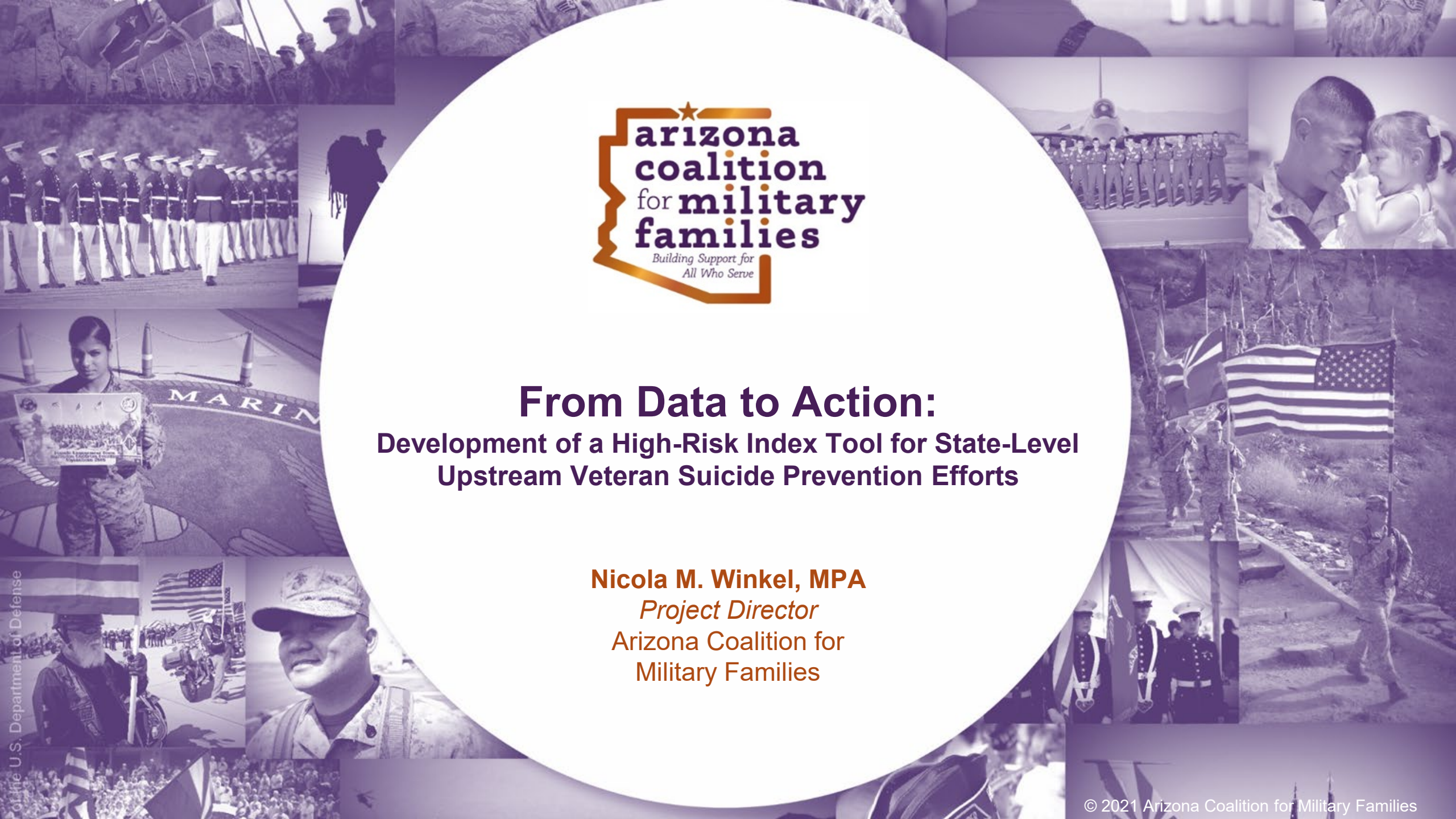

From Data to Action:

Development of a High-Risk Index Tool for State-Level Upstream Veteran Suicide Prevention Efforts

Nicola M. Winkel, MPA
Project Director
Arizona Coalition for
Military Families

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Introduction to Arizona's CDC project

ACMF received two years of grant funding from the CDC and CDC Foundation for the **Veterans Evaluation Demonstration Project**.

2nd year project focused on development of **data tools** to support upstream veteran suicide prevention

CDC science officers convened to identify indicators in existing **data sources**.

Sources were focused on data that would be **accessible by states** and compiled into a work product that formed the basis of the index tool.

The Population Council provided technical assistance to adapt their global health model for **translating data into prevention activities** for use with veteran suicide prevention.

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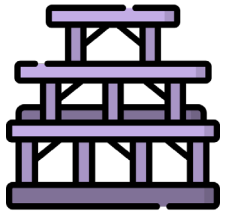
Why this project?

There are lessons to be learned from **public health** and **global health**.

Data and effective **prevention models** are available.



To have an impact, data must be **translated into action** and the **infrastructure** must be in place to implement prevention efforts.

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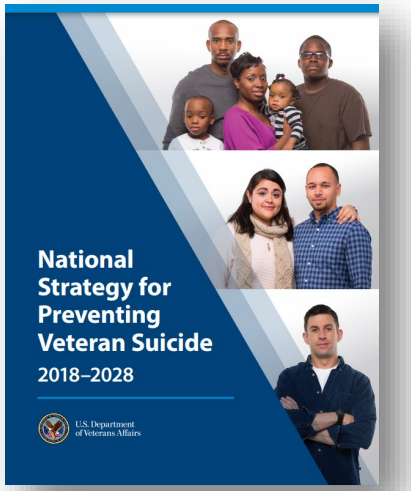
National Landscape

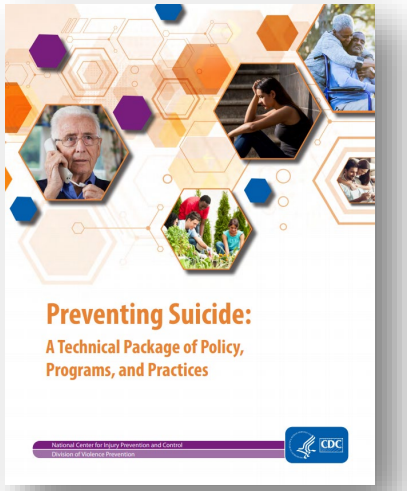
PREVENTS

Executive Order on Veteran Suicide



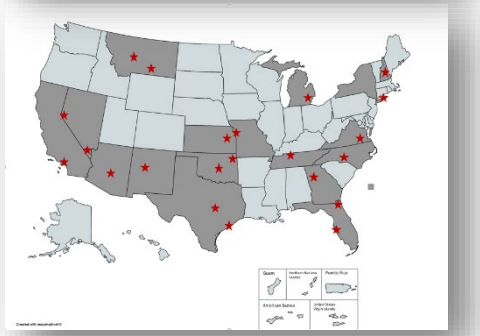
VA

National Strategy for Preventing Veteran Suicide



CDC

Preventing Suicide Technical Package



SAMHSA/VA SMVF TA Center

Governor's and Mayor's Challenges

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From Data to Action: Model

Identify high risk segments through combining data, analysis and mapping

Develop approaches and projects for proactively reaching and engaging service members, veterans and family members in focus segment

Implement projects, collect data and monitor outcomes and effectiveness

Iterate and evolve approaches and projects based on outcomes and lessons learned

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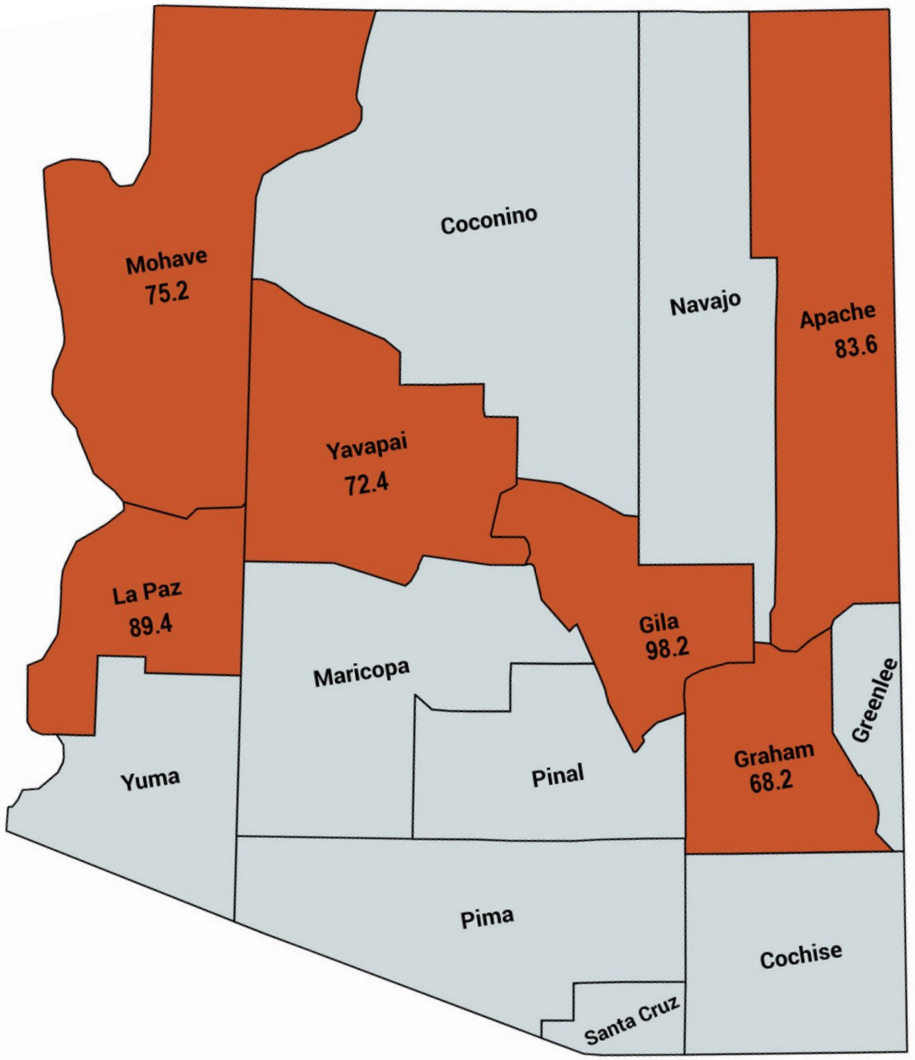
Identifying High-Risk Segments - By County

Arizona State Average: 20.6 veteran deaths by suicide per 100,000



These are counties with rates that are ~3-5x the statewide rate.

Source: Arizona Violent Death Reporting System

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Identifying High-Risk Segments - By Zip Code

Veterans represent **12%** of Arizona's population.

Any zip code with veteran suicides accounting for **more than 12%** of total suicides is deemed at elevated risk.

In 20 zip codes 100% of suicides were veterans (over a 3-year period).

Source: Arizona Violent Death Reporting System

100%	20 zip codes
50-99%	16 zip codes
30-49%	50 zip codes
12-29%	117 zip codes

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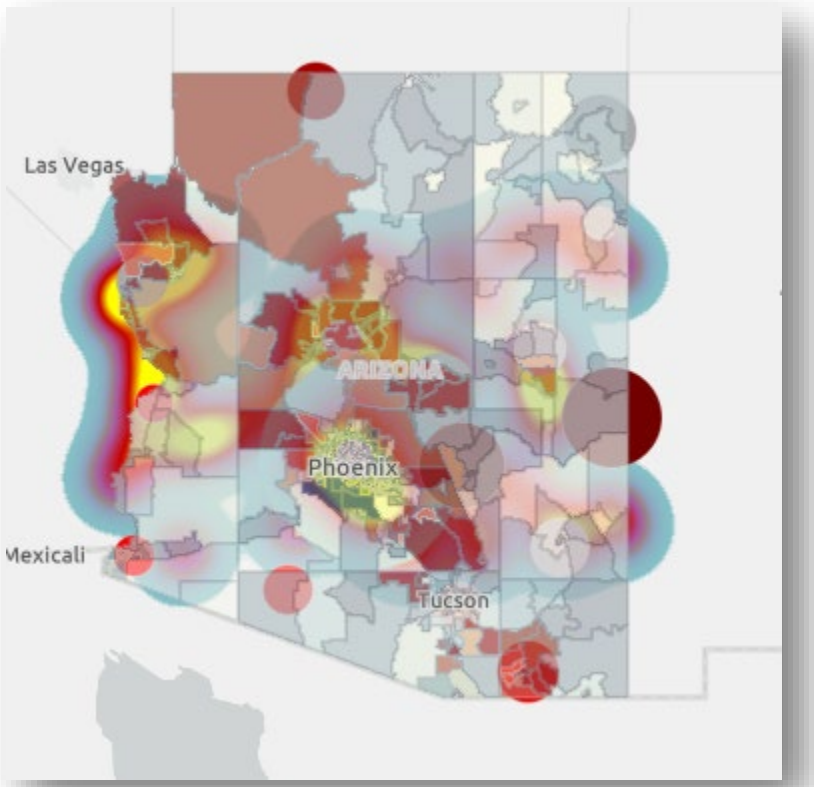
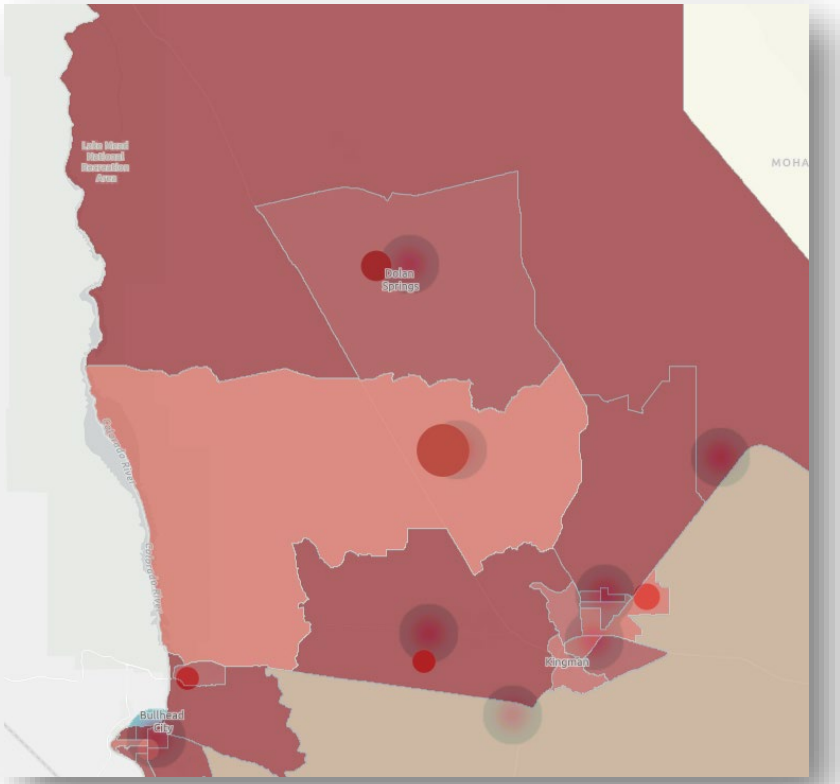
Identifying High-Risk Segments - Mapping





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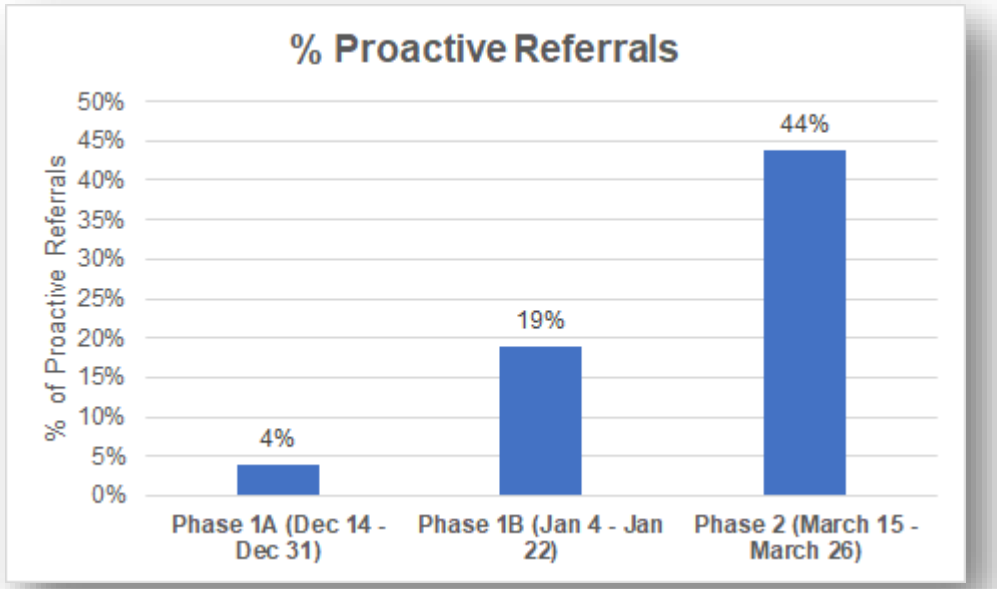
Examples of Proactive Prevention Activities



Veterans with a known or potential disability

- Disability is a **predictor** of suicide.
- Every month, the AZ Department of Veterans' Services serves **3000+** veterans with known or potential disability.
- Goal is to increase the number of these veterans who **proactively referred** to Be Connected for support and connection to resources outside their disability claim.
- A lean management approach is being used to test different ways to make these proactive referrals with an eventual **goal of 100% of clients being offered a proactive referral and increasing the number of referrals**.
- **Next**: Analyzing VA data on veterans with a service-connected disability in Arizona.

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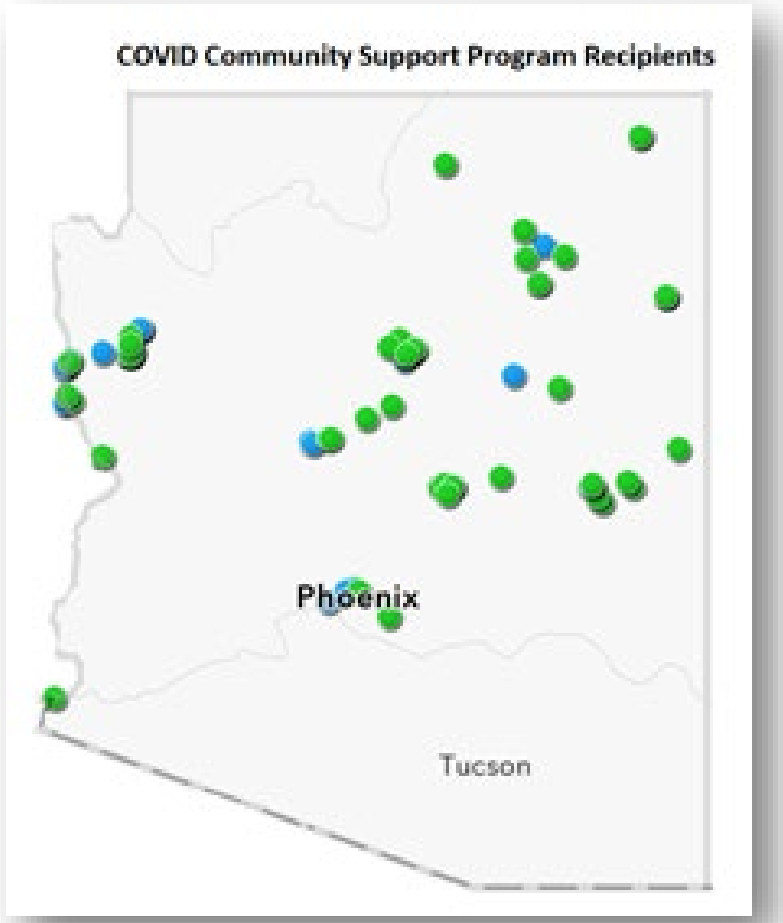
Examples of Proactive Prevention Activities



Food Insecurity

- Project supported by a grant from the Bob Woodruff Foundation.
- Community helpers were invited to **nominate military and veteran households impacted by COVID-19** for assistance with groceries and delivery when needed.
- We received **138 nominations in 2 weeks**, mostly in rural and highly rural areas, including tribal nations.
- Our Be Connected team conducted a **comprehensive needs assessment** with every person and are providing ongoing follow up.
- **Next**: Partnership with VA and community partners on a statewide food insecurity program.

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Thank you!

Special thanks to the Arizona Office of the Governor and the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family for continued partnership in support of all who serve and their families.

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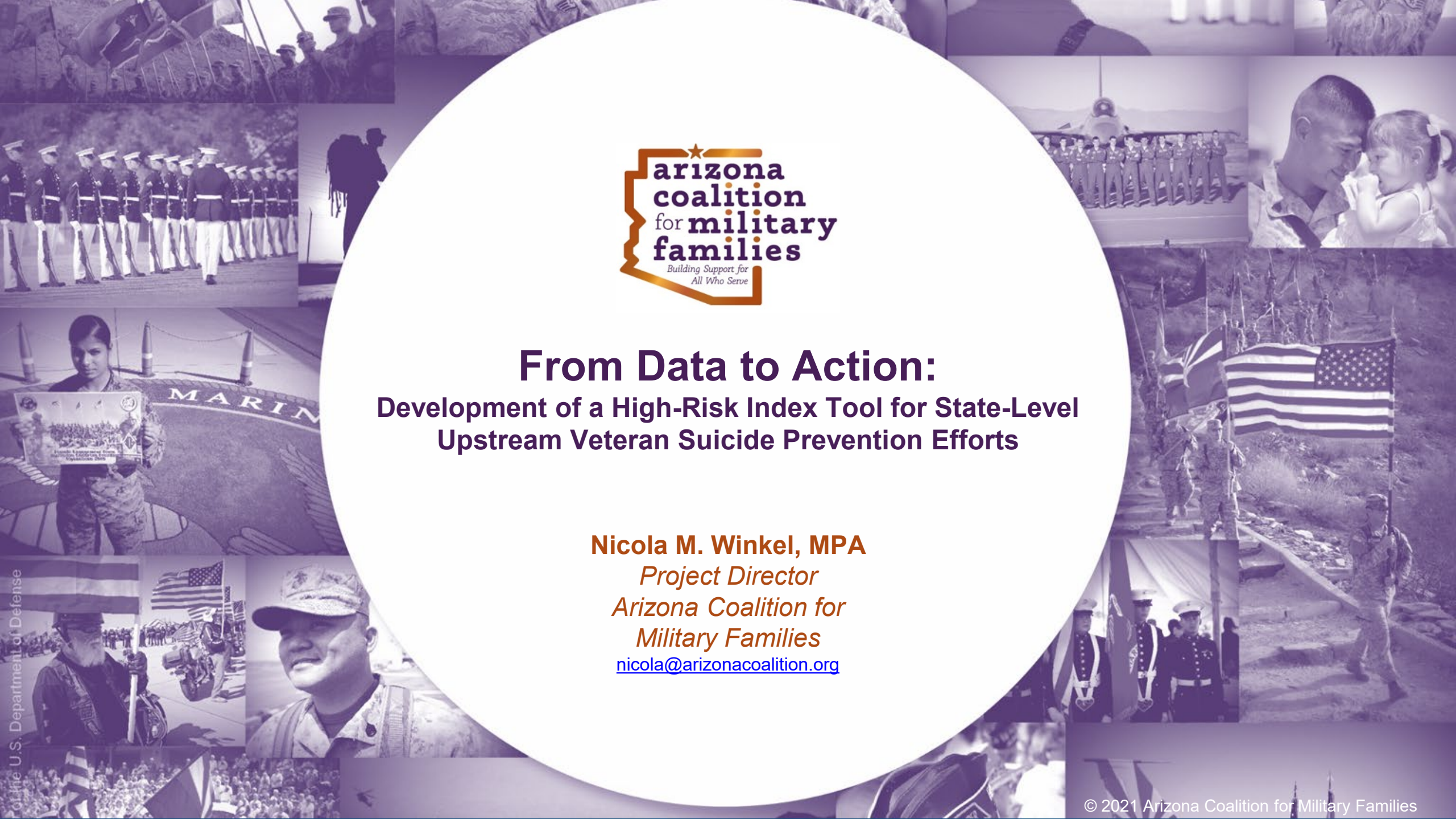

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