate the signature authority for military verification to other people. For this analysis, the date on which a spouse is determined to have met the eligibility criteria related to his or her relationship with the military is referred to as the date of military eligibility determination.

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[44] Throughout this chapter, all findings from the implementation study are from Part I.

[45] These steps are presented in a stylized manner here. The implementation report described the process in greater detail, including how some sites deviated from this stylized sequence of steps.

Next, applicants often met with workforce partner staff to review the process form and facilitated the completion of the eligibility determination process. When the One-Stop Career Center received the military-approved process form from the applicant or military center, it was to fill in information on the servicing One-Stop Career Center, note whether a CAA was awarded and, if so, for what amount, and fax the completed form to the education support office for DoD, known as Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). In determining the participant's eligibility, One-Stop Career Center staff reviewed the participant's selected career goal, education goal, and training program as listed on the form to ensure that they were appropriate to the demonstration and for the individual. As discussed in the implementation report, One-Stop Career Centers in at least seven sites required that applicants submit an education plan in addition to what they listed on the process form. While the content of the requested education plan varied across sites, it often included the selected education or training program; documentation that the participant applied to, or was accepted by, the education institution; the program start date; the anticipated program end date; and the total program cost.

In all sites, the workforce partner was responsible for officially enrolling participants in the demonstration, although the final signature authority to approve the CAA varied across sites. Many sites gave this authority to the frontline staff who reviewed participants' eligibility, but some sites required approval from their supervisors and/or the One-Stop Career Center director. For this analysis, the date on which a spouse is determined to have met all the eligibility criteria from both the military perspective and the workforce investment system perspective is referred to as the date of final eligibility determination.

While not officially a part of the CAA application process, another important date in the early phase of spouses' participation in the CAA program is when the spouse begins his or her training or education program. For simplicity, and to measure the two-year time window for which a spouse is eligible for a CAA, DOL has referred to this date as the CAA start date.

When reviewing the information presented in the next section, it will be important to recognize that the CAA start date is missing for about one-third (34 percent) of spouses in the analysis sample. (See Tables B.2 and B.3 in Appendix B.) According to site staff, a common reason that this date is missing is because, when the One-Stop Career Center staff entered data into the data tool, the staff did not routinely know the date when a spouse started or would start his or her training program. Another reason, described in the implementation study report, pertains to how sites defined when a CAA was officially open. At the two sites in California, for example, participants were not required to complete the application or enrollment process for their selected program in order to complete the CAA application approval process, although they were asked to select a career field and available education or training program. Thus, these sites did not expect all participants who completed the process actually to follow through with enrolling in an education or training program and opening an account.[46] Thus, it is likely that some of the spouses with missing CAA start dates in the analysis file did not, in fact, begin participation in a training or education program.

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[46] The implementation study report describes how these sites instituted an expiration date for approved CAAs if spouses did not enroll in an education or training program, so that funds could be de-obligated if the spouse was not likely to use them. Other sites, such as Georgia and Hawaii, required a commitment by the spouse to enroll in education or training before the CAA application was approved, such as documentation of their acceptance into and enrollment in their selected education or training program or the establishment of a payment system with the institution.

2.   Speed at Which Spouses Attained CAA Eligibility and Began Using Their CAA

Many spouses moved quickly through the steps in the CAA application process (Table V.1). Across all branches of military service, half of the spouses in the analysis sample (50 percent) were able to complete intake (submit their process form) on the same day they attended an orientation session. Furthermore, 89 percent of spouses were determined to have met the military eligibility criteria on the same day they completed the process form. Almost half (47 percent) of spouses were determined to have met all eligibility criteria on the same day they met the military eligibility criteria, although this information is missing for 10 percent of spouses. After adjusting for the missing data, the percentage of spouses who had the military and final eligibility determinations on the same day was 52 percent. Although many spouses proceeded quickly through these different steps, the average number of days between steps is influenced by the portion of spouses who took a long time to do so. For example, 40 percent of spouses had 15 or more days between their orientation and intake dates, which means that the average number of days between these steps for all spouses (with nonmissing dates) is 22. The average number of days between the intake date and the military eligibility determination date is 3, while the average between the military eligibility determination date and the final eligibility determination date is 17. The data do not indicate why some spouses took longer than others to proceed through these steps. However, during evaluation team site visits, site staff reported there was considerable variation in the amount of time that spouses needed to decide upon an occupation or program. Operational issues, such as the need to get the appropriate documentation from the institution offering the program, or backlogs in processing CAA applications, also could influence this length of time.

The time period between when a spouse achieved final eligibility and when he or she began the education or training program depended in large part on when the institution that offered the chosen program had scheduled the program to start. However, about one-third (37 percent) of the spouses were recorded in the Access data tool as having started the education or training program (the "CAA start date") on the same day that final eligibility was determined. Qualitative information collected during the implementation study site visits supports the view that some of these spouses were already enrolled in their programs when they applied for the CAA. However, the number of days between the final eligibility determination date and the CAA start date cannot be calculated for about one-third (34 percent) of spouses, in large part because the CAA start date is missing for many spouses. After adjusting for the missing data, the percentage who were reported as having had their CAA start date on the same day as their final eligibility date is 56 percent (not shown).

Table V.1 Number of Days Between CAA-Related Events, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristics	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Number of Days After the Orientation That the Intake Date Occurred[a]					
0 days[b]	49.9	21.2	40.8	96.8	45.8
1 to 14 days	9.9	17.1	8.0	1.8	24.1
15 or more days	40.2	61.7	51.1	1.4	30.0
Average number of days[b]	22.0	44.3	23.3	1.1	20.7
Number of Days After the Intake Date That the Military Eligibility Determination Occurred[a]					
0 days[b]	89.4	99.4	89.7	99.1	48.8
1 to 14 days	7.7	0.6	5.4	0.2	48.8
15 or more days	2.9	0.0	5.0	0.7	2.5
Average number of days[b]	2.7	0.1	4.2	0.5	4.7
Number of Days After the Military Eligibility Determination That the Final Eligibility Determination Occurred[a]					
0 days[b]	47.0	26.6	23.6	84.0	71.5
1 to 14 days	13.7	19.0	23.3	2.0	3.0
15 to 30 days	14.7	17.7	26.0	0.2	4.3
31 or more days	14.6	35.1	19.1	0.7	5.5
Missing	10.0	1.6	8.1	13.1	15.6
Average number of days[b]	16.9	42.1	20.3	1.0	6.0
Number of Days After the Final Eligibility Determination That the CAA Start Date Occurred[a]					
0 days[b]	36.8	49.5	28.3	2.0	66.7
1 to 14 days	11.1	16.3	17.5	1.1	4.5
15 to 30 days	8.5	13.6	14.0	0.2	2.5
31 or more days	9.7	13.9	15.5	0.7	4.1
Missing	33.9	6.8	24.7	96.0	22.3
Average number of days[b]	13.9	13.8	20.3	12.7	3.9
Number of Days After the Intake Date That the Final Eligibility Determination Occurred[a]					
0 days[b]	58.5	76.9	70.2	84.2	12.9
1 to 14 days	8.8	6.8	9.1	0.9	14.5
15 to 30 days	2.5	6.8	3.6	0.0	0.1
31 or more days	4.9	7.9	8.1	0.0	1.2
Missing	25.4	1.6	9.0	14.9	71.3
Average number of days[b]	6.9	9.4	8.7	0.1	6.0
Number of Days After the Intake Date That the CAA Start Date Occurred[a]					
0 days[b]	14.3	28.5	20.2	0.7	5.9
1 to 14 days	14.1	22.8	16.0	1.1	14.9
15 to 30 days	9.5	20.9	15.2	0.2	0.3
31 or more days	13.3	20.9	23.0	0.7	1.7
Missing	48.9	6.8	25.5	97.3	77.1
Average number of days[b]	25.6	23.5	29.7	19.0	9.3
Sample Size	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**691**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Table V.1 *(continued)*

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]Some spouses have complete information on one of the two events, but not the other. It cannot be determined from the data files why a date for an event is missing. One possibility is that an event is missing due to gaps in data entry. Another is that the data are "right-censored." For example, a spouse could have gone through an orientation and eligibility determination process in December 2008 but not enrolled in training (and started the CAA) until April 2009. The data, which were provided in February or March 2009, would show the orientation and eligibility determination dates, but the CAA start date would not be entered until April 2009, after the extract was provided for analysis.

[b]The Access database required the CAA-related dates to occur in a certain sequence, which would prevent the number of days between these dates from being negative. However, one site did not conduct the data entry using the standard data entry screens. Therefore, in some instances, the number of days between these dates is negative. These spouses are included in the row reporting statistics on the percentage of spouses with "0 days" between these two events. Furthermore, the number of days for these spouses is included as a zero in the calculation for the average number of days between these two events.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

Overall, 59 percent of spouses in the analysis sample received their final eligibility determination on the same day as their intake date.[47] Adjusting the length of time between these two dates by the 25 percent of spouses in the analysis sample for whom this length could not be calculated indicates that 78 percent of spouses with nonmissing information had these dates on the same day. The application process, from the intake date to the final eligibility determination, took between 1 and 14 days for 9 percent of spouses (or, 12 percent after adjusting for the percentage of spouses with missing information); the process was longer for small percentages of other spouses, including 5 percent of spouses (or, 7 percent after adjusting for missing data) for whom the process took 31 days or more. The data do not indicate why the process took longer for some spouses than others, although possible reasons include extra time that some spouses needed to develop and finalize their education plans, spouses' uncertainty about whether they wanted to proceed with education or training after they submitted their process forms, or a backlog by site staff in processing the forms.

For spouses for whom the time between the intake date and the final eligibility date could be calculated, the average length of time was seven days. This statistic is consistent with the qualitative information reported in the implementation report that the time for site staff and spouses to complete the full approval process varied from one day to several weeks or more. Some sites developed an approval process in which, once potential participants had the required documents, they could receive approval in one meeting. For example, at the two sites in California, participants

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[47] Generally speaking, the number of days between when a spouse submits an application form (the "intake date") and when he or she receives final approval for a CAA (the "final eligibility determination date") represents the time when the spouse and site staff are focusing one-on-one on the spouse's specific circumstances, to determine eligibility. However, as Table V.1 shows, about half of spouses submit their process forms the same day they attend an orientation session. So, looking at the time from the spouse's orientation to his or her final eligibility determination would present a picture of the speed at which spouses attain CAAs similar to the picture based on the time from the intake date to the final eligibility determination.

could complete the approval process during their weekly orientations (although some spouses attended orientation more than once, since they often did not have all the documentation completed at their first orientation). Other sites reported that they needed about two weeks from the time the process form and additional materials were submitted to the receipt of final approval.

The quantitative data show significant differences across branches of service in the time that it took for spouses' CAA applications to be approved (Table V.1).[48] For example, 84 percent of spouses with Marine sponsors achieved final CAA eligibility the same day they submitted their process forms, which translates into a 99 percent rate after an adjustment is made due to missing data for some spouses (not shown). This contrasts with 77 and 70 percent of spouses with Air Force and Army sponsors, respectively, who achieved final eligibility the same day they submitted their process forms. (These rates adjust to 78 and 77 percent, respectively, after taking into account the missing data.) The percentage of spouses with Navy sponsors who achieved final eligibility the same day as the intake date is shown in Table V.1 as 13 percent; this percentage adjusts to 45 percent after the missing data are taken into account. Thus, even after adjusting for missing data, the branches of service still varied considerably in the percentages of spouses who achieved final eligibility the same day they submitted their process forms. Furthermore, the branches vary in the average number of days between the two dates—ranging from less than one day for the Marines to nine days for the Air Force and Army. However, the prevalence of missing data will affect the average number of days between these two dates if the experiences of those with missing data are different from the experiences of those with nonmissing data.

Ultimately, the differences between branches might reflect differences in the CAA-related procedures that the bases developed but might not necessarily be inherent in the branches themselves. Part I of this document discusses different procedures that bases used to process spouses' CAA applications, but both the analysis in that report and the analysis here cannot provide guidance on whether an approach used at one base would work equally well at another base.

Some variations across spouses with different ranks of sponsors are found in Table V.2, although these differences are relatively small compared to those found for subgroups by branch of service. For example, the percentage of spouses with sponsors from each rank subgroup who achieved final eligibility the same day they submitted their process form ranged from 53 percent for sponsors of rank O1 to O3 to 74 percent for sponsors with an "other" rank. (After adjusting for missing data, the range is from 68 percent for O1 to O3 sponsors to 94 percent for sponsors of an "other" rank [not shown]).[49] While some portion of the difference in the CAA eligibility process could arise specifically because of the characteristics of a spouse or his or her sponsor, the processing of CAA applications appears to be fairly uniform regardless of the rank of the sponsor—at least compared to the variation across branches of military service.

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[48] Chapter IV presents information about the relationship between the branches of service and the sites; typically, each subgroup by branch of service contained data from only a few sites out of all sites included in the demonstration.

[49] Almost all sponsors with an "other" rank are warrant officers. The small size of the group of spouses with sponsors of an "other" rank is likely to lead to noise in the data and statistics. If these spouses are excluded from the analysis, the range after adjustment for missing data is from 68 to 81 percent, for spouses with sponsors of rank E1 to E4.

Table V.2 Number of Days Between CAA-Related Events, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristics	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Number of Days After the Orientation That the Intake Date Occurred[a]							
0 days[b]	49.9	57.5	52.3	42.5	54.2	35.5	52.9
1 to 14 days	9.9	9.4	8.2	10.6	13.3	14.5	3.9
15 or more days	40.2	33.2	39.6	46.9	32.5	50.0	43.1
Average number of days[b]	22.0	18.0	22.7	24.6	22.0	25.5	17.5
Number of Days After the Intake Date That the Military Eligibility Determination Occurred[a]							
0 days[b]	89.4	90.7	89.4	88.6	87.2	87.1	96.0
1 to 14 days	7.7	6.3	8.0	8.3	10.4	9.7	2.0
15 or more days	2.9	3.0	2.6	3.2	2.4	3.2	2.0
Average number of days[b]	2.7	2.6	3.4	2.7	1.3	4.0	0.8
Number of Days After the Military Eligibility Determination That the Final Eligibility Determination Occurred[a]							
0 days[b]	47.0	51.9	51.2	40.8	46.7	48.1	40.3
1 to 14 days	13.7	13.7	10.1	16.8	11.7	14.8	6.5
15 to 30 days	14.7	11.7	13.8	18.1	10.7	12.3	24.2
31 or more days	14.6	10.8	14.8	16.1	19.3	19.8	12.9
Missing	10.0	12.0	10.1	8.2	11.7	4.9	16.1
Average number of days[b]	16.9	13.5	17.5	17.1	25.4	23.0	14.3
Number of Days After the Final Eligibility Determination That the CAA Start Date Occurred[a]							
0 days[b]	36.8	34.8	38.7	35.3	45.2	49.4	22.6
1 to 14 days	11.1	9.0	11.1	13.4	9.6	12.3	4.8
15 to 30 days	8.5	6.6	7.7	10.5	9.6	8.6	4.8
31 or more days	9.7	7.2	7.2	12.5	10.2	12.3	16.1
Missing	33.9	42.4	35.2	28.3	25.4	17.3	51.6
Average number of days[b]	13.9	11.8	11.4	16.0	12.7	15.2	33.3
Number of Days After the Intake Date That the Final Eligibility Determination Occurred[a]							
0 days[b]	58.5	58.7	58.4	58.3	52.8	60.5	74.2
1 to 14 days	8.8	7.4	9.8	9.1	12.2	7.4	1.6
15 to 30 days	2.5	2.8	2.2	2.8	2.0	1.2	1.6
31 or more days	4.9	3.7	4.9	4.7	10.2	7.4	1.6
Missing	25.4	27.4	24.7	25.1	22.8	23.5	21.0
Average number of days[b]	6.9	6.0	6.6	6.5	12.3	11.2	1.4
Number of Days After the Intake Date That the CAA Start Date Occurred[a]							
0 days[b]	14.3	12.6	14.8	13.7	18.3	19.8	17.7
1 to 14 days	14.1	12.0	16.2	14.5	15.2	18.5	4.8
15 to 30 days	9.5	8.0	8.2	11.9	9.6	8.6	4.8
31 or more days	13.3	10.0	11.1	15.1	20.3	18.5	17.7
Missing	48.9	57.5	49.7	44.9	36.5	34.6	54.8
Average number of days[b]	25.6	23.2	21.6	27.5	28.9	30.8	38.3

Table V.2 *(continued)*

Characteristics	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Sample Size	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**62**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a]Some spouses have complete information on one of the two events, but not the other. It cannot be determined from the data files why a date for an event is missing. One possibility is that an event is missing due to gaps in data entry. Another is that the data are "right-censored." For example, a spouse could have gone through an orientation and eligibility determination process in December 2008 but not enrolled in training (and started the CAA) until April 2009. The data, which were provided in February or March 2009, would show the orientation and eligibility determination dates, but the CAA start date would not be entered until April 2009, after the extract was provided for analysis.

[b]The Access database required the CAA-related dates to occur in a certain sequence, which would prevent the number of days between these dates from being negative. However, one site did not conduct the data entry using the standard data entry screens. Therefore, in some instances, the number of days between these dates is negative. These spouses are included in the row reporting statistics on the percentage of spouses with "0 days" between these two events. Furthermore, the number of days for these spouses is included as a zero in the calculation for the average number of days between these two events.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

B. Spouses' Planned CAA Usage

As discussed in Chapter I, the analysis in this report contains a description of spouses' plans to use their CAAs around the time that they established eligibility for a CAA, but data are not available to assess the extent to which spouses followed through on their plans, completed their programs, or attained industry-recognized credentials, certifications, or licenses that would help them in their careers. In this section, the focus is on the information that is available about the plans.

1.   Planned Use of the CAA Funds and Target Credentials

CAAs could be used for participation in an education or training program that would lead to an industry-recognized credential, certification, or license within two years. Spouses who did not need to participate in a program, but who wanted to use the CAA to pay for the attainment of the credential—such as to cover a fee for a test for the credential—also were eligible for CAAs. Consistent with what was reported in the implementation study report, almost all spouses used their CAAs to participate in a training or education program that would lead to a credential (Table V.3). Only two percent of spouses planned to use the CAA for the attainment of a credential.

Much of the rest of the information on the characteristics of the spouses' planned usages of the CAA is plagued with missing data. Since the prevalence of missing data varies considerably across branches of service, the discussion focuses on patterns for all spouses, but not subgroups by branch of service.

Table V.3 Planned Use of CAA Funds and Target Credentials, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Purpose of the CAA[a]					
Training/education program and credential	98.2	98.4	99.0	99.3	95.5
Credential only	1.8	1.6	1.0	0.7	4.5
Total Cost of Training/Education or Activity (Funded by All Sources)					
$1,000.00 or less	2.3	8.4	2.3	0.0	0.6
$1,000.01 to $2,999.99	7.3	22.6	7.3	0.7	3.3
$3,000.00	9.1	19.0	12.1	0.2	4.9
$3,000.01 to $5,999.99	6.2	1.9	10.5	0.0	5.8
$6,000.00	7.8	7.9	7.6	0.0	13.0
$6,000.01 to $10,000.00	3.5	1.1	4.7	0.2	4.9
$10,000.01 or more	5.5	1.4	11.5	0.9	0.9
Missing	58.3	37.8	43.9	98.0	66.6
Average cost (dollars)[b]	5,738	3,214	6,819	8,539	5,218
Projected Amount to be Funded by CAA					
$1,000.00 or less	1.6	1.6	2.7	0.0	0.9
$1,000.01 to $2,999.99	4.8	3.8	7.5	0.7	3.6
$3,000.00	16.3	51.4	16.6	0.4	7.5
$3,000.01 to $5,999.99	4.8	1.1	7.8	0.0	5.1
$6,000.00	16.6	21.2	21.6	0.9	16.5
Missing	55.9	20.9	43.9	98.0	66.4
Average projected amount funded by CAA (dollars)[b]	4,090	3,731	4,113	4,095	4,492
Expected Degree, Certificate, Credential, or License[c]					
AA or AS diploma/degree	30.2	25.5	38.8	24.7	22.3
BA/BS diploma/degree	10.7	12.5	12.7	5.1	10.1
Occupational skills licensure	3.8	7.9	3.0	4.0	2.7
Occupational skills certificate/credential	31.6	14.9	24.7	61.1	32.3
Missing	23.8	39.1	20.9	5.1	32.6
Target Industry[e,f]					
Health care	40.3	38.9	37.7	55.8	35.5
Education	14.8	25.3	12.1	16.7	12.3
Business administration	7.0	10.9	10.2	0.9	3.5
Financial services	6.7	4.6	5.5	12.4	5.9
Homeland security	3.9	3.8	5.5	4.2	1.2
Information technology	2.9	3.3	3.2	1.6	3.2
Human resources	2.4	2.4	2.9	1.3	2.2
Hospitality	1.5	1.6	0.9	1.8	2.3
Construction	1.0	3.0	0.8	0.2	0.7
Other	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.0	0.3
Missing	19.2	5.7	20.7	5.1	33.0
Target Occupation[d]					
Health Care Practitioners and Technical	10.4	21.2	14.1	0.2	5.2
Education, Training, and Library	9.7	23.4	12.2	0.4	4.3
Health Care Support	8.7	11.1	16.2	0.9	0.3
Office and Administrative Support	7.0	17.4	10.2	0.4	0.4
Management	5.6	5.4	9.2	0.2	3.0
Business and Financial Operations	4.7	4.3	7.1	0.2	4.1
Other	6.2	9.5	9.7	0.0	2.7
Missing	47.9	7.6	21.3	97.6	79.9
Sample Size	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**691**

Table V.3 *(continued)*

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Note: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009 for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]The data from the sites showed six spouses as having missing information on the purpose of the CAA. Because they had nonmissing information about the characteristics of a training program, they were re-classified as having the purpose of the CAA as a training/education program and a credential.

[b]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[c]These categories have been chosen to correspond with Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD) categories of credentials. The WIASRD categories "high school diploma/degree" and "individual received training, but no recognized credential received" have not been included in the table because CAA recipients must have a high school diploma (or an equivalent).

[d]The data tool is designed to collect detailed O*Net information on occupations. The O*Net classification scheme uses 23 major groups to categorize occupations. The detailed codes were combined into the major groups and then reviewed to determine how further to aggregate the data.

[e]Originally, DOL and DoD identified five nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields in which spouses could pursue education and training programs, and, ultimately, careers, but they expanded the list of fields during the demonstration. No spouses in the Access data were reported as having social work, one of the new fields, as a target industry.

[f]The statistics in the rows for each category of industry include all subcategories for the industry.

AA = Associate of Arts.

AS = Associate of Science.

BA = Bachelor of Arts.

BS = Bachelor of Science.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

DoD = Department of Defense.

DOL = Department of Labor.

The total cost of the training and education program to be funded by any source—not only the CAA—is missing for 58 percent of spouses. Discussions with site staff about why this information is missing at such a high rate indicated that the staff frequently did not fill in this information because they did not know it. However, the projected amount of the program that was expected to be funded by the CAA is missing for a nearly identical percentage of spouses (56 percent). This information was missing for nearly all spouses with Marine sponsors and about two-thirds of spouses with Navy sponsors. Here also, some site staff reported that this information was missing because they did not know it. This might have occurred especially at sites that did not require spouses to have been accepted by an education or training program before a CAA plan was approved.

Overall, 16 percent of spouses were shown as having the projected amount to be funded by the CAA as $3,000, and a comparable percentage (17 percent) were shown with CAA funding of $6,000.[50] After adjusting for the presence of missing data, these percentages are 37 and 38 percent, respectively. However, as mentioned in the next subsection, 55 percent of spouses planned to enroll in education or training programs that were expected to last more than one year. Thus, the percentage of spouses who ultimately will use more than $3,000 could be higher than is shown in Table V.3. The reason for the concentration of spouses with $3,000 of CAA funding is probably because site staff were indicating in the data tool the amount of CAA funding available for the spouse in the first year of his or her participation in the CAA program, not the projected amount for both CAA years.

Although many spouses are missing information about the expected credential, and their target industry and occupation, Table V.3 reports the information available for the full sample and by subgroups based on the sponsor's branch of service. About 30 percent of spouses were expecting to attain an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) diploma or degree, and about the same percentage (32 percent) were expecting to attain an occupational skills certificate or credential. Less common, at 11 percent, was the attainment of a BA or BS diploma or degree. (Adjusting these statistics for the 24 percent of spouses with missing data indicates that 40 percent of spouses were aiming for an AA or AS, 41 percent were aiming for an occupational skills certificate or credential, and 14 percent were aiming for a BA or BS.) Although spouses were allowed to use a CAA for the completion of a program that, in its entirety, would take more than two years, they could only do so if they expected to complete the program within two years of the start of their CAA. Thus, if one assumes for simplicity that attainment of a BA or BS diploma or degree takes four years from start to finish, the spouses who expected to attain one of these types of degrees had already completed at least two years of their program before they received their CAA.

Despite the prevalence of missing data about spouses' target industries and occupations in which they wanted to pursue CAA-funded careers, the individual-level data support the finding in the implementation study and in the analysis of weekly report data in Chapter III of this report that planned careers in the health care and education fields were common. Forty percent of all spouses (which are 50 percent of those with nonmissing information) were targeting a career in the health care industry, while 15 percent (or 18 percent of those with nonmissing information) were targeting the education industry. Financial services and business administration also were common target industries.

Data on spouses' target occupations are missing for almost half of spouses (Table V.3). Some site staff reported that they did not record this information in the Access data tool because doing so was cumbersome and time-consuming. Nevertheless, the information available on spouses' target occupations is consistent with that presented elsewhere. Common target occupations were in the health care and education fields. However, spouses also planned to train to perform other occupations in broad categories such as management and office and administrative support.

Because of the high prevalence of missing data and the small sample sizes for some rank subgroups, care must be taken in the interpretation of patterns across rank subgroups in spouses'

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[50] It is possible to calculate the percentage of the total cost projected to be funded by the CAA. However, this information is not presented because of the high rate of missing data for (1) the total cost of the training or education to be funded by all sources, and (2) the projected amount to be funded by the CAA.

planned uses for their CAAs. Nevertheless, a few patterns in the data are suggestive (Table V.4). Spouses with sponsors who are officers were somewhat more likely than spouses with enlisted-rank sponsors to want to use the CAA for a credential only. They also were more likely to use their CAA for an occupational skills licensure. These findings are consistent with the one in Chapter IV that spouses with officer sponsors were more likely to have their bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, they were more likely to target an occupation or industry related to education.

Table V.4 Planned Use of CAA Funds and Target Credentials, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Purpose of the CAA[a]							
Training/education program and credential	98.2	99.0	98.0	98.1	96.8	94.7	100.0
Credential only	1.8	1.0	2.0	1.9	3.2	5.3	0.0
Total Cost of Training/Education or Activity (Funded by All Sources)							
$1,000.00 or less	2.3	2.4	3.0	1.7	2.0	6.2	0.0
$1,000.01 to $2,999.99	7.3	7.3	7.1	7.2	7.1	11.1	6.5
$3,000.00	9.1	7.8	8.6	9.2	11.7	14.8	12.9
$3,000.01 to $5,999.99	6.2	5.2	3.9	8.6	6.6	4.9	6.5
$6,000.00	7.8	7.7	9.4	6.2	11.7	7.4	4.8
$6,000.01 to $10,000.00	3.5	2.1	3.2	4.6	5.1	4.9	0.0
$10,000.01 or more	5.5	5.0	5.2	6.3	7.1	1.2	1.6
Missing	58.3	62.4	59.6	56.3	48.7	49.4	67.7
Average cost (dollars)[b]	5,738	5,767	5,573	5,946	6,279	3,969	3,902
Projected Amount to be Funded by CAA							
$1,000.00 or less	1.6	1.9	2.0	1.0	1.5	4.9	0.0
$1,000.01 to $2,999.99	4.8	5.0	4.7	4.9	4.1	3.7	6.5
$3,000.00	16.3	14.7	15.5	16.3	20.8	24.7	16.1
$3,000.01 to $5,999.99	4.8	4.4	3.2	6.6	3.6	3.7	3.2
$6,000.00	16.6	14.1	17.3	17.1	25.9	14.8	6.5
Missing	55.9	59.9	57.2	54.2	44.2	48.1	67.7
Average projected amount funded by CAA (dollars)[b]	4,090	3,992	4,098	4,155	4,339	3,708	3,488
Expected Degree, Certificate, Credential, or License[c]							
AA or AS diploma/degree	30.2	29.1	28.6	35.3	19.3	17.3	32.3
BA/BS diploma/degree	10.7	7.6	10.9	10.7	19.3	17.3	9.7
Occupational skills licensure	3.8	2.1	3.5	4.1	5.6	12.3	3.2
Occupational skills certificate/credential	31.6	36.7	32.5	26.8	31.5	32.1	32.3
Missing	23.8	24.6	24.4	23.0	24.4	21.0	22.6
Target Industry[e,f]							
Health care	40.3	43.0	42.6	39.3	30.5	40.7	30.6
Education	14.8	13.4	12.8	13.7	27.4	23.5	16.1
Business administration	7.0	5.3	7.2	8.2	8.1	4.9	4.8
Financial services	6.7	8.2	6.6	6.0	4.6	1.2	11.3
Homeland security	3.9	4.5	4.4	3.7	1.5	1.2	6.5
Information technology	2.9	1.6	2.9	3.8	2.0	7.4	3.2
Human resources	2.4	0.9	2.7	3.4	2.5	1.2	1.6
Hospitality	1.5	1.6	0.8	1.6	3.0	2.5	0.0
Construction	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.2	1.6
Other	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4	1.0	1.2	0.0
Missing	19.2	19.9	18.9	18.9	18.8	14.8	24.2

Table V.4 *(continued)*

Characteristic	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Target Occupation[d]							
Health Care Practitioners and Technical	10.4	7.4	10.8	12.4	12.2	12.3	3.2
Education, Training, and Library	9.7	8.2	8.6	9.4	15.7	22.2	4.8
Health Care Support	8.7	8.2	8.2	9.9	5.1	8.6	11.3
Office and Administrative Support	7.0	6.1	6.6	8.4	4.6	7.4	6.5
Management	5.6	2.4	5.4	7.5	6.6	4.9	12.9
Business and Financial Operations	4.7	4.5	3.9	5.4	4.1	2.5	9.7
Other	6.2	5.2	6.1	6.0	8.6	11.1	6.5
Missing	47.9	57.9	50.5	40.9	43.1	30.9	45.2
Sample Size	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**62**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Note: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a]The data from the sites showed six spouses as having missing information on the purpose of the CAA. Because they had nonmissing information about the characteristics of a training program, they were re-classified as having the purpose of the CAA as a training/education program and a credential.

[b]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[c]These categories have been chosen to correspond with Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD) categories of credentials. The WIASRD categories "high school diploma/degree" and "individual received training, but no recognized credential received" have not been included in the table because CAA recipients must have a high school diploma (or an equivalent).

[d]The data tool is designed to collect detailed O*Net information on occupations. The O*Net classification scheme uses 23 major groups to categorize occupations. The detailed codes were combined into the major groups and then reviewed to determine how further to aggregate the data.

[e]Originally, DOL and DoD identified five nationally recognized high-growth and high-demand fields in which spouses could pursue education and training programs, and, ultimately, careers, but they expanded the list of fields during the demonstration. No spouses in the Access data were reported as having social work, one of the new fields, as a target industry.

[f]The statistics in the rows for each category of industry include all subcategories for the industry.

AA = Associate of Arts.

AS = Associate of Science.

BA = Bachelor of Arts.

BS = Bachelor of Science.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

DoD = Department of Defense.

DOL = Department of Labor.

2. Characteristics of the Training Programs

Among spouses who planned to use their CAAs for a training or education program, and not for a credential only, the most common type of provider was a community college, used by 42 percent of these spouses (Table V.5). Four-year universities and proprietary schools also were common, at 27 and 26 percent, respectively.

About one-quarter of the spouses who planned to participate in an education or training program were expecting to receive their instruction through distance (Internet) learning, while nearly all the rest were planning to participate in traditional classrooms. Evidence from focus groups of spouses indicates that some spouses valued the opportunity to use the CAA for distance learning, since it allowed them to balance their education or training with child care and other responsibilities, while others thought they could learn better in a traditional classroom.

It was common for the programs to be projected to last at least six months, with 55 percent lasting more than a year. For spouses with nonmissing information, the average length of the expected training was 17 months.

An examination of the different branches of service separately shows that spouses with Air Force sponsors are much more likely than other spouses to plan to attend a four-year university. Sixty-five percent of Air Force spouses had this plan, compared to 26 percent of Army spouses, and 15 percent each among Marine and Navy spouses. The most common type of school for Army and Navy spouses was community college at (51 and 50 percent, respectively), whereas about half of Marine spouses (53 percent) planned to attend a proprietary school. This difference across branches is likely to reflect differences across the subgroups of spouses in their prior education and work experience, as well as the availability and cost of training and education institutions near the bases of each branch of service. Perhaps because of the differences across branches of services in the types of institutions that spouses planned to attend, Marine spouses were more likely than other spouses to plan to participate in distance learning. While the average length of the program for each branch was greater than one year, the average length of the program ranged from 15 months for Marine spouses to 21 months for Air Force spouses.

Table V.5   Characteristics of Planned Training or Education Programs for CAA Recipients Who Planned to Participate in Them, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Type of Provider					
Community college	42.5	18.8	51.2	30.6	50.1
Proprietary school	25.6	11.8	14.8	53.2	34.3
Adult education provider	4.0	2.2	7.3	0.9	0.8
Four-year university	27.4	65.0	26.2	15.3	14.6
Other[a]	0.6	2.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
Delivery Method					
Classroom	72.7	85.1	70.7	51.1	83.0
Distance (Internet)	26.4	12.6	28.8	48.0	16.5
Other[b]	0.9	2.2	0.6	0.9	0.6

Table V.5 *(continued)*

Characteristic	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Expected Length of Program					
3 months or less	6.8	3.4	8.0	6.5	6.9
More than 3 months, but no more than 6 months	6.0	5.5	3.7	9.3	7.7
More than 6 months, but no more than 1 year	32.2	25.4	31.5	38.6	32.6
More than 1 year, but less than 2 years	25.4	31.8	28.1	15.4	24.5
2 years	29.6	33.9	28.7	30.1	28.2
Average length (months)[c]	16.9	21.4	17.0	14.8	15.7
Sample Size	**2,439**	**359**	**1,094**	**446**	**536**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Note: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

This table includes spouses who planned to use the CAA to participate in a training or education program. It excludes spouses who planned to use the CAA to obtain a credential only. Furthermore, the information in the table pertains to spouses' plans for the first reported education or training program. One spouse was reported to have planned to use the CAA for more than one training or education program.

The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]Responses given to indicate an "other" type of provider include an employer, a medical school, and a hospital. Some spouses also gave responses for which the type of provider was unclear, such as "correspondence" and "teacher certification." The category "employer" was specified in the Access data tool as an option for site staff to use. The other examples were recorded as narrative responses based on the selection of an "other" category for the type of provider.

[b]Examples of "other" types of delivery methods include self-study, and a combination of classroom and Internet. The category "self-study" was specified in the Access data tool as an option for site staff to use. The other examples were recorded as narrative responses based on the selection of an "other" category for the type of delivery method.

[c]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

Spouses of officers were more likely than spouses of enlisted personnel to plan to attend a four-year university (Table V.6). Based on the analysis of subgroups by rank of service, between 47 and 49 percent of the officer spouses planned to attend a four-year university, compared to between 22 and 27 percent of spouses of enlisted personnel. This difference might depend, at least in part, on the differences across branches of service in the proportion of spouses married to officers, since Chapter IV shows that a higher proportion of Air Force spouses were married to officers. Despite this difference across ranks in the type of provider for the education or training, however, differences in the delivery method and length of the program across rank subgroups are relatively small. Between 51 and 59 percent of spouses in each rank subgroup planned to attend their program for more than a year, and the average length of the program ranged across subgroups from 16 to 19 months.

Table V.6   Characteristics of Planned Training or Education Programs for CAA Recipients Who Planned to Participate in Them, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Type of Provider							
Community college	42.5	41.1	42.1	46.2	31.9	31.0	55.4
Proprietary school	25.6	32.2	28.1	20.7	19.8	16.9	25.0
Adult education provider	4.0	3.9	2.8	5.7	0.5	1.4	3.6
Four-year university	27.4	22.1	26.6	26.8	47.3	49.3	16.1
Other[a]	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.6	0.5	1.4	0.0
Delivery Method							
Classroom	72.7	73.7	73.9	71.6	70.5	76.1	69.1
Distance (Internet)	26.4	25.6	25.3	27.7	27.2	21.1	30.9
Other[b]	0.9	0.6	0.8	0.7	2.3	2.8	0.0
Expected Length of Program							
3 months or less	6.8	7.8	7.7	5.8	5.2	4.9	8.9
More than 3 months, but no more than 6 months	6.0	5.6	7.3	5.5	6.9	1.6	8.9
More than 6 months, but no more than 1 year	32.2	34.8	32.0	29.4	32.4	42.6	31.1
More than 1 year, but less than 2 years	25.4	22.4	25.0	27.8	26.0	26.2	24.4
2 years	29.6	29.4	28.0	31.5	29.5	24.6	26.7
Average length (months)[c]	16.9	15.6	15.8	18.7	16.3	18.7	17.0
Sample Size	**2,439**	**704**	**547**	**878**	**183**	**71**	**56**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Note: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

This table includes spouses who planned to use the CAA to participate in a training or education program. It excludes spouses who planned to use the CAA to obtain a credential only. Furthermore, the information in the table pertains to spouses' plans for the first reported education or training program. One spouse was reported to have planned to use the CAA for more than one training or education program.

[a]Responses given to indicate an "other" type of provider include an employer, a medical school, and a hospital. Some spouses also gave responses for which the type of provider was unclear, such as "correspondence" and "teacher certification." The category "employer" was specified in the Access data tool as an option for site staff to use. The other examples were recorded as narrative responses based on the selection of an "other" category for the type of provider.

[b]Examples of "other" types of delivery methods include self-study, and a combination of classroom and Internet. The category "self-study" was specified in the Access data tool as an option for site staff to use. The other examples were recorded as narrative responses based on the selection of an "other" category for the type of delivery method.

[c]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

CAA = Career Advancement Account

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APPENDIX A

**SAMPLE FRAME FOR THE INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL
DATA ANALYSIS**

As explained in Chapter IV, it was important to determine the sample frame for analysis—that is, which spouses from among all spouses in the sites' data sets should be included in the analysis sample. This was an issue because sites were not required to enter information about spouses who were approved for a CAA on or after July 28, 2008, although many sites did record information on some spouses for whom it was not required to do so. Having information on some spouses who were approved for CAAs before July 28, 2008, but not information on other spouses who were approved for CAAs during the same time period, might lead to a bias in the sample if the included spouses and the excluded spouses differ systematically from each other. Therefore, to determine the appropriate sample frame, we needed to answer two related questions. The first question was, "What information in the data tool should be used to determine the date when a spouse was approved for a CAA?" Although the data tool includes an item for a final eligibility date—on which a spouse was determined to have met all eligibility criteria for receipt of a CAA—missing information for this data item suggested that other data items should be considered as back-up dates for the CAA approval date. The second question was, "What, if any, cutoff date should be used to restrict the sample?" While sites were instructed to enter information about spouses who were approved for a CAA on or after July 28, 2008, an earlier or later date might be more appropriate on the basis of sites' actual use of the data tool.

Answering the first question required identification of a single date, which we defined as the "enrollment date." As described in more detail in Chapter IV, the data tool contains five CAA-related dates: (1) an orientation date; (2) an intake date, which is the date that the spouse submitted an application for a CAA; (3) the military eligibility determination date, which is the date that the military partner determined that a spouse met military eligibility criteria; (4) the final eligibility determination date, which is the date that a spouse's full eligibility was determined, based on a decision typically made by workforce partner staff; and (5) the CAA start date, defined by DOL as the date on which a spouse begins training. Based on input from DOL, Mathematica implemented a decision to use these five dates to define an enrollment date for each spouse. Furthermore, any spouse who had at least one of the five dates in the Access data tool, and who therefore had a nonmissing enrollment date, was kept in the analysis sample. Thirty-one spouses who were in the data tool, but who lacked information on all five of these CAA-related dates, were excluded from the analysis file. (As discussed below, other spouses were excluded later as part of the process to define the analysis sample.)

Of the 3,726 spouses in the files received from the sites, most (3,397) had a final eligibility determination date, which seems to be the date that most closely aligns conceptually with when a CAA is awarded (Table A.1). This is because this date indicates that a spouse has met all eligibility criteria, and he or she is entitled to disbursements of CAA funds for a training program or credentialing test. Two-hundred ninety-eight (298) spouses had at least one of the other dates but not the final eligibility determination date. If the final eligibility determination date is missing, we checked the other CAA-related dates in a specific order (the military eligibility determination, intake, orientation, and CAA start dates) to find one present and set the enrollment date equal to that value. Once a date was found for a spouse in the data file, no other dates were checked.

Table A.1 Presence of CAA-Related Dates in the Military Spouse CAA Demonstration Access Data Files

Presence of CAA-Related Dates in the Access Data	Number of Spouses	Included in the Analysis Sample
Has a Final Eligibility Determination Date	3,397	Yes
Is Missing a Final Eligibility Determination Date but Has the:		
Intake date only	185	Yes
Intake and orientation dates only	18	Yes
Intake, orientation, and military eligibility determination dates only	90	Yes
Intake, orientation, military eligibility determination, and CAA start dates	2	Yes
Orientation date only	1	Yes
Orientation date and CAA start dates only	2	Yes
Total	298	Yes
Does Not Have Any of the 5 CAA-Related Dates	31	No
Total	**3,726**	--

Note: The five CAA-related dates in the demonstration-specific Access data files are the intake date, the orientation date, the military eligibility determination date, the final eligibility determination date, and the CAA start date.

The 298 spouses who are missing a final eligibility date but who could have an enrollment date using another CAA-related date variable can be viewed as consisting of three subgroups, all of which are included in the analysis sample. One subgroup consists of spouses who recently began their CAA involvement and were unlikely to have achieved final eligibility before the data from sites were provided for the analysis. Of the 298 spouses, about 45 belong to this subgroup: they have CAA-related dates that were in December 2008, January 2009, or February 2009. It is likely that most of these spouses were still working their way through the application process when the data extracts were provided in February and March 2009. Some are likely to have subsequently received CAAs, while others might never get a CAA.

A second subgroup consists of spouses who began their involvement early in the grant period and who are likely to be excluded from the analysis sample due to use of a cutoff date to exclude the early part of the demonstration for which information on spouses is missing at a high rate (described more below). About 30 to 40 spouses out of the 298 spouses who are missing a final eligibility determination date but who could have an enrollment date using another CAA-related date are likely to belong to this subgroup. These spouses were excluded from the analysis file because their most recent CAA-related date is before the time frame that would be included in the analysis sample. The precise number of spouses in this group would depend on the cutoff date used to restrict the sample.

The third subgroup consists of spouses for whom it is unclear whether they received a CAA but who were included in the analysis since their involvement was after mid-July 2008. About 215 to

225 spouses have CAA-related dates from around mid-July 2008 to November 2008; again, the precise number depends on the cutoff date used to restrict the sample. For these spouses, there are at least four potential scenarios. One scenario is that the spouses achieved eligibility, but the final eligibility determination date is missing due to incomplete data entry. Spouses in this scenario should be included in the analysis sample since they received CAAs. A second scenario is that the spouses were determined ineligible; ideally, these spouses should not be included in the analysis sample. A third scenario is that the spouses could be eligible, but they lost interest before they received a final eligibility determination; under ideal circumstances, these spouses also should not be included. Finally, spouses could still have been working toward eligibility when the data extract was received for analysis; these spouses ideally should be included if they achieved final eligibility and excluded if they did not. It was not possible to distinguish between these four scenarios using other data items in the Access data tool, since data on CAA start dates (indicating the start of CAA-funded training) and outcomes are sparse. Furthermore, discussions with site staff about why the CAA-related date information is missing did not provide guidance on the frequency of each potential reason.

Ultimately, the decision whether to include all, a subset, or none of these 298 spouses in the analysis sample was a judgment call. Based on input from DOL, a decision was made to use all five CAA-related dates to impute an enrollment date. As described above, the five dates in the data file were checked in the following order: the final eligibility determination date, the military eligibility determination date, the intake date, the orientation date, and the CAA start date. The first one that was present was used as the enrollment date. Compared to approaches that use fewer of the dates, this approach means that more spouses would be included in the analysis file, which in turn improves the correspondence between the number of enrollments recorded in the Access data files using this approach and the number of CAAs reported in the weekly reports data as having been awarded. However, using this approach means that the sample could include spouses who began the application process to establish eligibility for a CAA but for whom a final eligibility status could not be determined from the file. Some of these spouses might have achieved final eligibility, even though the data to document this are incomplete; others might have been determined ineligible, while still others might have dropped out of the approval process before the sites determined eligibility. The analysis sample also might include spouses who did not achieve final eligibility as of when the data were provided to Mathematica, as well as spouses who will never achieve eligibility for a CAA.

After the decision was made to include in the analysis sample the spouses with any of the five CAA-related dates, DOL and Mathematica decided to restrict the analysis to spouses who began their CAA involvement on or after July 14, 2008. A cutoff of July 28, 2008, might seem most natural, because it was optional for sites to record information about spouses before July 28, 2008. However, use of the July 14, 2008, cutoff date for the analysis sample allows more spouses to be included in the analysis, while still yielding a high rate of correspondence between the number of spouses in the analysis sample and the number of spouses who were awarded CAAs during the same time period, according to aggregate information that states report weekly to DOL. Although inclusion of data on spouses who began their CAA involvement much earlier in the grant period also would increase the number of spouses in the analysis sample, the correspondence between the two data sources is lower. Therefore, doing so might distort the reported statistics, since the spouses included in the data might not be similar to those who began their involvement around the same time but for whom no data are available.

APPENDIX B

**MONTHLY STATISTICS ABOUT KEY DATES IN THE
CAA ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

This appendix contains three tables that provide additional information to supplement the discussion in Chapter IV about the patterns in CAA enrollments over time and the one in Chapter V about the speed at which spouses moved through the different steps involved in receiving CAAs. Table B.1 shows the statistics for the number of CAA awards each month, the cumulative number of awards, and the percentage of the target number of awards that have been provided to spouses. Table B.2 shows, both for all spouses and for subgroups of spouses by the branch of service of the sponsor, the percentage of spouses who achieved each of the following steps in the CAA enrollment process: (1) orientation date, (2) intake date, (3) military eligibility determination date, (4) final eligibility determination date, and (5) CAA start date. Table B.3 shows comparable information for subgroups of spouses by the military rank of the sponsor.

Table B.1 Cumulative Number of CAA Awards Over Time

Month	New CAA Awards in the Month	Cumulative Awards by the End of the Month	Cumulative Number of Awards as a Percentage of the Target Number of Awards
January 2008 or Earlier	307	307	4.1
February 2008	186	493	6.6
March 2008	242	735	9.9
April 2008	266	1,001	13.4
May 2008	543	1,544	20.7
June 2008	369	1,914	25.7
July 2008	494	2,407	32.3
August 2008	502	2,909	39.1
September 2008	451	3,361	45.2
October 2008	404	3,764	50.6
November 2008	294	4,058	54.5
December 2008	276	4,335	58.2
January 2009	327	4,661	62.6
February 2009	190	4,851	65.2
March 2009	212	5,063	68.0
April 2009	195	5,257	70.6
May 2009[a]	108	5,366	72.1
Sample Size	**5,366**	**5,366**	

Source: States' May 18, 2009, reports to DOL on the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009.

Notes: Occasionally, the cumulative number of awards by a state for a week was lower than the number for the previous week; this pattern suggests that the state made a correction to the prior count of awards. Because the corrections were small and could not be pinpointed to specific prior weeks, this analysis generally does not incorporate modifications to the states' data. The one exception is for California data before April 14, 2008, because the state's correction in that weekly report was large. Table III.1 provides further details.

When a calendar week spanned the end of a month and the beginning of the subsequent month, the number of CAAs shown as having been awarded during that week is based on the proportion of weekdays in each of the two months. Due to rounding, the sum across states for a month might not sum to the total for the month.

The number of CAAs that have been targeted for award, as of the May 18, 2009, weekly report, is 7,444 (Table I.2).

[b]Because this analysis is based on May 18, 2009, weekly report data about the number of CAAs awarded through May 15, 2009, the statistics reported for May 2009 might not include all CAAs awarded during the month.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

DOL = Department of Labor.

Table B.2 Dates of CAA Orientations, Intake, Eligibility Determinations, and Start of the CAA, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristics	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Date of Orientation					
Before July 2008	12.3	26.6	12.2	0.9	12.2
July 2008	14.3	22.3	18.2	1.8	11.9
August 2008	20.6	20.3	21.1	26.4	15.6
September 2008	12.6	10.7	16.1	12.7	7.5
October 2008	12.2	9.9	13.0	13.3	11.4
November 2008	9.4	6.9	10.2	9.3	9.5
December 2008	7.1	2.5	6.2	6.9	11.6
January 2009	6.8	0.8	2.8	15.3	11.2
February 2009[a]	4.7	0.0	0.2	13.3	9.0
Date of Intake					
Before July 2008	2.4	5.7	3.4	0.0	0.7
July 2008	9.0	17.1	11.9	2.4	4.3
August 2008	21.3	34.8	22.4	26.2	9.1
September 2008	13.7	10.6	20.1	12.9	5.5
October 2008	13.1	11.1	17.2	13.3	7.4
November 2008	7.6	5.2	9.6	8.9	4.5
December 2008	6.6	5.2	8.7	6.7	4.1
January 2009	7.7	9.5	5.3	14.4	6.1
February 2009[a]	3.2	0.5	0.5	13.1	2.6
Missing	15.4	0.3	0.9	2.0	55.7
Date of Military Eligibility Determination					
Before July 2008	8.6	21.2	10.3	0.9	3.7
July 2008	13.2	23.1	16.0	1.1	11.2
August 2008	22.5	20.9	22.7	26.7	19.9
September 2008	12.6	11.3	14.6	12.7	9.9
October 2008	13.0	11.3	14.3	13.4	11.6
November 2008	9.5	5.0	10.5	9.4	10.4
December 2008	7.9	2.8	7.6	6.9	12.1
January 2009	8.2	4.4	4.0	15.6	12.2
February 2009[a]	4.7	0.0	0.1	13.4	9.0
Date of Final Eligibility Determination by One-Stop Career Center Staff					
July 2008	9.7	14.0	11.4	2.3	9.1
August 2008	23.8	43.0	23.0	16.9	18.2
September 2008	16.5	9.9	19.7	14.3	16.3
October 2008	15.0	11.3	18.0	15.3	11.8
November 2008	10.1	6.1	11.0	10.5	10.5
December 2008	9.4	4.7	10.1	7.7	12.3
January 2009	10.6	10.5	6.7	17.6	12.7
February 2009[a]	4.9	0.6	0.1	15.3	9.1
CAA Start Date					
July 2008	4.0	4.1	3.1	1.1	7.2
August 2008	18.2	48.9	19.3	0.9	11.3

Table B.2 *(continued)*

Characteristics	All Spouses	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
September 2008	10.0	4.9	13.2	0.2	13.9
October 2008	11.1	12.5	15.7	0.2	10.0
November 2008	6.4	4.6	8.3	0.4	8.2
December 2008	4.3	1.6	3.7	0.2	9.6
January 2009	9.8	15.2	11.1	0.7	11.0
February 2009[a]	2.4	1.6	0.9	0.2	6.5
Missing	33.8	6.5	24.6	96.0	22.3
Sample Size	**2,630**	**368**	**1,117**	**450**	**691**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. This analysis includes military spouse CAA recipients determined eligible between July 14, 2008, and when the site's extract was provided. The analysis does not reflect activities and outcomes for these spouses after the extract dates. CAA recipients who were determined eligible for a CAA before mid-July 2008 are not included in the extracts. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

The sum of the sample sizes in the columns for the four branches of military service is four spouses fewer than the sample size reported in the "All Spouses" column because information on the branch of service of the sponsors is missing for four spouses.

[a]Because extracts of sites' data were received between February 10 and March 6, 2009, the number of spouses with this event during February is likely to be higher than reported in this row. No spouses had this date in March 2009.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

Table B.3 Dates of CAA Orientations, Intake, Eligibility Determinations, and Start of the CAA, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristics	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Date of Orientation							
Before July 2008	12.3	10.0	10.9	14.5	13.8	16.9	7.4
July 2008	14.3	11.7	15.4	15.9	14.9	14.3	7.4
August 2008	20.6	23.2	19.7	18.7	22.9	18.2	24.1
September 2008	12.6	12.4	12.1	13.3	12.2	13.0	11.1
October 2008	12.2	11.8	12.1	12.8	10.6	10.4	14.8
November 2008	9.4	9.8	9.2	9.3	7.4	9.1	16.7
December 2008	7.1	6.1	6.7	7.9	7.4	5.2	11.1
January 2009	6.8	7.8	8.9	4.8	6.4	9.1	3.7
February 2009[a]	4.7	7.2	4.9	2.8	4.3	3.9	3.7
Date of Intake							
Before July 2008	2.4	1.9	2.0	2.4	4.6	6.2	1.6
July 2008	9.0	6.9	10.3	10.0	10.2	6.2	8.1
August 2008	21.3	23.0	19.7	19.8	27.4	25.9	11.3
September 2008	13.7	13.0	12.6	15.2	12.7	9.9	19.4
October 2008	13.1	12.9	12.5	13.6	10.2	16.0	19.4
November 2008	7.6	7.7	8.2	6.7	8.1	6.2	12.9
December 2008	6.6	5.8	6.2	7.3	6.1	3.7	14.5
January 2009	7.7	8.4	9.6	6.6	6.1	6.2	4.8
February 2009[a]	3.2	4.9	4.2	1.4	3.6	1.2	3.2
Missing	15.4	15.5	14.6	17.1	11.2	18.5	4.8
Date of Military Eligibility Determination							
Before July 2008	8.6	7.0	7.6	9.9	10.2	13.0	5.7
July 2008	13.2	10.0	14.7	15.3	11.3	14.3	5.7
August 2008	22.5	25.2	20.5	20.6	29.0	15.6	24.5
September 2008	12.6	12.7	11.3	13.6	10.8	15.6	11.3
October 2008	13.0	12.4	13.5	13.1	12.9	11.7	17.0
November 2008	9.5	9.2	9.3	9.7	7.5	10.4	17.0
December 2008	7.9	7.4	7.6	8.7	5.9	6.5	11.3
January 2009	8.2	8.9	10.5	6.3	8.1	9.1	3.8
February 2009[a]	4.7	7.3	4.9	2.7	4.3	3.9	3.8
Date of Final Eligibility Determination by One-Stop Career Center Staff							
July 2008	9.7	7.7	10.9	10.6	10.3	9.1	7.7
August 2008	23.8	25.3	22.8	22.6	29.3	27.3	11.5
September 2008	16.5	16.1	13.5	19.2	12.1	16.9	21.2
October 2008	15.0	13.7	14.8	15.9	14.4	16.9	17.3
November 2008	10.1	10.4	9.9	9.8	8.6	9.1	17.3
December 2008	9.4	8.7	10.1	10.2	6.9	5.2	13.5
January 2009	10.6	10.4	12.9	8.9	13.2	11.7	7.7
February 2009[a]	4.9	7.7	5.1	2.8	5.2	3.9	3.8

Table B.3 *(continued)*

Characteristics	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
CAA Start Date							
July 2008	4.0	3.5	5.1	3.7	5.6	1.2	3.2
August 2008	18.2	18.1	18.0	17.8	19.8	25.9	11.3
September 2008	10.0	8.9	7.9	12.3	9.6	13.6	4.8
October 2008	11.1	7.6	10.3	13.7	12.7	16.0	9.7
November 2008	6.4	6.0	6.6	7.2	4.6	7.4	3.2
December 2008	4.3	4.1	4.7	4.7	4.1	3.7	0.0
January 2009	9.8	7.0	10.3	10.3	14.2	12.3	16.1
February 2009[a]	2.4	2.5	2.0	2.2	4.1	2.5	0.0
Missing	33.8	42.4	35.2	28.1	25.4	17.3	51.6
Sample Size	**2,630**	**753**	**594**	**943**	**197**	**81**	**62**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. This analysis includes military spouse CAA recipients determined eligible between July 14, 2008, and when the site's extract was provided. The analysis does not reflect activities and outcomes for these spouses after the extract dates. CAA recipients who were determined eligible for a CAA before mid-July 2008 are not included in the extracts. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

[a]Because extracts of sites' data were received between February 10 and March 6, 2009, the number of spouses with this event during February is likely to be higher than reported in this row. No spouses had this date in March 2009.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

APPENDIX C

ACTIVITIES AND EXPENDITURES DURING USE OF THE CAA

As discussed in Chapter IV, the analysis of individual-level data in this report focuses on the characteristics of spouses and their plans for using their CAA as of when they began their CAA involvement. This focus is driven by the timing of when DOL asked sites to begin recording information on spouses, the length of the training and education programs in which spouses were participating, and the time frame for when extracts of the data would be required for analysis.

After receipt of the data from sites in early 2009, however, an investigation was conducted to determine whether it made sense to report additional information about the experiences and outcomes of spouses after their initial CAA involvement. Topics included whether spouses completed their education or training programs, if they planned to participate in them; the attainment of credentials; CAA expenditures per participant; and use of non-CAA services paid for by WIA or another source. Most data items were not complete enough to warrant reporting.   For example, of the 2,630 spouses in the analysis data file, 1,832 (70 percent) had missing information about the expenditures on the CAA. Staff were asked to record information about expenditures to date as of when they provided the extracts for the analysis. However, discussions with site staff indicated that some staff often were waiting to record this information in the data tool until after all expenditures were completed. Because information about expenditures was often recorded in a separate data system, not specific to the Military Spouse CAA Demonstration, it was cumbersome for staff to record this information even when it was available.

Despite the low quality of most data items collected after the initial involvement of spouses in the demonstration, however, this appendix contains information from two states, Colorado and Florida, about spouses' receipt of WIA services because these data are complete for most spouses in these states. For the analysis in the main chapters of the report, data from Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and Jacksonville, Florida, are combined. However, for this appendix, the analysis of Florida data is restricted to Jacksonville, which collected and reported its data separately from that of Fort Walton Beach. Data from both Fort Walton Beach and other states besides Colorado are excluded from the analysis because of the high rates for which these data are missing. Because the statistics differ dramatically for these two sites, the information is shown by site (Table C.1), in addition to subgroups by branch of service (Table C.2) and rank of service (Table C.3).

When the extracts of data were provided for analysis, 37 percent of spouses at either Colorado or Florida-Jacksonville were reported to have received 0 WIA services, whereas 29 and 34 percent, respectively, received 1 and 2 services (Table C.1). However, an examination of the data by site shows that all spouses who received 2 services were from Jacksonville, and all spouses who received 0 services were from Colorado. Almost all spouses who received 1 service were from Colorado. Colorado spouses were shown as having received 0.4 services, on average, and almost all who received any service received labor market information. In Jacksonville, all spouses were recorded as having received job counseling or staff-assisted job development. About 71 percent received an interest or personal inventory, and nearly all the rest received a skill or ability assessment.

The statistics in Tables C.2 and C.3, which show the information by the branch and rank of service, respectively, are likely to be driven by the variations across the two bases. Air Force spouses are exclusively from Colorado, and Army spouses are almost all from Colorado. Thus, spouses from these branches of service were likely to receive either 0 or 1 service (labor market information). Navy spouses were almost all from Jacksonville and were likely to have received two services: (1) job counseling or staff-assisted job development, and (2) a skill/ability assessment or an interest/personal inventory. In addition, while an examination of the receipt of WIA services across

Table C.1 Use of WIA Services in Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville, by Site (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	Colorado	Florida-Jacksonville
Number of Different Types of Services Used[a]			
0	37.1	56.6	0.0
1	28.7	43.5	0.7
2	34.2	0.0	99.3
Average Number of Different Types of Services Used[b]	1.0	0.4	2.0
Types of WIA Services Used (More than One Service Allowed):			
Skill/ability assessment	9.6	0.0	28.0
Interest/personal inventory	24.6	0.0	71.3
Job counseling or staff-assisted job development[c]	34.7	0.4	100.0
Labor market information	28.2	43.0	0.0
Sample Size	**415**	**272**	**143**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

This table is restricted to Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville, since they are the only sites that reported data on the types of WIA services that spouses received. Although some sites are recording spouses' participation in WIA activities in a WIA-specific database, the information on WIA activities in this table is from the data tool is specific to the Military Spouse CAA Demonstration. No cross-checks of the data from the two databases have been done to examine the consistency or accuracy of the data reported for the evaluation.

[a]The Access data tool allows site staff to record when spouses received a WIA service, but not to actively indicate that spouses did not receive any WIA services. The statistics in this table are based on an assumption that the absence of information about receipt of WIA services means that the spouse did not receive any WIA services. That is, all spouses are assumed to have nonmissing information about receipt of services.

[b]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[c]The Access data tool included separate categories for job counseling and staff-assisted job development. However, the statistics on these services are combined because of infrequent use of the staff-assisted job development category in the data tool.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

WIA = Workforce Investment Act.

Table C.2 Use of WIA Services in Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville, by Military Branch of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses[a]	Air Force	Army	Navy
Number of Different Types of Services Used[b]				
0	37.1	42.5	61.1	1.4
1	28.7	57.5	37.4	2.1
2	34.2	0.0	1.5	96.5
Average Number of Different Types of Services Used[c]	1.0	0.6	0.4	2.0
Types of WIA Services Used (More than One Service Allowed):				
Skill/ability assessment	9.6	0.0	0.5	27.1
Interest/personal inventory	24.6	0.0	1.0	69.4
Job counseling or staff-assisted job development[d]	34.7	0.0	2.0	97.2
Labor market information	28.2	57.5	36.9	1.4
Sample Size	**415**	**73**	**198**	**144**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

Этот table is restricted to Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville, since they are the only sites that reported data on the types of WIA services that spouses received. Although some sites are recording spouses' participation in WIA activities in a WIA-specific database, the information on WIA activities in this table is from the data tool specific to the Military Spouse CAA Demonstration. No cross-checks of the data from the two databases have been done to examine the consistency or accuracy of the data reported for the evaluation.

[a]No military spouses from Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville reported having a sponsor in the Marines; thus, the columns in the table for the military branches are restricted to the Air Force, Army, and Navy.

The Access data tool allows site staff to record when spouses received a WIA service, but not to actively indicate that spouses did not receive any WIA services. The statistics in this table are based on an assumption that the absence of information about receipt of WIA services means that the spouse did not receive any WIA services. That is, all spouses are assumed to have nonmissing information about receipt of services.

[c]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[d]The Access data tool included separate categories for job counseling and staff-assisted job development. However, the statistics on these services are combined because of infrequent use of the staff-assisted job development category in the data tool.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

WIA = Workforce Investment Act.

Table C.3 Use of WIA Services in Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville, by Military Rank of Sponsor (In Percentages Unless Stated Otherwise)

Characteristic	All Spouses	E1 to E4	E5	E6 to E9	O1 to O3	O4 to O10	Other
Number of Different Types of Services Used[a]							
0	37.1	34.0	40.0	43.0	22.4	33.3	40.0
1	28.7	37.0	17.0	25.9	38.8	23.8	60.0
2	34.2	29.0	43.0	31.1	38.8	42.9	0.0
Average Number of Different Types of Services Used[b]	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.2	1.1	0.6
Types of WIA Services Used (More than One Service Allowed):							
Skill/ability assessment	9.6	8.0	12.0	7.4	14.3	14.3	0.0
Interest/personal inventory	24.6	21.0	31.0	23.7	24.5	28.6	0.0
Job counseling or staff-assisted job development[c]	34.7	29.0	44.0	31.9	38.8	42.9	0.0
Labor market information	28.2	37.0	16.0	25.2	38.8	23.8	60.0
Sample Size	**415**	**100**	**100**	**135**	**49**	**21**	**10**

Source: Individual-level data on clients provided by Military Spouse CAA Demonstration grantees.

Notes: Each site that issued CAAs to military spouses after mid-July 2008 provided an extract of its database between February 10 and March 6, 2009, for this analysis. Spouses from Maine, one of the eight CAA grantees, are not included in this analysis because Maine did not issue new CAAs after mid-July 2008.

         This table is restricted to Colorado and Florida-Jacksonville, since they are the only sites that reported data on the types of WIA services that spouses received. Although some sites are recording spouses' participation in WIA activities in a WIA-specific database, the information on WIA activities in this table is from the data tool specific to the Military Spouse CAA Demonstration. No cross-checks of the data from the two databases have been done to examine the consistency or accuracy of the data reported for the evaluation.

         The Access data tool allows site staff to record when spouses received a WIA service, but not to actively indicate that spouses did not receive any WIA services. The statistics in this table are based on an assumption that the absence of information about receipt of WIA services means that the spouse did not receive any WIA services. That is, all spouses are assumed to have nonmissing information about receipt of services.

[b]This is calculated for spouses with nonmissing information for this data item.

[c]The Access data tool included separate categories for job counseling and staff-assisted job development. However, the statistics on these services are combined because of infrequent use of the staff-assisted job development category in the data tool.

CAA = Career Advancement Account.

WIA = Workforce Investment Act.

the rank subgroups of the sponsors shows a few differences across ranks, the statistics are based on small sample sizes (Table C.3).

Care must be taken when interpreting the statistics on WIA service receipt because the information was recorded by two sites only and because most spouses were still participating in the CAA program. The data do not reflect all WIA-funded services that these spouses will receive by the time they complete their involvement in the demonstration.