

News and stories

Gold Star families acknowledge shared grief

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Steven Porter | Journal & Courier

Mary King came by herself to a Memorial Day ceremony at Columbian Park, but as soon as she arrived, she knew she wasn't alone.

King, who drove from Fishers to honor the life and military service of her son, immediately spotted other parents there for the same reason.

She struck up a conversation and found new friends Robert and Mary Patterson of North Aurora, Illinois.

"There's just a connection because it's something no one else can understand," she said, pausing on the park's updated Memorial Island.

King and the Pattersons were drawn to Lafayette for the unveiling of a new Gold Star Families monument. It recognizes that the suffering inflicted by the death of American military service men and women is wide-reaching.

"I think a lot of times people forget that it's more than just the mothers," King said. "It's a full family, and it's not only the immediate family, the siblings. It's an extended family. It's the

aunts, uncles, cousins. Everybody shares the grief.”

Her son, U.S. Army Capt. Nathan King, was killed during a training exercise in 2006 after serving two tours of duty in Iraq.