

MISSING PERSPECTIVES:

WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

From Service to Civilian Life

Women have served in America's wars and conflicts throughout our history. The contributions made by the women in the military both in and out of service cannot be overstated. Women in the military have used their skills and experiences from their military service to make achievements in their careers and their communities. Information and data in this document are from various sources centered on service experience, transition, employment, entrepreneurship, and higher education.



CURRENT
POPULATION
OF WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

**Active Duty, Guard,
and Reserve**

399,000+ women active duty
and select reserve
members to date

- ▶ 229,000+ women active-duty service members
- ▶ 169,000+ women select reserve members

Veterans

1.9 million+ women veterans
in the U.S. today

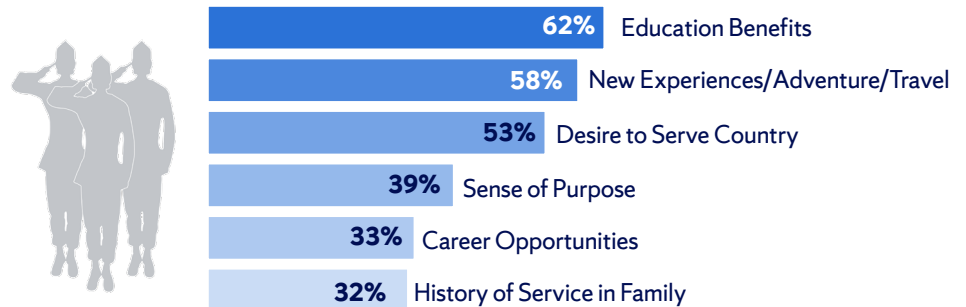
POST-9/11 WOMEN VETERANS

812,000+

WHICH MAKE UP ABOUT 41% OF
THE FEMALE VETERAN POPULATION

VIEWSON MILITARY SERVICE

Top Motivations for Military Service



Top Skills & Attributes Strengthened By Military Service

- ▶ Work ethic and discipline (85%)
- ▶ Teamwork (84%)
- ▶ Adaptation to different challenges (81%)
- ▶ Mental toughness (79%)
- ▶ Leadership and management skills (77%)
- ▶ Ability to get things done (74%)
- ▶ Perseverance (74%)
- ▶ Professionalism (74%)

EXPERIENCES FOR IAVA WOMEN VETERAN MEMBERS¹

**7 out of 10 would recommend military
service to a family member or friend**

- ▶ 75% felt pride from their accomplishments during their military service
- ▶ 85% have matured as a result of their military service

¹ IAVA stands for Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and this data is from a membership survey; 14% of IAVA member survey participants (n=691) are women (90% are post-9/11 veterans).

TRANSITION EXPERIENCES FOR IVAA WOMEN VETERAN MEMBERS

62%

DESCRIBED THEIR OVERALL TRANSITION FROM ACTIVE DUTY TO VETERAN STATUS AS DIFFICULT, WHILE 38% DESCRIBE IT AS SMOOTH

- ▶ 23% received support/training for transitioning to the civilian workforce before leaving the military
- ▶ 27% had a job secured before they left the military
- ▶ 44% moved back home after separating, 26% moved or stayed near last duty station, and 30% did neither of these

TRANSITION CHALLENGES

51% experience MANY challenges when transitioning out of the military

Top challenges

- ▶ Loss of identity / purpose (44%)
- ▶ Relating to non-veteran civilians/reintegrating with community (41%)
- ▶ Health concerns (mental or physical) (30%)
- ▶ Readjusting to social life (29%)
- ▶ Finding/keeping employment as a civilian (24%)



64% WERE SUCCESSFUL IN OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES THEY FACED IN THEIR TRANSITION



Prepared to Navigate

PREPARED UNPREPARED

38% **52%**

36% **52%**

48% **36%**

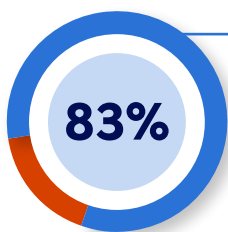
22% **62%**

37% **51%**

- The transition from military to civilian life
- The transition to post-service employment
- Access to post-service education
- The resources available in your local community (e.g., housing assistance, financial counseling, legal services)
- The healthcare and benefits system (e.g., access to medical, physical, and mental health services)

HEALTHCARE ACCESS

FOR IVAA WOMEN VETERAN MEMBERS



ARE ENROLLED IN VA HEALTHCARE

OF THESE

- ▶ 70% use VA as their primary source of care
- ▶ 54% had sought healthcare from the VA in the past month



Military Sexual Assault

59% said they had EXPERIENCED MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT (this includes things like unwanted touching, someone exposing themselves, or unwanted sexual contact)

66% believe that Department of Defense is **NOT EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT**, and only 6% believe they are

66% are receiving VA benefits other than healthcare



57% rated their overall experience with VA healthcare as good or excellent

EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment

In 2021, women veterans unemployment was **4.2%**

THIS IS SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN THE TOTAL VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WHICH WAS AT 4.4%



In 2021, post-9/11 women veterans unemployment was **4.9%**

THIS IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER THAN THE POST-9/11 VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WHICH WAS AT 4.6%



EXPERIENCES FOR IAVA WOMEN VETERAN MEMBERS

➤ **17%** experienced an employment status change during the COVID-19 pandemic

➤ **79%** reported being satisfied with their current job

➤ **31%** consider themselves to be underemployed, defined as not having enough paid work or not doing enough work that makes full use of your skills or abilities



Median Earnings

IN 2019

\$47,000



Earnings for women veterans

HIGHER compared to the total population who earn about \$42,600 YET **LOWER** compared to male veteran counterparts who earn about \$61,100

LOWER compared to non-minority veteran counterparts who earn about \$31,400

\$45,000 earnings for post-9/11 women veterans

HIGHER COMPARED TO THE TOTAL POPULATION WHO EARN ABOUT \$42,600 YET LOWER COMPARED TO MALE POST-9/11 VETERAN COUNTERPARTS WHO EARN ABOUT \$62,000

IN 2019

TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES

- ① Educational, Health and Social Services (35%)
- ② Public Administration (15%)
- ③ Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services (11%)
- ④ Retail Trade (9%)
- ⑤ Manufacturing (6%)

IN 2019

TOP FIVE OCCUPATIONS

- ① Office and Administrative Support (18%)
- ② Healthcare Practitioners and Technical (15%)
- ③ Business and Financial Operations (10%)
- ④ Sales and Related (10%)
- ⑤ Management (9%)

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

60% indicate that entrepreneurship helped them find a purpose after military service



CAPITAL

- ▶ 55% INDICATED THAT THE CAPITAL THEY NEED IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE
- ▶ 24% APPLIED FOR FUNDING IN 2020
- ▶ 43% PAY AN INTEREST RATE OF 15% OR MORE ON LOAN/CREDIT CARD
- ▶ 67% STATE THAT THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THEIR BUSINESS CAUSED THEM STRESS



Community and Network

- 57%** consider themselves social entrepreneurs
- 68%** feel responsibility for their local community
- 54%** have difficulty navigating the resources in their local community
- 36%** believe the certification process is difficult

Syracuse University's D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) is the first national institute in higher education singularly focused on advancing the lives of the nation's military, veterans and their families. Through its professional staff and experts, and with the support of founding partner JPMorgan Chase Co., the IVMF delivers leading programs in career and entrepreneurship education and training, while also conducting actionable research, policy analysis, and program evaluations. The IVMF also supports veterans and their families, once they transition back into civilian life, as they navigate the maze of social services in their communities, enhancing access to this care working side-by-side with local providers across the country. The Institute is committed to advancing the post-service lives of those who have served in America's armed forces and their families.

In Collaboration with:



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SUGGESTED CITATION

Maury, R.V.; Zoli, C.; Fay, D.; Pritchard, A.; Tihic, M.; Linsner, R. K.; Harvie, J.Y.; Akin, J.L.; & Rivera, C.C. (2022). Data Brief: Missing Perspectives: Women in the Military - From Service to Civilian Life. Syracuse, NY: D'Aniello Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University.

HIGHER EDUCATION

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

In 2021, post-9/11 women veterans have achieved:



BACHELOR'S
OR HIGHER



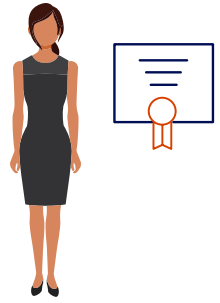
SOME COLLEGE/
ASSOCIATE'S
DEGREE



HIGH
SCHOOL



LESS THAN
HIGH SCHOOL



EXPERIENCES FOR IAVA WOMEN VETERAN MEMBERS

83%

**SAID THEY COULD
NOT AFFORD SCHOOL
WITHOUT THE GI BILL**

and another 11% were unsure if they could afford school without it



71% have enrolled in higher education since separating from the military, and 80% have graduated

73% used the post-9/11 GI Bill to support their education, 34% used the Montgomery GI Bill, and 19% used VA Vocational Rehabilitation training

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Transition Experiences, Healthcare Access, and Military Sexual Assault

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Earnings, industry, and occupation is data analyzed using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Sophia Foster, Ronald Goeken, Jose Pacas, Megan Schouweiler and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 11.0 [U.S. Census Bureau 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates only reported 2019].

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