

THE OPERATION CHILD CARE PROJECT



Katherine Torres-Pummill

Board Chair, The Operation Child Care Project

Katherine Torres-Pummill (Kathy) is a seasoned professional with a distinguished background in strategically establishing and sustaining global market presence for leading brands across key digital platforms. As Vice President of Military Partnerships at Recurrent Ventures, Kathy leads the military portfolio, securing new sponsors, managing strategic partnerships, and achieving significant growth. She is recognized for orchestrating a partnership with Paramount for *Top Gun: Maverick*, resulting in a unique screening opportunity for USAA and active-duty service members. Additionally, in her dual role as the Head of Branded Content & Partnerships at We Are The Mighty, Kathy transformed the company's digital media content and strategy, achieving sustained profitability and earning recognition with the 2020 Cynopsis Top Women in Media Award.

"I met Kayla [Corbitt] through Veterati in 2020," Kathy shares. "We immediately hit it off and I mentored her for about two years. In 2022, Kayla decided to launch the non-profit and asked me to join her board." Today, Kathy serves as Chair of the Board of Directors for The Operation Child Care Project (OCCP), a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded by Kayla Corbitt with a mission to ensure military families have access to affordable, high-quality child care options, empowering them to pursue their career goals and create stable environments for their quality of life.

Kathy is an Air Force veteran spouse whose husband served in the Air Force and Air National Guard for 11 years. "In 2011, our lives took a significant turn when we discovered that we were expecting our son. Shortly thereafter, my husband informed me of his deployment to Afghanistan as a contractor," Kathy says. Over the subsequent three years, Kathy undertook the responsibilities of managing her career and their son, as well as her eventual graduate studies. "The absence of a tag-team approach during my pregnancy and the initial 2.5 years of my son's life necessitated adjustments in my professional trajectory," she says. The exorbitant costs associated with hiring a nanny or sitter in New York City, where Kathy resided at the time, made securing assistance for evenings or weekends a financial challenge for her. "I struggled to complete schoolwork or chores after his bedtime," she recalls.

"Kayla is bringing water to a desert," Kathy declares. "The reality is that the brunt of the impact when starting a family often falls on our [military] spouses. Consequently, we find ourselves at a crossroads, where pursuing careers, education, and safeguarding mental health either leads to being left behind or demands a sacrifice of blood, sweat, and countless tears, as was my experience. While this dilemma is pertinent to women in general, the unique challenges posed by military life exacerbate the struggle for spouses to forge ahead," she explains. Kathy describes her interactions with various brands, "I have observed numerous initiatives promoting spouse hiring and resources for entrepreneurship, etc. However, the crux of the matter lies in the unresolved child care crisis," she states. "Until this predicament is adequately addressed, these commendable initiatives risk losing their significance, as many of spouses remain unable to avail themselves of such opportunities."

Kathy is passionate about changing the narrative of the military community and believes supporting the impact of The Operation Child Care Project (OCCP) is crucial in creating meaningful change for military spouses facing the challenges of balancing family, education, and career aspirations.

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Kathy holds a Master of Science in Media Management from The New School, a university in New York City. Outside of her professional world, Kathy embraces the sunshine and laid-back vibes of SoCal living with her husband, 11-year-old son, and their dog. They share a passion for traveling, learning new cultures, and creating forever memories from the bustling streets of Asia to the vibrant landscapes of Latin America and Africa. Kathy illuminates, “With each new destination, we discover the world together, and the bond we share becomes the backdrop of our beautiful journey.”



To learn more about the work Kathy and the team at OCCP are doing, visit occproject.org and stay tuned for updates on facebook.com/theoccproject.