



Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services Articles of Interest: 12-25 March 2016

FORCE OF THE FUTURE

1. [Pentagon's top personnel official resigns](#)

(14 Mar) Military Times, By Andrew Tilghman

The Pentagon's top personnel chief — the architect of the controversial "Force of the Future" personnel reform initiative — has resigned.

2. [DoD to Expand 'Force of the Future' Personnel Plan Despite Setback](#)

(15 Mar) Military.Com, By Richard Sick

Pentagon officials said Tuesday that the sweeping changes proposed under the "Force of the Future" military personnel reforms would go forward and even be expanded despite the surprise resignation of the plan's "architect."

3. [Update: Force of the Future Reforms Move Forward](#)

(17 Mar) DoD News, By Cheryl Pellerin

Force of the Future reforms are aligning military and civilian personnel rules with the 21st century, one of the program's architects said in a recent interview, noting that some revolutionary changes already are moving into place.

4. [Carter at West Point: Force of the Future reforms will continue](#)

(23 Mar) Stars & Stripes, By Corey Dickstein

Defense Secretary Ash Carter vowed to push forward "full speed ahead" with his controversial military personnel reforms, even after the program's architect announced he'd soon resign.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

5. [Here's Why the U.S. Military Is a Family Business](#)

(10 Mar) Time, By Mark Thompson

Enlisting in the U.S. military used to be a rite of passage for many young American men. But since the draft ended in 1973, being born into a military family has become a much more important marker of a future in the U.S. armed forces.

6. [Favorable gunny promotions could be good news for junior Marines](#)

(12 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Lance M. Bacon

For the second year in a row, enlisted Marines have a good shot at making sergeant, staff sergeant and gunny as the Corps approaches the end of its post-war drawdown.

7. [Marine recruiter accused of sexually abusing girl, 15](#)

(12 Mar) Chicago Tribune, By William Lee

A U.S. Marine recruiter was charged with a felony after he admitted having sex with a teenage girl he had tried to recruit into the armed services, prosecutors said.

8. [Warrants wanted: Army Guard offers big bonuses to qualified troops](#)

(13 Mar) Army Times, By Michelle Tan

The Army National Guard is offering up to \$20,000 to qualified candidates as it struggles to fill its warrant officer ranks, losing to retirement almost as many warrants as it is bringing in every year.

9. Marines' new T-shirt policy could be tied to tattoo complaint

(14 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Lance M. Bacon

A minor change to the Marines Corps' uniform policy could be the result of a tattooed woman's plight to join the service.

10. Female Army recruiters: Opening all jobs to women sends powerful message

(20 Mar) Army Times, By Kyle Jahner

Kennedy's experience is an example of why the Army has set out to grow and leverage its corps of female recruiters.

11. Military Couple Assignment Policy – 5 Things you Need to Know

(21 Mar) Navy News, By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

In an effort to improve support for dual military families, Navy Personnel Command updated the current collocation policy. These changes are reflected in the new MILPERSMAN 1300-1000, which was released on March 12.

12. Former Recruit Battalion CO: Recruit Stronger Women for Corps

(23 Mar) Military.com, By Hope Hedge Seck

As the Marine Corps prepares to open all-male combat and special operations units to women, one officer maintains that successful integration starts even before the first day of boot camp.

13. Marine Corps researching new ways to recruit women

(24 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Jeff Schogol

The Marine Corps has undertaken several research projects to better understand and reach women who may want to serve.

EMPLOYMENT & INTEGRATION

General Officer Assignments. The chief of staff, Army announced the following assignments:

- Maj. Gen. Peggy C. Combs, commanding general, U.S. Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox, Fort Knox, Kentucky, to chief of staff, U.S. Northern Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.
- Brig. Gen. Maria B. Barrett, deputy commander, operations, Cyber National Mission Force, U.S. Cyber Command, Fort Meade, Maryland, to deputy commanding general, Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber, U.S. Army Cyber Command, Fort Gordon, Georgia.
- Brig. Gen. Patricia A. Frost, deputy commanding general, operations, U.S. Army Cyber Command, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, to director of cyber, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, U.S. Army, Washington, District of Columbia.
- Col. (Promotable) Jennifer G. Buckner, commandant, U.S. Army Cyber Center and School, Fort Gordon, Georgia, to deputy commander, operations, Cyber National Mission Force, U.S. Cyber Command, Fort Meade, Maryland.

Flag Officer Announcements. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced today that the president has made the following nominations:

- Navy Reserve Rear Adm. (lower half) Deborah P. Haven has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral. Haven is currently serving as commander, Defense Contract Management Agency International, Fort Lee, Virginia.
- Navy Reserve Capt. Carol M. Lynch has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). Lynch is currently serving as deputy force judge advocate, Navy Reserve Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia.
- Navy Reserve Capt. Mary C. Riggs has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral (lower half). Riggs is currently serving as deputy chief of staff, Navy Reserve, Navy Medicine Education and Training Command, Jacksonville, Florida.

General Officer Announcement. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced today that the president has made the following nomination: Air Force Col. Andrea D. Tullos has been nominated to the rank of brigadier general. Tullos is currently serving as the commander, 42nd Air Base Wing, Air Education and Training Command, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

Flag Officer Announcements. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter announced today that the president has made the following nominations:

- Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Lisa M. Franchetti has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral. Franchetti is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Nine; and commander, Carrier Strike Group Fifteen, San Diego, California.
- Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Dee L. Mewbourne has been nominated for appointment to the rank of rear admiral. Mewbourne is currently serving as director, maritime operations, N3, N5, N2, N7, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia.

General Officer Assignments. The chief of staff, Air Force announced the following assignments:

- Col. Linda S. Hurry, who has been selected to the grade of brigadier general, from commander, 635th Wing, Air Force Materiel Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, to director, expeditionary support, Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, Air Force Materiel Command, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.
- Col. Angela M. Cadwell, who has been selected to the grade of brigadier general, from executive officer to the deputy commander, U.S. European Command, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, to director, command, control, communications and cyber systems, Headquarters U.S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

General Officer Assignment. The chief of staff, Air Force announced the following assignment: Col. Andrea D. Tullos, who has been selected to the grade of brigadier general, from commander, 42nd Air Base Wing, Air Education and Training Command, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, to director of security forces, deputy chief of staff for logistics, engineering and force protection, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Pentagon, Washington, District of Columbia.

14. Women could enter Navy SEAL training by September

(11 Mar) Navy Times, By Meghann Myers

With the path to the elite SEAL teams opening to women, female special operator hopefuls could be entering the military's most arduous training by late summer.

15. Navy's first female admiral lined up for another 4-star post

(14 Mar) Navy Times, By David Larter

The Navy's highest-ranking woman may soon head to Europe.

16. Marine Corps Begins Moving Female Leaders into Infantry Units

(17 Mar) Military.com, By Hope Hedge Seck

As Marine Corps officials plan to move newly minted female riflemen into infantry units by early 2017, they're working to create a system that they believe will make the historic move successful.

17. Only 1 Woman on UN Security Council From the United States

(17 Mar) ABC News, By Edith M. Lederer

The number of women diplomats at the United Nations has always been low and for the last 70 years only a few have gotten seats on the Security Council. In 2014 there were a record six, in 2015 there were four, and today there is only one woman on the council, U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power.

18. Female Marine officers, staff NCOs to join grunt units

(17 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Jeff Schogol

Female Marine officers and staff noncommissioned officers will soon be assigned to infantry battalions.

19. These are the Army's new gender neutral rules for Special Forces

(18 Mar) Army Times, By Jim Tice

The Army has issued its rules for opening Special Forces to women as part of several policy revisions affecting the service's special operations career fields.

20. West Point's first female commandant advises future cadets

(19 Mar) fayobserver.com, By Drew Brooks

Before a Fort Bragg dinner on Saturday, the first female commandant of cadets at West Point assured a room of future cadets that the academy, like the Army, has come a long way toward gender equality.

21. Gen. Robinson to head NORTHCOM, will be first female to run COCOM

(20 Mar) Air Force Times, By Stephen Losey

[Gen. Lori] Robinson will be the first woman to ever head a combatant command, Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook said in a tweet announcing Robinson's nomination.

22. This is what the Navy's occupation fitness test should be

(24 Mar) Navy Times, By Meghann Myers

If the Navy wants a fitter force, it has to be comprehensive: Better access to healthy food, command PT and a fitness test that has something to do with the job.

23. [Keeping Marine Corps Boot Camp Gender-Divided Ensures It's Separate But Not Equal](#)

(24 Mar) Task & Purpose, By Ellen Haring

The Marine Corps' plan to keep boot camp training segregated by gender demonstrates its unwillingness to embrace integration.

WELL-BEING & TREATMENT

24. [Air Force assistant vice chief fired over unprofessional relationship](#)

(18 Mar) Air Force Times, By Oriana Pawlyk

The Air Force assistant vice-chief of staff has been removed after an Inspector General investigation found he exchanged inappropriate emails with a female lieutenant colonel.

25. [More high-ranking officers being charged with sex crimes against subordinates](#)

(19 Mar) The Washington Post, By Craig Whitlock

The U.S. military has stepped up investigations of high-ranking officers for sexual assault, records show, curtailing its traditional deference toward senior leaders as it cracks down on sex crimes.

26. [The Military's suicide-prevention fight has moved to Facebook and Twitter](#)

(20 Mar) Military Times, By Patricia Kime

In 2015, the Defense Personnel and Security Research Center, working with researchers from Northrop Grumman and the University of Utah National Center for Veterans Studies, undertook two studies on suicide cues in social network posts.

27. [The Army offers job perks to those who help prevent sex assault](#)

(21 Mar) Army Times, By Jim Tice

Active-component soldiers who serve full-time in support of the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Prevention Program qualify for an array of assignment incentives under a directive issued March 11 by acting Secretary of the Army Patrick J. Murphy.

28. [Bill would give military dads, adoptive parents 12 weeks leave](#)

(21 Mar) The Hill, by Rebecca Khell

All military parents, regardless of gender or whether their children are adopted, would get 12 weeks of paid parental leave under a bill introduced by Rep. Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.)

29. [Coast Guardsman Found Guilty of Sexual Assault](#)

(22 Mar) The Virginia-Pilot, By Amir Vera

According to a press release from the Coast Guard, [Petty Officer 3rd Class Jerry W.] Clifft was sentenced to four years in prison, reduction of rank to seaman recruit, total forfeiture of pay and allowances as well as a dishonorable discharge.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH / WOMEN VETERANS

30. [Army backs bill to allow female pilots' ashes at Arlington](#)

(16 Mar) The Associated Press

The acting Army secretary has signaled his support for legislation that would reverse a decision by his predecessor and allow female World War II pilots known as WASPs to continue placing their ashes at Arlington National Cemetery.

31. [Women veterans can find a mentor through American Corporate Partners](#)

(22 Mar) Military Times, By Charlsy Panzino

American Corporate Partners announced Monday a new mentoring program focusing solely on female veterans.

1. Pentagon's top personnel official resigns

(14Mar) Military Times, By Andrew Tilghman

The Pentagon's top personnel chief — the architect of the controversial "Force of the Future" personnel reform initiative — has resigned.

Brad Carson, who served as acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, will leave his post on April 8, according to defense officials.

At the same time, Carson's senior adviser, Morgan Plummer, a former Army officer and central figure in the personnel reform effort, will also step down, defense officials said.

Carson, a 49-year-old former congressman and Iraq War veteran, was tapped for the job in April 2015 and oversaw implementation of several controversial changes to military personnel policy, including the recent decision to open combat jobs to women with no exemptions.

Carson also became the public face of Defense Secretary Ash Carter's ambitious effort to modernize the military personnel system, which faced stiff opposition from some corners of the Pentagon.

Carson recently completed the year-long effort and passed along to the secretary a slate of final recommendations, which may include a call for major changes to the federal law that defines military officers' career tracks, defense officials said.

The departure also comes after Carson's disastrous confirmation hearing on Capitol Hill in February. Senators accused him of presuming confirmation and violating a once rarely enforced law that bars new appointees from serving in their high-level positions while awaiting the Senate's formal approval.

Combined with controversy surrounding the personnel reform effort — which Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz, called "an outrageous waste of official time and resources" — Carson's chances at confirmation before the end of the Obama administration appeared slim.

Carson notified his staff by email Monday afternoon.

"Given the extraordinary work that we've already achieved to date, low likelihood of confirmation even after recusing myself, and reduced time left in the administration, I have determined it is better for me and my family to depart from public life and try to quickly provide some stability to P&R's leadership for the duration of the Administration," Carson wrote in the email, according to a copy obtained by Military Times.

"I could not be more proud of the work we've achieved together, nor of each of you for the tremendous work that you do," Carson wrote.

It's unclear who Carter might tap to replace Carson for the final nine months of the administration.

A Democrat from Oklahoma who spent four years in the House of Representatives, Carson came to the top Pentagon job after serving as undersecretary of the Army. His 12 months as the acting personnel chief included several far-reaching changes and accomplishments.

Carson's brief tenure marked a sharp change for the office that for years suffered from high-turnover among its leadership and typically initiated few policy changes. Prior to Carson's appointment last year, most Pentagon personnel reforms from recent years were either initiated by the individual services or by Congress.

The Force of the Future initiative stemmed from the secretary's concern that the military's rigid career tracks may not appeal to the best and brightest among today's younger generation, especially people with high-demand skills needed for career fields like cyber warfare.

Carter has rolled out the policy changes in stages.

In November, Carter unveiled "tranche one," which included:

- Creating a new high-tech personnel management system for matching individual troops with job assignments, an online network he compared to social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.
- Creating a new "chief recruiting officer," a civilian to oversee forcewide efforts to attract top talent.
- Establishing a first-of-its-kind "exit survey" for separating troops to better understand retention trends
- Expanding corporate fellowship programs to allow service members to work in the private sector.

In January, Carter announced "tranche two," with reforms that included:

- Extending the forcewide maternity leave benefit to 12 weeks for all women and 14 days for men
- Expanding mandatory hours for on-base child-care facilities.
- Expanding options for military service members seeking specific duty stations offering more geographic stability for their families.
- Coverage for troops seeking to freeze sperm or eggs to preserve fertility options

Carter is now considering formal recommendations for a "tranche three" and "tranche four," according to defense officials familiar with the process. That may include:

- Formally asking Congress to revise the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act, which sets in law many aspects of officer career tracks. That may include scaling back the "up-or-out" rules and joint service requirements as well as other revisions aimed at encouraging officers to pursue non-traditional career paths or develop technical expertise.
- Revising personnel regulations to make it easier for mid-career professionals from the civilian world to seek "lateral entry" and join the military without having to start at the bottom of the traditional rank and pay structure.

<http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/pentagon/2016/03/14/pentagons-top-personnel-official-resigns/81759816/>

2. DoD to Expand 'Force of the Future' Personnel Plan Despite Setback

(15 Mar) Military.Com, By Richard Sick

Pentagon officials said Tuesday that the sweeping changes proposed under the "[Force of the Future](#)" [military personnel reforms](#) would go forward and even be expanded despite the surprise resignation of the plan's "architect."

"Nothing's changed with regard to Force of the Future," Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook said of the plan that has been trumpeted as a legacy initiative for Defense Secretary Ashton Carter.

"The secretary remains squarely behind the initiatives he's already unveiled and has more to come," Cook said. Carter will be making the case for Force of the Future in upcoming congressional testimony, Cook said.

"And he feels confident that these are changes that are critical to this department going forward" and adapting to retain personnel and recruit more into the ranks in a changing economy, Cook said. "It's our goal to continue working with Congress."

Force of the Future suffered a major setback Monday with the resignation of Brad Carson, the Pentagon's top personnel chief as acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

Carson, considered the "architect" of Force of the Future, was expected to leave the building on April 8. Morgan Plummer, a former [Army](#) officer and Carson's top adviser, was expected to leave along with Carson, Pentagon officials said.

In a statement after Carson announced his resignation, Carter said, "Brad Carson has developed some of the most important and groundbreaking work in years to modernize our personnel policies."

"At my direction, he charted a path forward for the Department and our people that will leave a lasting legacy, and will improve the mission effectiveness, readiness and the quality of life for our civilian workforce, uniformed service members and families," Carter said.

Carson was nominated last year by President Obama to succeed Jessica Wright in the Under Secretary's personnel post but

immediately ran afoul of the Senate Armed Services Committee over alleged violations of the obscure Federal Vacancies Act, as well as the reforms he was proposing.

The resignations of Carson and Plummer followed a particularly confrontational hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) at which the Force of the Future proposals were called "outrageous" and Carson's qualifications were questioned.

"This initiative has been an outrageous waste of official time and resources during a period of severe fiscal constraints," Sen. John McCain, an Arizona Republican and the SASC chairman, told Carson. "It illustrates the worst aspects of a bloated and inefficient defense organization."

"I find it deeply disturbing that you are proposing to add expensive fringe benefits allegedly aimed at retention during a time when we are asking 3,000 excellent Army captains to leave the service who would have otherwise chosen to remain on active duty," McCain said.

McCain and other members of the panel also expressed concerns that Carson had violated the Federal Vacancies Act by performing the duties of the undersecretary for personnel and readiness while still in the "acting" status.

The Federal Vacancies Act had also tripped up the nomination of Eric Fanning, the acting Secretary of the Army, to become the first openly gay head of a service branch. The Pentagon got around that by changing Fanning's title and [his nomination was approved by the SASC](#) earlier this month to become secretary of the Army.

However, Fanning's nomination was still on "hold" because of Sen. Pat Roberts, a Kansas Republican. Roberts was seeking assurances from the White House and the Defense Department that Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, prisoners will not be transferred in the future to [Fort Leavenworth, Kansas](#), before he will lift the hold on Fanning's nomination.

Carson, 49, a [Navy](#) veteran of Iraq and a former Democratic congressman from Oklahoma, was influential in Carter's move to [open up combat roles to women](#) in the military, and also in the [proposal to allow transgender troops to serve openly](#).

Carson's reform proposals under Force of the Future, which he billed as the "biggest personnel overhaul in 45 years," were aimed at fundamental changes in the way the Defense Department recruits, pays, promotes and manages the military.

In an article for Defense One last June, Carson bluntly described what he was attempting in Force of the Future as an effort to discard the hidebound ways of doing things that had become entrenched in the Pentagon bureaucracy.

"In this modern, data-informed world, neither the business community nor the Defense Department has time or decision space for the bureaucratic needs of hierarchical, linear organizations of a former era," Carson said.

"Unfortunately, the department has been just that type of institution when it comes to personnel management -- until now," Carson said.

The major personnel changes sought by the Pentagon require the approval of Congress. Other changes can be authorized by Carter without the input of Congress.

With only 10 months left in the Obama administration, it remained unclear whether the major changes could be put in place this year, or whether Carter would turn to seeking to lay the groundwork for reform for the next president.

Critics of the plan question the viability of adding personnel programs that could potentially cost billions at a time when the Defense Department was [cutting the Army to 450,000 troops](#) and also was continuing to face the possibility that the arbitrary budget caps known as sequestration could be re-imposed.

One of the main proposals in the Force of the Future plan that would require congressional approval would revamp the military pay system by creating new basic pay tables for high-demand career fields such as cybersecurity to allow commanders to dole out merit-based cash bonuses.

Another major proposal, also requiring congressional approval, would change the "up-or-out" system of promotions under federal law that limits the number of times an officer can be passed over for promotion before being forced to leave the military. Under Force of

the Future, promotions would be based more on experience and performance rather than time in grade.

Carter has unveiled the proposed Force of the Future changes in three "tranches," which were detailed by Military Times. The first tranche disclosed in November included:

- Creating a new high-tech personnel management system for matching individual troops with job assignments in an online network Carter compared to Facebook.
- Creating a new civilian "chief recruiting officer" to oversee efforts to attract top talent.
- Expanding corporate fellowship programs to allow service members to work in the private sector.

In January, Carter offered "tranche two," with changes that included:

- Extending the forcewide [maternity leave benefit to 12 weeks for all women](#) and 14 days for men. (The Navy, which had a policy of 18 weeks maternity leave, would reduce the leave to 12 weeks.)
- Expanding mandatory hours for on-base child-care facilities.
- Expanding options for military service members seeking specific duty stations to provide more stability for their families.

Carter has also been considering a "tranche three" and possibly a "tranche four" of personnel changes. One of the additional reforms Carter was expected to propose involved changing regulations to make it easier for mid-career civilian professionals to seek "lateral entry" to join the military without having to start at the bottom of the traditional rank and pay structure.

In his statement announcing his resignation, Carson said, "I'm very grateful to the men and women of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Their commitment to those that serve our country, in and out of uniform, is unparalleled, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served with such an outstanding team."

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/03/15/dod--expand-force-of-the-future-personnel-plan-despite-setback.html>

3. Update: Force of the Future Reforms Move Forward

(17 Mar) DoD News, By Cheryl Pellerin

Force of the Future reforms are aligning military and civilian personnel rules with the 21st century, one of the program's architects said in a recent interview, noting that some revolutionary changes already are moving into place.

Brad R. Carson, senior advisor to the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, told DoD News that one of the new family-friendly rules -- extended maternity leave -- will be effective almost immediately and another, egg freezing, will be covered by TRICARE starting Oct. 1.

Such changes in the personnel systems account for similar employee benefit developments in the private sector and for changing expectations of the millennial generation.

The secretary so far has announced two groups of reforms, Carson said. These are reforming practices to recruit and retain service members, and making changes to appeal more to service members and their families.

"Both [groups] have been wildly popular, we've found, [with] great support from the force, from senior leaders, and whole Facebook page is devoted to ... how this is going to revolutionize the experience of service members," Carson said.

Revolutionary Change

The first group of reforms included blended retirement, the establishment of a Defense Digital Service, designating a chief recruiting officer and establishing an Office of People Analytics.

On blended retirement, Carson said today's retirement system works only for those who have served for 20 years -- a number that includes only 10 to 17 percent of service members.

"We've tried to modernize the retirement system so that you take away something no matter how long you've served," he said.

Service members will have a 401K plan that they can invest in immediately on entering the service, and after the third year the

department will contribute to those plans.

On the Defense Digital Service, Carson said this is an arm of the U.S. Digital Service. The USDS is made up of software engineers and other experts from across the country who came in at the last minute in December 2013 to shore up the administration's overburdened healthcare.gov website.

At the Defense Department, Carson said, such experts will come in and work for six months or two years and have a high impact.

"That's really our vision for Force of the Future -- we want to have this kind of permeability between the private and public sectors, he added.

Recruiting and Analysis

On the chief recruiting officer and office of people analytics, Carson said the department is moving forward on both reforms.

The department hasn't yet found the right person to serve as chief recruiting officer, he said. But there's a need to recruit executives from the private sector to "come in for a few years to help us," he added.

The office of people analytics will help the department learn more about its service members and civilians and help the services and the Pentagon retain them, Carson said.

"Why do they leave? When do they really join? What do they want over the course of their careers? And what are trends that can be identified?" he said.

"The office of people analytics [will have] three or four PhDs in data science [who will] look at these kinds of trends," Carson said.

Family Flexibility

In the second tranche of family reforms, he said the department is moving rapidly on extending maternity leave, which it already has the authority to do, and asking Congress to help the department extend paternity leave.

Another initiative within the second group of reforms seeks to allow a service member, in exchange for an extra service obligation, to stay on a post longer than usual to stabilize their family or accommodate a spouse's career.

"We're not forcing the services to do this, we're giving them the tools [so that] if they want to use this as an incentive they really can," Carson said.

Another piece, flexible family planning, will make egg-freezing part of the TRICARE program, increase the number of lactation rooms in DoD facilities, and keep every military childcare center open for at least 14 hours a day, he said.

"We hope that we can at least start the implementation of most of these reforms over just the next few months," he added.

"So for example maternity leave will be almost immediate. Egg freezing will be on Oct. 1. ... It may take a few months or even a couple of years to fully implement, but we can start immediately and get the ball rolling," Carson said.

The Next Reforms

Carson said the next big group of reforms, which are currently under review by the defense secretary, will include making the up-or-out system governing officer promotions more flexible, allowing lateral entry into the military, establishing technical tracks, and encouraging military departments to send more of their officers and senior enlisted to advanced civil schooling. After that, he said, the department will announce reforms to the 700,000-employee civilian personnel system.

"The challenges are that the personnel system has been around for a very long time, and so there are a lot of rules and regulations that have been built up. Expectations and careers have been built around these rules," Carson said.

"You have to measure twice and cut once when you think about changing the personnel system," he added, "but we think we're making some real progress by looking at what the needs of the force are -- what families need."

<http://www.defense.gov/News-Article-View/Article/689615/update-force-of-the-future-reforms-move-forward?source=GovDelivery>

4. Carter at West Point: Force of the Future reforms will continue

(23 Mar) Stars & Stripes, By Corey Dickstein

Defense Secretary Ash Carter vowed to push forward "full speed ahead" with his controversial military personnel reforms, even after the program's architect announced he'd soon resign.

During a visit to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., Carter told the institution's 4,400 cadets that his proposals would ensure the military in which they will soon be officers will be capable of recruiting and retaining the most talented people to serve.

Questions about the future of his programs were raised this month after Brad Carson, the acting undersecretary of defense, announced he will leave his post next month following a difficult confirmation hearing in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"I respect Undersecretary Carson's decision not to pursue confirmation, but he and his office have done excellent work with respect to the Force of the Future," Carter told reporters traveling with him at West Point. "I'm completely committed to the force of the future."

The proposals have been criticized by some members of Congress, including Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., who called them "an outrageous waste of time and resources."

Carter rolled out the "first tranche" of personnel reforms in November, which included mid-career sabbaticals, high-tech industry fellowships and changes to the retirement system.

The reforms were backed by much of the Pentagon leadership, Carter said.

"When we're doing something that clearly makes good sense for the country and we've shown the way and we've articulated and explained why it makes sense — everybody in the department knows that it makes sense," Carter said. "I'm confident that those things will stick, because they clearly will make a better military and they have logic and support."

Additional reforms are in the works, he said Wednesday. Those proposals are likely to include a call to overhaul laws governing the way military officers are promoted.

"It's important to act with resolve and not wait," Carter said, stopping short of predicting they'd be completed before he leaves office. "But it's also important to do it thoughtfully."

During his visit to West Point, Carter's first as defense secretary, he met with cadets, toured a physics laboratory and received classified briefs on the academy's cyber and counter-terrorism programs.

The defense secretary told the cadet corps, all millennials who will commit to serving in the Army for several years upon graduating from the academy, that their generation will demand reforms to the military more than past generations.

Cadets generally agreed with that assessment, said Cadet 1st Capt. EJ Coleman, who will graduate in May and commission as an artillery officer.

"A lot of people in my generation are looking for different opportunities," Coleman said, calling millennials the "social media" generation.

"I think they are looking for some flexibility," the cadet said. "Yes, this is the military, and it's not going to change abruptly, the Army has rigid structure and that's good, but there are great positives to having some options in the military."

<http://www.stripes.com/news/carter-at-west-point-force-of-the-future-reforms-will-continue-1.400828>

5. Here's Why the U.S. Military Is a Family Business

(10 Mar) Time, By Mark Thompson

A Pentagon report shows 4 of 5 recent recruits have had a close relative in uniform

Enlisting in the U.S. military used to be a rite of passage for many young American men. But since the draft ended in 1973, being born into a military family has become a much more important marker of a future in the U.S. armed forces.

The draft once acted as a national eggbeater, whipping young men of different creeds, races, economic circumstances and other divergent backgrounds into a unified fighting force. But Pentagon data show that 80% of recent troops come from a family where at least one parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle, sibling or cousin has also worn their nation's uniform. More than 25% have a parent who

has served.

The subject surfaced at a Senate Armed Services Committee subcommittee hearing Tuesday, when Senator Angus King, (I-Maine), questioned the reliance of the U.S. military on relatives of those who have served. The U.S. armed forces had 3.5 million troops at the peak of the Vietnam War—more than double the 1.4 million it had during the post-9/11 wars. That means the pool of potential recruits in the future who had a close relative who served will also shrink. “This going to put more pressure on the non-family member recruiting,” King said Thursday. “We’ve got to reach outside the bloodlines.”

Such military service “has been part of our history for a long time,” King added. “It’s wonderful that we have people that have this tradition in their families and they continue to honor it—that’s a good thing. The only question I had was does the mathematics suggest that at some point in the future we’re going to have make greater efforts to broaden the pool.”

A Pentagon [report](#) detailing 2012-2013 recruits shows that 86% of new Air Force airmen had a close relative (parent, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle or cousin) who had served. The Navy rate was 82%; Army, 79%; and Marines, 77%.

“Eighty-two percent of Navy recruits have had a family member serve in the U.S. military, which is a concern to us,” says Lieut. Commander Nate Christensen, spokesman for the Chief of Naval Personnel. “We believe that this limits both the talent pool from which the Navy draws, as well as the diversity of background in our force, and ultimately could lead to a civil-military divide.”

The report also noted how many of those recruits went into the same service as their kin. Relatives are what the military calls key “influencers” because of their ability to steer young people into, or away from, the military. While 59% of Army recruits whose close relatives had served in uniform said they had a relative who had served in the Army, that was true for only 37% of Marine recruits. The Air Force (46%) and Navy (51%) fell in between.

This has been a recurring topic of discussion in recent years. David Barno, a retired three-star Army general who had two sons in the service, said the isolation of modern military life has tended to increase sons and daughters following in their parents’ footsteps. “It’s a family business,” Barno told TIME in 2011. “It’s an ever-decreasing circle of folks on these isolated military posts who raise their own kids and send them into the force.” The Pentagon was unable to provide additional information showing how recruits’ family background has changed over time.

Army personnel chief Lieut. General James McConville highlighted the issue at Tuesday’s hearing, when he discussed the pain he felt at having to force young men and women out of uniform as the Army shrinks after the major wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. As “the father of three soldiers,” he said in his opening statement, “it breaks my heart that we have to involuntary separate soldiers who have served so honorably during this time of conflict.”

<http://time.com/4254696/military-family-business/>

6. Favorable gunny promotions could be good news for junior Marines

(12 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Lance M. Bacon

For the second year in a row, enlisted Marines have a good shot at making sergeant, staff sergeant and gunny as the Corps approaches the end of its post-war drawdown.

The Corps plans to promote 1,696 Marines to gunnery sergeant in 2016. While the number could increase slightly, manpower officials do not expect gunny promotions to exceed the pre-drawdown average of 1,750.

While it’s a 17-percent drop from the 2,047 Marines who made gunny last year, it is far better than the 1,129 promoted in 2014. During the drawdown, gunny promotions averaged around 1,400.

Those roughly 1,700 promotions will have a trickle-down effect.

The Marine Corps plans to promote 3,600 sergeants to staff sergeant this year, said Lane Beindorf, who heads up enlisted promotions for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

Another 9,600 corporals will likely be able to make sergeant, Beindorf added. Beginning April 1, though, corporals and lance corporals must meet a new 12-month time-in-grade requirement before they can add another stripe.

“The [promotion] numbers for 2016 will be somewhat lower than 2015, especially since last year’s allocations of 4,274 staff sergeants were the second highest in a decade,” Beindorf said. “There were a number of [Temporary Early Retirement Authorization] takers, which opened several allocations.”

The promotion season kicks off with the gunnery sergeant selection board, which will convene April 20 and is expected to last about eight weeks.

The infantry’s quota of 143 promotions is by far the most of any military occupational specialty. It is followed by administrative specialist, which has 107 slots, and motor transport operations chief, which has 83.

Light armored vehicle crewmen will see the biggest increase over last year’s quotas — 17 will be promoted, as compared to just four last year. Supply administration and operations specialists are at the other end of the spectrum. Their 47 promotion slots dropped from 70 in 2015.

Six MOSs that had no gunny promotions in 2015 have quotas this year. They include:

- Middle East cryptologic linguist
- Asia-Pacific cryptologic linguist
- Helicopter power plants mechanic, T-64
- Fixed-wing aircraft mechanic, F/A-18
- Fixed-wing aircraft power plants mechanic, J-52
- Aviation electronic micro/miniature component and cable repair technician, IMA

Five aviation MOSs will have no gunny promotions for a second year, including several in the F-35B joint strike fighter community and one for KC-130s.

Two MOSs will have no gunny promotions for a third straight year: Central Asian cryptologic linguist and tactical systems operator/mission specialist.

Making the grade

Manpower officials emphasized that all Marines need to make sure the information in their military personnel file and master brief sheet are up to date before promotion boards convene.

Marines can perform an audit of their records by following instructions at the Manpower Management Division [home page](#). Click the “MMRP-50 Officer/Enlisted Career Counseling” link on the left, then click the “OMPF and MBS Self Audit Document” link at the bottom of the page.

If Marines find errors or omissions, they should visit their career counselor.

There are two areas that can quickly derail a Marine's shot at a promotion: photographs and professional military education requirements. The latter will play a larger role in promotions beginning this year. All lance corporals must complete an online course and a command-sponsored leadership and ethics seminar to be eligible for promotion to corporal. Corporals must complete a command-sponsored corporals course to be eligible for promotion to sergeant.

On Oct. 1, sergeants will be required to complete an online version of sergeants course, followed by the resident version of the course at a staff NCO academy.

Staff sergeants have a little more leeway. In order to make gunny, they must complete the MarineNet career course, followed by a resident or distance education program. The completion of resident PME courses will not fulfill nonresident PME requirements.

Marines up for promotion are also required to submit an official photograph taken within 12 months of the board’s convening date. The lack of a photo is not a reason for non-selection in and of itself, but an updated photograph or letter explaining the absence of photograph will go a long way when the selection board decides who is the best qualified for selection, officials said.

Digital photographs are preferred, as they can be electronically filed in the OMPF, where they can be submitted by an authorized

combat camera department. If a Marine does not have access to combat camera, Marine administrative message 90/16 provides details on other options.

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2016/03/12/favorable-gunny-promotions-could-good-news-junior-marines/81484214/>

7. Marine recruiter accused of sexually abusing girl, 15

(12 Mar) Chicago Tribune, By William Lee

A U.S. Marine recruiter was charged with a felony after he admitted having sex with a teenage girl he had tried to recruit into the armed services, prosecutors said.

A Cook County judge set bail at \$150,000 for Luis Fernando Maya, 28, during a hearing Saturday at the Leighton Criminal Court Building on charges of aggravated criminal sexual abuse.

In court, authorities said Maya, a Marine recruiter in [Des Plaines](#), was the subject of a Marine Corps investigation after learning he had “inappropriate and sexual conversations” with potential recruits through text messages and social media.

Maya lives in the 2300 block of West Arthur Avenue in the city's West Rogers Park neighborhood, prosecutors said.

One of the recruits, a 15-year-old high school freshman, eventually came forward, alleging that Maya contacted her through Facebook last year about joining the Marines. Prosecutors said Maya maintained communication with the girl despite learning she was under the eligible recruitment age and convinced her to meet with him last October after school.

At least twice, Maya had sex with the girl in his van parked near Mozart Park on the city's Northwest Side, authorities said. Maya made incriminating statements to Marine officers, Chicago police and assistant state's attorneys, further admitting that he knew the victim was 15.

Judge Peggy Chiampas also ordered that Maya have no contact with the victim and no contact with anyone under 18.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-state-marine-recruiter-accused-of-sexually-abusing-girl-15-20160312-story.html>

8. Warrants wanted: Army Guard offers big bonuses to qualified troops

(13 Mar) Army Times, By Michelle Tan

The Army National Guard is offering up to \$20,000 to qualified candidates as it struggles to fill its warrant officer ranks, losing to retirement almost as many warrants as it is bringing in every year.

The Guard is focused on recruiting for 39 career fields in particular and has opportunities across the 54 states and territories.

“As a warrant, you are the technical expert in your field,” said Maj. Carol Stahl, deputy accessions branch chief for the Army Guard. “If you really love what you’re doing and want to keep doing that, being a warrant officer is really for you. When a warrant officer speaks, people listen.”

The Army Guard has about 8,570 warrant officers in its ranks today; it is authorized more than 10,400. As of January, more than 3,800 of the Guard’s warrant officers, or about 44 percent, were eligible for retirement.

Part of the issue is the need for experienced, technical experts, she said. The other issue is attrition, as the vast majority of warrant officer candidates serve as enlisted soldiers before making the switch.

“It’s an older population, so we have a lot of guys who are up for retirement,” she said. “The number of warrant officers we’re bringing in is being offset by people getting out or retiring.”

So far this fiscal year, which started Oct. 1, the Guard has brought in 242 warrant officers but lost 232, said Chief Warrant Officer 2

Darrell Beal, who works in the Army Guard's warrant officer accessions section.

The previous year, fiscal 2015, the Guard brought in 573 new warrants but lost 622.

"We're always encouraging states to overdrive the [recruiting] mission if possible," Stahl said, adding that the Guard also is challenged by geography and finding the right candidate for the right job or unit.

To help meet its needs, the Guard is seeking applicants from within but also soldiers transitioning from the active Army as well as service members from the other services.

Here's what you need to know to decide if going warrant is right for you.

Should I apply?

Warrant officers who are leaving the active Army and decide to join the Guard can receive a \$20,000 affiliation bonus in exchange for a three-year commitment. The service commitment doubles to six years if the warrant officer chooses to switch career fields and needs further training.

Enlisted soldiers from the regular Army who leave active duty to join the Guard and go warrant are eligible for a \$20,000 accession bonus in exchange for a six-year commitment.

If you're already in the Guard and decide to go from enlisted to warrant, you also can earn up to \$20,000; the money is paid after you complete MOS-specific training and sign up for six more years.

Becoming a warrant officer also provides soldiers with highly specialized training in their chosen field, which could translate into enhanced civilian career opportunities after the Army.

What are some of the other benefits?

Warrant officers make more money than enlisted soldiers.

A sergeant with more than eight years of service makes \$398.64 every drill weekend. A warrant officer 1 with eight years of service makes \$533.28.

An E-5 with more than 10 years of service makes \$419.68, while a WO1 with the same time in service makes \$552.56.

This does not include the additional pay soldiers receive during their two-week annual training.

Warrant officers also have healthy promotion rates.

"Promotion rates up to CW4 are virtually a lock based on vacancies," Stahl said.

In the Guard, promotions up to CW4 are unit vacancy based and are almost guaranteed once the officer is in good standing and meets the time in grade and military education requirements.

Unlike the active Army or Army Reserve, Guard warrants don't compete against peers for promotion by a selection board.

In addition, a sergeant first class with two years of time in grade who makes the switch to go warrant is automatically promoted to CW2 upon completion of his or her training.

Candidates also are eligible to state-specific education and veteran benefits.

Who are they looking for?

The Guard is looking for candidates from within its organization but also soldiers transitioning from the active Army and service

members from all of the other services.

“Of course we’re always looking for warrant officers within our own ranks, but we just can’t fill our ranks with just our in-service guys. There’s just not enough of them,” Stahl said.

The Guard hopes that its numerous hometown locations across the country is a draw for service members leaving active duty.

“If you decide to get off active duty, you’re probably going to go back to where your family is from or where you can get a job,” Stahl said.

As for candidates who have served in the Air Force, Navy or Marine Corps, the Guard is “absolutely interested in them as long as they’re qualified,” Stahl said.

“Sometimes you don’t have a one-for-one match on our [military occupational specialties], but sometimes you do,” she said.

The Guard will review records for all applicants to see if they qualified, she said.

Where are the shortages?

The Guard is seeking candidates for all military occupational specialties, but it is focusing on 39 in particular.

One of specialties with the biggest shortages is military intelligence. Cyber is another, Stahl said.

Other critical areas are air defense artillery, signal and electronic warfare, Beal said.

Here is the full list, by MOS:

- 120A: Construction engineering technician
- 125D: Geospatial engineering technician
- 131A: Field artillery targeting technician
- 140A: Command and control systems technician
- 140E: Air and missile defense tactician/technician (Patriot systems technician)
- 150A: Air traffic control technician
- 150U: Tactical unmanned aerial systems operations technician
- 170A: Cyber operations technician
- 180A: Special Forces warrant officer
- 255A: Information services technician
- 255N: Network management technician
- 255S: Information protection technician
- 255Z: Cyberspace network operations technician

- 270A: Legal administrator
- 290A: Electronic warfare technician
- 350F: All-source intelligence technician
- 350G: Geospatial intelligence imagery technician
- 351L: Counterintelligence technician
- 351M: Human intelligence collection technician
- 352N: Signals intelligences analysis technician
- 353T: Military intelligence systems maintenance/integration technician
- 420A: Human resources technician
- 670A: Health services maintenance technician
- 740A: Chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological technician
- 880A: Marine deck officer
- 881A: Marine engineering officer
- 882A: Mobility officer
- 890A: Ammunition warrant officer
- 913A: Armament systems maintenance warrant officer
- 914A: Allied trades warrant officer
- 915A: Automotive maintenance warrant officer
- 919A: Engineer equipment maintenance warrant officer
- 920A: Property accounting technician
- 920B: Supply systems technician
- 921A: Airdrop systems technician
- 922A: Food service technician
- 923A: Petroleum systems technician
- 948B: Electronic systems maintenance warrant officer
- 948D: Electronic missile systems maintenance warrant officer

How do I apply?

For the full list of requirements, go to <http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant/>.

Key requirements include:

- U.S. citizenship.
- A General Technical score of 110 or higher.
- A high school diploma or GED.
- The ability to obtain a secret clearance or better, which varies by career field.
- Ability to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test and the commissioning physical.
- At least 12 months remaining on your enlisted contract at the time of application.

For specific information about serving as a warrant officer in the Guard, go to <http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant/WONationalGuard.shtml>.

Active Army enlisted soldiers and warrant officers interested in learning more should contact the Reserve Component Career Counselor at their installation for more information.

All other interested candidates also should talk to their state, territory or District of Columbia warrant officer strength manager. To find a warrant officer strength managers, go to <http://www.nationalguard.com/contacts/wosm>.

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/guard-reserve/2016/03/13/warrants-wanted-army-guard-offers-big-bonuses-qualified-troops/81657428/>

9. Marines' new T-shirt policy could be tied to tattoo complaint

(14 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Lance M. Bacon

A minor change to the Marines Corps' uniform policy could be the result of a tattooed woman's plight to join the service.

Marine administrative message 143/16 gives female Marines the option to wear a white crew-neck T-shirt with their dress or service uniforms. Previously, only white V-neck T-shirts were authorized for women.

The change follows complaints from a congresswoman that the Marine Corps' tattoo policy unintentionally discriminates against women after a recruiter told her constituent, Kate Pimental, 20, that she couldn't enlist because of a tattoo that runs across her neckline. Her tattoo, which reads "Let your smile change the world but never let the world change you," is not visible with a crew-neck shirt.

The Marine Corps does not allow tattoos on the neck that are visible in a standard physical training shirt or in the "V" portion of the short-sleeve khaki shirt without an undershirt. While men are allowed to wear crew neck T-shirts, which cover the area, women had only two options: a V-neck option or nothing.

When made aware of that difference, Rep. Chellie Pingree, D-Maine, [wrote a Feb. 22 letter](#) to Commandant Gen. Robert Neller crying foul.

The different uniform standards, Pingree wrote, were "not right" and kept "smart, capable women like Kate from being able to serve her country."

Marine officials contend, however, that there was more to the decision to bar Pimental from serving in the Corps than her tattoo — that she didn't meet other requirements.

"Applicants must meet a variety of prerequisites to enlist, including moral, mental and physical requirements," said Capt. Gerard

Farao, a spokesman for 1st Marine Corps District. “The tattoo is only a small piece of the ‘whole-person’ concept the Marine Corps looks at. When applying the ‘whole person’ concept to every applicant and after working with her recruiter, Ms. Pimental did not meet all the standards required for enlistment.”

Pimental could not be reached for comment.

In asking Neller to review the policy, Pingree wrote that “several policies and regulations ... however unintentional, directly affect female Marines’ opportunities to serve.”

“As women take more active roles in defending this country, it’s important that we address some of the discrepancies that provide men with options unavailable to their female counterparts,” she wrote.

Whether her efforts helped drive the March 11 change is unknown. Pingree said she never heard back from the Marine Corps. Marine uniform officials did not respond to questions submitted by Marine Corps Times about the change.

“We are very grateful that General Neller acted so quickly, because it was an issue that was resolvable,” Pingree told Marine Corps Times. “I don’t think anybody wants to see what could be considered a minor issue be a point of discrimination between women and men.

“It is a good day in Washington, it is a good day in the military when you see a problem and it can be resolved quickly.”

The new policy states that the white crew-neck and V-neck shirts are authorized with the female service and dress uniforms and are worn at the individual’s choice, though a commander can require crew-neck undershirts for uniformity in formations, ceremonies or parades. Marines may wear short-sleeve undershirts of any material as long as they meets the command’s minimum safety standards and have a Marine Corps approval identification number.

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2016/03/14/marines-new-t-shirt-policy-could-tied-tattoo-complaint/81779928/>

10. Female Army recruiters: Opening all jobs to women sends powerful message

(20 Mar) Army Times, By Kyle Jahner

When Alina Kennedy walked into a recruiting office in New Hampshire several years ago, a friend had already stoked her interest with the stories she shared about her great experience in the Army.

Good thing. Without that background, the first-year college student might very well have turned around and never looked back.

“I’m an independent spirit, but honestly I was a little overwhelmed when I walked into the recruiting center and it was all males from a combat arms background,” said Kennedy, now a sergeant first class and recruiter who works as the professional development noncommissioned officer at Recruiting Command headquarters in Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Kennedy’s experience is an example of why the Army has set out to grow and leverage its corps of female recruiters. Several of the women talked with Army Times about how the service’s treatment and perceptions of gender have changed as it opens ground combat jobs to women, and what female soldiers can contribute to a recruiting center’s success.

Young women’s fears about their quality of life in the Army and the rigors of basic training are the most common obstacles female recruiters say they have to overcome.

“The biggest question I always get asked is, ‘Can you be married and have children when you join the military, and do you have to leave them behind?’” said Sgt. 1st Class Taisha Franco, a recruiter working in Hempstead, New York, who has also recruited in south Texas. “I break it down for them. I have a picture of my husband and children in my office.”

Kennedy, who is 5-foot-1, 118 pounds, says women can more easily convince female recruits they can hack it at basic.

Sgt. 1st Class Yanitzas Betances-Leger, a center leader for the Harlem Recruiting Center in New York, has encountered the same concerns. She says trust and credibility are the linchpins of recruiting. A New York City native, Betances-Leger said many in her neighborhood distrust recruiters, regarding them salespeople just trying to meet quotas. Her own mother “did not approve of me

joining the Army, not at all,” she said. Her mom's view changed after seeing the changes in her daughter’s life.

“She walks around with my recruiting card ... four of my cousins actually joined, one being a female,” said Betances-Leger, who has served for more than 16 years. “Women in the Hispanic community, they don’t just go by what they read. They go by if someone they know [has done it], someone relatable.”

Still, conveying to recruits how much the Army has to offer women does not end the struggle for recruiters. Betances-Leger said women are still seen as the underdogs who have to “put 110 percent into every task” to prove themselves, and others agreed.

“You realize quickly in basic training, as a female, you’re looked at in a different manner,” Franco said. “They’re never surprised if you fail, they’re more surprised that you made it.”

But Franco also cited women reaching [higher echelons](#) of command as a sign of progress and that the culture is shifting. Regarding combat jobs, Kennedy said even women who don’t want those jobs respect the decision to replace gender-based restrictions with more objective job requirements; it sends a broader message about what the Army values, and could attract more women to the service.

“A year ago we didn’t have the opportunity for women to serve in every single” military occupational specialty, Kennedy said. “A more fair and equal organization, that will change the minds of a lot of females.”

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2016/03/20/female-army-recruiters-opening-all-jobs-women-sends-powerful-message/81544848/>

11. Military Couple Assignment Policy – 5 Things you Need to Know

(21 Mar) Navy News, By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

In an effort to improve support for dual military families, Navy Personnel Command updated the current collocation policy. These changes are reflected in the new MILPERSMAN 1300-1000, which was released on March 12.

Here is what you need to know:

1. Existing policies were primed for review and update.

The Navy realizes how important families are, and when they're not whole it can add stress to a Sailor's life. Collocation of dual-military couples is part of supporting families. It is a priority, along with balancing fleet readiness. The revised policy updates the collocation and distribution procedures and makes orders negotiation less cumbersome.

2. Changes are being made to existing personnel information technology (IT) systems.

Adjustments to personnel IT systems will better identify dual-military families, providing detailers a better means to coordinate collocation during Sailors' orders negotiation window.

3. Instead of opting in, the Sailor can decide to opt out.

In the past, a Sailor had to request collocation during each orders negotiation. Now Sailors will submit a one-time request that will remain in effect until the Sailor tells their detailer otherwise. If a Sailor chooses not to be collocated, they contact their detailer and negotiate appropriate orders.

4. A flag officer review is required when detailers can't collocate dual-military families.

To ensure Navy Personnel Command has done everything possible to accommodate dual-military collocation, the Assistant Commander, Navy Personnel Command for Distribution will review instances where the Navy cannot support collocation for any reason other than when a Sailor chooses to opt out.

5. The Navy is serious about making this work.

The fleet is invested in collocation. For example, the submarine community is currently expanding homeport options for female officers and will be extending options for female enlisted in the future.

To keep the system working properly, the Navy requires Sailors to keep their records updated, especially if there is a change in marital status.

For more information, visit <http://www.npc.navy.mil> and read MILPERSMAN 1300-1000.

http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=93733

12. Former Recruit Battalion CO: Recruit Stronger Women for Corps

(23 Mar) Military.com, By Hope Hedge Seck

As the [Marine Corps](#) prepares to open all-male combat and [special operations](#) units to women, one officer maintains that successful integration starts even before the first day of boot camp.

During a recent Washington, D.C., panel on combat integration, Lt. Col. Kate Germano said the Marine Corps should aim to raise its recruiting standards in order to develop a stronger, more physically qualified population of female Marines for infantry and other roles.

"When you have women underperform on the rifle range as recruits, have 20 percent of recruits not qualify, that says something," Germano said. "Then that becomes the norm; it becomes the expectation."

Germano commanded 4th Recruit Training Battalion, the only unit to train female recruits, until she was relieved from her post last June in connection with an [investigation that found her hard-edged leadership style](#) created a "hostile ... abusive" command environment. Germano maintains she was an effective leader, citing an increase in rifle qualification rates for her all-female battalion from 79 percent to 91 percent during the year she spent there.

Germano previously served as the commanding officer of Recruiting Station San Diego.

In an interview with Military.com, Germano said sending more physically fit female recruits to boot camp would also help break down perceived cultural barriers between male and female Marines and engender respect as new female infantrymen enter the fleet.

"When we have women who can barely pass the physical fitness component in training, we'll never have male Marines who respect females in training," she said.

Better-qualified female recruits, Germano suggested, may also be more likely to make it through boot camp and complete longer Marine Corps careers.

Data provided by [Parris Island](#) officials shows female recruits dropped out of boot camp at a rate of 13.3 percent over the last four years, more than double the 6.5 percent attrition rate for male recruits.

"Integrating recruit training and improving how we screen and qualify females to enlist is a force multiplier throughout the Marine Corps," Germano said. "If you improve the caliber of the average female recruit, you're going to make a difference across every [military occupational specialty] in the Marine Corps."

But despite publishing a detailed plan to [introduce women to ground combat arms jobs](#), the Marine Corps is not changing up its recruiting strategy for women, an official with Marine Corps Recruiting Command said.

Steve Wittle, deputy assistant chief of staff, G3, at Marine Corps Recruiting Command, told Military.com the current plan involved informing the recruitable female population about the availability of infantry jobs and continuing recruiting relationships the Marine Corps already has with college and high school athletic organizations to seek out qualified female recruits.

Even there, the Marine Corps has its work cut out. In 2013, the Pentagon's market research department, Joint Advertising Market Research & Studies (JAMRS), found that only 61 percent of the recruitable female population knew that infantry jobs would be coming available to women, Wittle said. In 2014, the figure dropped to 51 percent.

For now, Wittle said, there are no plans to change how the Marine Corps targets and recruits female Marines.

"We'll continue doing exactly what we've been doing," he said.

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/03/23/former-recruit-battalion-co-recruit-stronger-women-for-corps.html>

13. Marine Corps researching new ways to recruit women

(24 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Jeff Schogol

The Marine Corps has undertaken several research projects to better understand and reach women who may want to serve.

As a result, service advertising initiatives will include updates to recruiting websites, social media content and other awareness materials, such as informational brochures and direct mail, said Jim Edwards, a spokesman for Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

For now, MCRC doesn't have plans for an advertising campaign geared toward letting women know about combat arms jobs that recently opened to women, but that could change in the future, Edwards told Marine Corps Times.

"We will continue to evaluate accession requirements that will determine what, if any, focused effort will accompany the next major campaign that is anticipated to launch sometime in 2017," Edwards said in an email.

The Marine Corps plans to increase accessions of women with the intent of raising the percentage of women in the Marine Corps to about 10 percent by fiscal 2020 or 2021, Lt. Gen. Mark Brilakis, MCRC commander, told Marine Corps Times in September.

When asked if the Marine Corps plans to increase the number of female recruiters, Edwards said the service selects recruiters based on skill, not gender.

"Approximately 3,760 Marine recruiters are serving in every community of our nation delivering our 'Tough, Smart, Elite Warrior' message of opportunity to young men and women," he said.

The Army is working to boost its number of female recruiters. Brig. Gen. Donna Martin, deputy commander of recruiting, [told Army Times](#) this month that more female recruiters would also be sent to high-profile recruiting events.

"They'll be speaking to women to debunk the myths about serving in the military as a woman," Martin said.

The Marine Corps currently has 147 enlisted female recruiters and seven female officer selection officers, Edwards said.

"These numbers don't account for several female Marines serving in leadership and support billets throughout the recruiting command," he said.

The first female poolees are expected to ship to recruit training for infantry military occupational specialties in October, officials told reporters last week. Female poolees will begin shipping for other MOSs open to women, such as tanks and artillery, in June.

"The Marine Corps Recruiting Command is working closely with Marine Corps leadership in order to tailor our collective messages to properly inform all prospective Marines on their opportunities for service," Edwards said. "However, while Marine recruiters advise prospective applicants on programs and opportunities, their focus is more on preparation for recruit training and successful service in the operating forces."

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2016/03/24/marine-corps-researching-new-ways-recruit-women/82208072/>

14. Women could enter Navy SEAL training by September

(11 Mar) Navy Times, By Meghann Myers

With the path to the elite SEAL teams opening to women, female special operator hopefuls could be entering the military's most arduous training by late summer.

The likeliest timeline for women would be to enter Naval Special Warfare Preparatory School on Sept. 19 and then the Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL course in Coronado, Calif. early next year.

The head of the Navy SEALs said the training will be opened to women, but cautioned that this process will yield few qualified women and could prove a distraction for his force's core competency — combat effectiveness.

"In the near term, achieving integration, and evolving existing cultures will channel focus and energy away from core combat readiness and effectiveness efforts," said Rear Adm. Brian Losey, the head of Naval Special Warfare Command, in his letter summarizing the SEAL's 48-page integration plan.

The plan to integrate SEALs has been controversial, with some special operations veterans saying it was a distraction and worrying that the drive to include women would come with lowering their legendary standards.

In his letter released Thursday, Losey warned against lowering those standards.

"Any deviation from the validated, operationally relevant, gender-neutral standards would undermine true integration, disrupt unit cohesion, impact combat effectiveness, and be a disservice to those exceptional candidates willing to test and serve against the required and validated standards," he said.

The plan lays out several timeline scenarios, some of which are more feasible than others. For women to enter BUD/S by late October, they would have had to have been screened before the SEALs' integration plan was released, for example. Meeting those deadlines would be needed for women to report to Naval Special Warfare Preparatory School at Great Lakes, Illinois, in May, the earliest possible date.

An NSW spokesman was unable to say Friday whether any women have screened for SEAL training.

The next enlisted panel meets in June, which would put approved women at prep school in mid-September, then at NSW orientation in early December, an eight-week process before starting BUD/S.

Per the officer timeline, if a woman was prepared to apply first thing this year, she could be at BUD/S in early 2017. However, not all commissioning pipelines would have been prepared for that.

For example, Naval Academy Superintendent Vice Adm. Ted Carter, who supplies 35 percent of special warfare officers, announced in December that he would allow women into his NSW pipeline with the class of 2017.

And once women get through BUD/S, notorious for dropping 80 percent of men, it could be up to a year before they are assigned to SEAL or SWCC units.

It's much more likely, according to their notes, that a woman who gets to boot camp in July and screens for NSW could be at prep school on Sept. 19, and NSW orientation on Dec. 1, putting the first women at BUD/S in late January 2017.

Combating concerns

Welcoming women to NSW's SEAL and special warfare combat crewmen specialties will take some logistical work, which is outlined in the plan, but they must hew to their standards, Losey wrote.

"Focusing on gender-neutrality of standards is the number one effective measure to continue successful gender integration in the force," he added.

With already low selection numbers for men, it's unlikely that special operations will see an influx of women.

In similar communities, female participation is low: divers are 0.6 percent women, while explosive ordnance disposal is 0.9 percent female enlisted and 2.5 percent female officers.

Only 13 percent of female enlisted EOD applicants make it through, and 18 percent of female diving hopefuls. That's compared to men, who get through at 31 percent and 47 percent, respectively.

"Equal opportunity may not produce equal results," Losey wrote. "While there are no insurmountable obstacles to opening all NSW

positions to females, there are foreseeable impacts in achieving true integration in NSW ground combat units."

There is also considerable worry in the force that integration will become a sideshow.

Media attention is an issue, according to the plan. Unlike coverage of the Navy's integration of the riverines, women completing Marine Corps enlisted infantry training and the first women to graduate Army Ranger School, NSW is committing to keeping secret the identities of all of their trainees.

Brass tacks

Adding women to NSW is more complicated than opening the training pipeline — it will also require manning tweaks and infrastructure upgrades.

In the short-term, they're asking to multiply the number of female staff by five at the Naval Special Warfare Center. For the long-term, they want to have eight more female billets in the training phase staff.

Currently, there are 10 women assigned to NSWCEN, including an athletic trainer, physical therapist, psychologist, physician's assistant, EOD officer, senior chief hospital corpsman, an HM1 diving medical technician, a 1st class master-at-arms, a 2nd class gunner's mate and a 2nd class boatswain's mate.

It will also cost \$275,000 to physically accommodate women. They'll need \$175,000 of that to install security cameras at the BUD/S barracks and another \$100,000 for women's heads and showers at their San Clemente Island facilities.

The open-bay barracks will be use privacy partitions and have segregated heads, based on the Army's Ranger School. During training, there will be all-female floors and wings.

All of these changes are contingent on those gender-neutral physical standards. SEALs and SWCCs have a grueling fitness test and candidates compete against each other for a spot, graded on a curve.

Often, the average candidate swims and runs minutes faster and can do one-and-a-half times as many push-ups, sit-ups and pull-ups as the minimum requirement.

<http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2016/03/11/women-could-enter-navy-seal-training-september/81637272/>

15. Navy's first female admiral lined up for another 4-star post

(14 Mar) Navy Times, By David Larter

The Navy's highest-ranking woman may soon head to Europe.

[Adm. Michelle Howard](#), the vice chief of naval operations, is the president's top pick to lead Naval Forces Europe, now commanded by Adm. Mark Ferguson, according to three sources familiar with high-level personnel moves. Howard also relieved Ferguson as vice chief.

In July 2014, Howard became the Navy's first female four-star. The follow-on assignment in Naples, Italy, would all-but guarantee she'll retire an admiral.

If confirmed for the post, it would cement the 1982 Naval Academy graduate's legacy as one of the most accomplished women in the service's history. She was the first black woman to command a ship — the amphibious dock landing ship *Rushmore* in 1999 — and went on to command Amphibious Squadron 7 and later Expeditionary Strike Group 2.

Howard is also well known for leading a counter-piracy task force that pulled off the high-seas rescue of civilian Capt. Richard Phillips from Somali pirates in 2009, later depicted in the Tom Hanks movie "Captain Phillips."

Replacing Howard at vice chief, sources say, will likely be [Vice Adm. Bill Moran](#), a P-3 pilot who has served as the chief of naval personnel since 2013.

During his time there, Moran has worked to rebuild sailors' trust in senior leadership in the wake of the controversial 2011 enlisted retention board. He has also worked hard to fill empty billets at sea, which had been as high as 13,000 when Moran took office, and hiked sea pay for the first time in decades and introduced new hardship duty pay-tempo for sailors on long deployments.

Moran's likely successor is Rear Adm. Robert Burke, the 2005 Stockdale Award winner for his tour as CO of the attack submarine Hampton. Burke heads the chief of naval operations' military personnel plans and policy office at the Pentagon.

<http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2016/03/14/michelle-howard-naveur-naval-forces-europe-bill-moran-vice-chief/81777230/>

16. Marine Corps Begins Moving Female Leaders into Infantry Units

(17 Mar) Military.com, By Hope Hedge Seck

As [Marine Corps](#) officials plan to move newly minted female riflemen into infantry units by early 2017, they're working to create a system that they believe will make the [historic move](#) successful.

Support jobs, ranging from logistics to administration, are now available to female Marines within infantry units, officials told reporters Thursday. The goal, they said, was to install female leaders at the units in keeping with a mandate from Defense Secretary Ashton Carter before the junior women arrived.

"Throughout the Marine Corps, everyone is now assignable to certain billets," said Col. Ann Weinberg, deputy director of the Marine Corps Force Innovation Office and one of the architects of the Corps' plan to incorporate women into previously closed ground combat units.

While a few billets will stay female-only and male-only, such as those for drill instructors overseeing recruits of the same gender, the exceptions are rare, Weinberg said.

The 233 female Marines who have already completed infantry training and received a secondary infantry military occupational specialty during previous research can request to make a lateral move into a ground combat unit at any time. But female recruits who want to enter a "loadbearing" ground combat specialty, such as rifleman or mortarman, will not be able to ship to boot camp until Oct. 1. Female recruits in non-loadbearing combat-arms fields, such as artillery or [tanks](#), can begin boot camp June 1 at the earliest.

Setting conditions

This delay will give Marine officials the opportunity to ensure that senior female officers and enlisted Marines are in place before the junior Marines arrive. The goal is to have a female staff noncommissioned officer and an officer in support MOSs at each infantry battalion who will unofficially support the unit and new female members throughout the transition period.

"As soon as we get demand signals from junior female Marines matriculating into entry training pipeline to become 03XXs [the Marines' infantry designator], we'll start assigning senior female leadership to those infantry battalions as well," Weinberg said. "We've just got to manage the population and the inventory of that particular population. Setting the conditions is really where we are."

When the first female Marines enter the fleet as infantrymen, a process expected to start early next year, Weinberg said they will be assigned in pairs. Either two female Marines with the same MOS will go to the same unit, or if there isn't a second Marine available, a male and female Marine who have trained together in the same MOS will be assigned together.

"We found with previous experience especially with pilot pipeline that it doesn't matter if you're the same sex. What matters is that you've trained together, you know each other, and you trust each other," Weinberg said. "So you have that task cohesion ... I trust that you can do your job, you trust that I can do my job, we go into a unit together, we get assigned to the same unit, we all vouch for each other."

Once women have been installed in previously closed ground combat units, their progress and success will be measured with a longitudinal assessment plan designed to allow officials to make adjustments as needed. Lessons learned by the first generation of female infantrymen may help those that come after.

"The longitudinal assessment is going to take a look at propensity, performance, injury rates, career progression rates, command rates and take a look at that not just for women, but really throughout the Marine Corps," Weinberg said. "Because we haven't, to be

perfectly honest, done a really good job of understanding what is it that keeps a Marine in, what is it that encourages a Marine to leave the Marine Corps, male or female, so we wanted to be able to capture those in terms of surveys at the end of the career, in the middle of the career, when you decide to get out, what are some of the factors going into that."

Waiting for recruits

One unknown could delay all these plans: the length of time it takes to see the first female Marines express interest in going infantry.

To date, none of the previously qualified 233 female Marines have requested a lateral move, though some have expressed interest in doing so in the future.

Brig. Gen. James Glynn, head of the Marine Corps' office of communication, noted that some of the qualified women had career concerns as well as circumstantial delays such as light duty status that made them temporarily ineligible for a move.

To date, no female recruits have requested to go infantry. Steve Wittle, a deputy assistant chief of staff, G3, at Marine Corps Recruiting Command, said the recruiting offices would keep a count of the women who requested newly available specialties. Meanwhile, MCRC is pushing information out to all the female poolees in the Corps' delayed entry program, he said, to inform them that they have the opportunity to change their desired field if they wish.

Perhaps one of the greatest unknowns is when a woman will make it through the Corps' grueling infantry officer course. To date, 29 female officers have attempted the course, but none have completed it. Officials said Thursday that one woman, whose name has not been released, is now preparing to attempt the course in coming months in hopes of becoming an infantry officer.

Still, Glynn said, the Marine Corps will be able to execute its integration plan even if IOC continues to stymie female Marines.

"I'm not going to sit here and hide behind it; it's definitely a challenge. Would we prefer to have it that way? Certainly we would. And I think if I were that young PFC reporting, I'd prefer to have it that way," Glynn said. "But where we sit right now, part of that experiential learning piece is going to be, we're quite likely going to learn that particular dimension without that in place."

With all units and jobs open to women, it is possible that a female Marine could end up involuntarily assigned an infantry MOS in the future. But Glynn said current demand for infantry jobs makes the chance of that happening slim.

"We haven't had to involuntarily assign someone to the infantry for decades," he said. "We fill that early in the year and it's actually quite competitive."

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/03/17/marine-corps-begins-moving-female-leaders-into-infantry-units.html>

17. Only 1 Woman on UN Security Council _ From the United States

(17 Mar) ABC News, By Edith M. Lederer

The number of women diplomats at the [United Nations](#) has always been low and for the last 70 years only a few have gotten seats on the [Security Council](#). In 2014 there were a record six, in 2015 there were four, and today there is only one woman on the council, U.S. Ambassador [Samantha Power](#).

With thousands of women at U.N. headquarters this week for the annual meeting of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, four U.N. ambassadors who served on the 15-member council including Power spoke about being part of the male-dominated body and the need to put more women in the front lines on issues of international peace and security.

U.N. political chief Jeffrey Feltman, who moderated Wednesday's panel, said being back to just one woman on the council shows the need for a "sustained commitment" to gender parity in dealing with world crises and conflicts.

But he stressed it's not just the Security Council where women are outnumbered.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has increased the number of undersecretary-generals and assistant secretary-generals serving overseas to about 20 percent, and the number of women ambassadors at the U.N. has risen from about seven 20 years ago to about 37

today, which is also about 20 percent, "but again it's not enough," Feltman said.

"Numbers aren't everything, but they're an important signal to the international community" of the implementation of the U.N. goal to achieve equality for women including in leadership positions, he said.

The first woman to serve on the Security Council was Ana Figueroa Gajardo of Chile in 1952. The first American woman with a seat on the council was Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick in 1981.

Power said the first time she felt that she was the only woman on the council was last Thursday during a debate on sexual abuse by U.N. peacekeepers where she spoke out strongly.

"I felt when I was strong, very strong, I could see the little thought bubbles in some of my counterparts who were listening to me thinking, 'This is because she's a woman. She's this fired up about this issue,'" Power recalled. "I don't think it has anything to do with being a woman. It has to do with basic decency and injustice and a sense of what the U.N. stands for."

She said people looking at the Security Council table in 2016 and seeing just one woman will think "that's crazy" and will also ask why there's been no woman secretary-general and why there have only been two women presidents of the General Assembly in over 70 years.

Other ambassadors said getting a seat at the Security Council table was harder for women than for men but that being female also had its advantages in diplomacy.

Jordan's U.N. Ambassador Dina Kavar said "women get where we get ... because we fight more to get where we want to get."

Luxembourg's U.N. Ambassador Sylvie Lucas said: "I think you have to work harder, still as woman, to make your points."

At Security Council meetings, Power said all 15 countries have "red lines" — but there is a lot of space between the red lines where ambassadors can make a difference.

"I think we all navigate in no man's land, male and female," Kavar said. But "there's something in this nature in women where we want to find solutions."

Lithuania's U.N. Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaite said "the visual impact does matter — having six women, or five women, or four women sitting at the council and debating world affairs is a very powerful signal for those who would like to be there in the future."

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/woman-security-council-united-states-37708546>

18. Female Marine officers, staff NCOs to join grunt units

(17 Mar) Marine Corps Times, By Jeff Schogol

Female Marine officers and staff noncommissioned officers will soon be assigned to infantry battalions.

With all combat arms jobs now open to women, qualified enlisted Marines could soon be moving into infantry battalions. Since no female officer has graduated from Infantry Officer Course, though, there currently are no women to lead them.

To begin building that cadre of women leaders, Marine officials will soon assign female officers and staff NCOs to infantry battalions where they will serve in support roles, officials said.

These female Marines or sailors will help male infantrymen adjust to the changes in their units before female grunts join their battalions, said Col. Anne Weinberg, deputy director of manpower integration.

"I think there's a 'you gotta see it to believe it' aspect in some of these units," Weinberg said at a Thursday media roundtable.

The female leaders' main responsibility will be to assist the entire unit, not just the women grunts, Weinberg said.

"We really didn't look at them as helping the junior female Marines," she said. "We really looked at helping the unit writ large — as a resource to the commander, as a sounding board."

However, the female officers and staff NCOs' secondary mission will be to serve as a resource for any female infantrymen who join

the battalions, Weinberg said.

“If they feel like there’s something they can’t talk to their male leader about, just to have that same gender face,” she said.

The cadre of women leaders is expected to be in place in infantry battalions at least 90 days before the first female Marines arrive, Weinberg said. The first poolees are expected to ship to recruit training for infantry MOSs in October, so the earliest they would join infantry battalions would be early next year.

However, 233 female Marines have already graduated from Infantry Training Battalion or other MOS schools previously closed to women, she said. Those Marines have the ability to make lateral moves into infantry and non-load-bearing MOSs before October.

“If we do get some lat-movers, we’ll get the female leadership in place sooner rather than later,” Weinberg said.

At least three female Marines who have qualified for combat arms jobs have told Marine Corps Times they intend to apply for lateral moves.

About 200 female Marine leaders are already assigned to units in other MOSs that had been restricted to men only, Weinberg said. The first poolees are expected to ship to recruit training in June for those MOSs, such as tanks and artillery, said Stephen Wittle with Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

In May and June, all Marines will receive two days of training on the Marine Corps’ gender integration plan, Weinberg said.

“We’re doing it for the entire Marine Corps, not just the previously closed MOSs,” she said. “[It’s a] great opportunity to take people aside and focus on this for two days and have an opportunity to talk about institutional change, unconscious bias.”

In addition to learning about why the Marine Corps has opened all MOSs to women, Marines will have to complete training vignettes, Weinberg said.

“Some of the scenarios are: You’re in the field; you only have this certain amount of space for billeting and you’ve got three women and six guys; how are you going to billet?” she said. “Just some common sense things that these units probably haven’t had to deal with.”

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/story/military/2016/03/17/female-marine-officers-staff-ncos-join-grunt-units/81931858/>

19. These are the Army's new gender neutral rules for Special Forces

(18 Mar) Army Times, By Jim Tice

The Army has issued its rules for opening Special Forces to women as part of several policy revisions affecting the service's special operations career fields.

Announced March 8, the changes apply to enlisted personnel seeking assignments in three specialties: Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations.

An overview:

Special Forces

- SF is open to male and female soldiers. However, before attending Special Forces Assessment and Selection, known as SFAS, soldiers must complete a physical assessment test that, as a minimum, includes 49 pushups, 59 situps, a 2-mile run of 15:12 minutes or less, and six pullups.
- Female soldiers must have a negative pregnancy test within 30 days before their report date to SFAS.
- Soldiers seeking entry into Special Forces must have a valid SF physical before attending SFAS. Additionally, candidates must be able to complete a physical demonstrating they are able to endure the speeds and stress associated with a high-altitude, low-opening

parachute jump. If needed, soldiers must also undergo corrective eye surgery before attending the SF qualification course.

- The minimum General Technical score for Special Forces has been increased from 107 to 110, and the Army will not accept waivers.
- The maximum age for SFAS remains 36, and soldiers must have at least 36 months of obligated service remaining when they complete the SF qualification course.

Civil Affairs

- Soldiers who qualify for reclassification to become a civil affairs specialist must successfully complete Civil Affairs Assessment and Selection and the CA qualification course.
- Prerequisites for reclassification include a physical profile rating of no less than 111221; a minimum GT score of 107; a secret security clearance; no criminal convictions for any offense other than minor traffic violations.
- Also, soldiers must achieve a score of 65 or higher on the Defense Language Aptitude Battery, and have a valid Test of Basic Education or measuring an applicant's abilities in reading, writing and arithmetic.
- Specialists must have one to four years of service, and no more than three years in grade as an E-4 to apply for the CA qualification course.
- Sergeants must have two to six years of service, and no more than three years in grade as an E-5 to apply for the qualification course.
- Staff sergeants must have three to eight years of service, and no more than three years in grade as an E-6 to apply for the qualification course.
- Promotable staff sergeants may apply with a waiver approved by the civil affairs commandant at the Special Operations Center of Excellence.
- CA applicants must have completed the survival, evasion, resistance and escape physical within 24 months before submitting their accessions packet.
- If not already jump-qualified, soldiers must complete basic airborne training before reporting to the CA qualification course.
- Female soldiers must have a negative pregnancy test within 30 days before their CA Assessment and Selection report date.

Psychological Operations

- Soldiers requesting reclassification into the Psychological Operations career field must have a current survival, evasion, resistance and escape Level C physical on record, and a minimum GT score of 107.
- Soldiers in the ranks of private first class through sergeant are eligible to apply for reclassification if they have at least 18 months in the service, but no more than 10 years.
- Female soldiers must have a negative pregnancy test within 30 days before their report date for the PO Assessment and Selection.
- Soldiers must successfully complete PO Assessment and Selection to attend the qualification course, which is a prerequisite for reclassification.

All soldiers

All of these changes will be reflected in a future update to Chapter 5 of AR 614-200, the Army's principal regulation governing enlisted assignments and personnel management. For detailed information about the regulation changes, soldiers should access MilPer Message 16-073.

For career field specifics and application details, soldiers should access the Special Operations Recruiting Battalion (Airborne) [website](#).

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/enlisted/2016/03/16/army-special-forces-gender-neutral-women-qualifications/81852684/>

20. West Point's first female commandant advises future cadets

(19 Mar) fayobserver.com, By Drew Brooks

Jackson and Samantha Sullivan are twins, the children of a Fort Bragg battalion commander, each bound for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point later this year.

But will their experiences be the same?

Samantha wanted to know: As a female cadet, will she be fighting biases her brother won't?

Before a Fort Bragg dinner on Saturday, the first female commandant of cadets at West Point assured a room of future cadets that the academy, like the Army, has come a long way toward gender equality.

Brig. Gen. Diana Holland, who graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1990, a decade after the school's first female graduate, said the Army, and fellow cadets, will be looking for good leaders and teammates.

If you work hard, be yourself and exemplify the school's motto of "Duty, Honor, Country," then "you will do just fine," Holland said.

Holland, who was named to her post at West Point late last year, spoke to five future cadets before a West Point Founders Day Dinner hosted by Gen. Robert B. Abrams and the Fort Bragg-Sandhills Chapter of the West Point Society.

More than 214 years after the school's founding, Holland was a guest of honor and the keynote speaker of the event, which featured current and past Fort Bragg officers, as well as current and future cadets.

Not only a graduate and current commandant, but also a former history professor at West Point, Holland said times have changed at the campus overlooking the Hudson River in New York.

"I've noticed a definite shift in attitudes to female cadets," she said. "The issues of gender ... I'm just not seeing it like we did decades before. I think we've come a long way.

In a small conference room before the dinner, Holland addressed concerns from her future charges.

With 99 days until "R Day," also known as Reception Day or the day cadet candidates report to West Point, many of the questions dealt with that preparation.

What type of shoes to bring? Should they study up on chemistry?

Holland advised the future cadets to take their first year seriously.

That means arriving on campus in top physical shape and not being distracted academically.

"You cannot over prepare from the physical condition standpoint," she said. "It will be demanding, no matter where you are academically."

For the future cadets, the encounter was a preview of something some had dreamed about for years.

They hope to serve their country, follow in the footsteps of family and friends and represent something bigger than themselves.

"It's just that feeling of pride, that service," said Bradley Wanovich, describing a recent visit to the campus.

"You guys are ready, aren't you?" Holland asked with a smile.

If they had not, the future cadets wouldn't have had to look far for inspiration.

In addition to the dinner's host, Abrams and several Fort Bragg leaders are graduates of West Point.

Abrams, who commands U.S. Army Forces Command, graduated in 1982.

His deputy, Lt. Gen. Patrick Donahue, graduated in 1980.

Lt. Gen. Kenneth Tovo, commander of U.S. Army Special Operations Command, graduated in 1983.

Other Bragg leaders with West Point degrees include the commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, Maj. Gen. Richard D. Clarke; and the commander of Joint Special Operations Command, Lt. Gen. Raymond "Tony" Thomas.

And even Holland has ties to Fort Bragg, further bolstering the installation's relationship with the "The Long Gray Line," as West Point graduates are known.

Early in her career, Holland served in the 20th Engineer Brigade at Fort Bragg as a battalion logistics officer and then as a company commander.

With several Fort Bragg children in the upcoming class of cadets, those connections will only continue to grow.

And Holland said they would do just fine amid the difficult learning environment, assuming they work hard and stayed away from distractions.

"We'll see you in 99 days," she said.

http://www.fayobserver.com/news/local/west-point-s-first-female-commandant-advises-future-cadets/article_f0e0a47b-29b0-5298-b0c9-2ba3add20e76.html

21. Gen. Robinson to head NORTHCOM, will be first female to run COCOM

(20 Mar) Air Force Times, By Stephen Losey

Defense Secretary Ash Carter has nominated Gen. Lori Robinson to be the next head of the U.S. Northern Command, the Pentagon said Friday morning.

Robinson will be the first woman to ever head a combatant command, Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook said in a tweet announcing Robinson's nomination.

Robinson is now commander of Pacific Air Forces. Before heading PACAF, Robinson was vice commander of Air Combat Command. She is a senior air battle manager with more than 900 flight hours in the E-3B/C and E-8C aircraft.

If confirmed by the Senate, she would replace Adm. Bill Gortney, who held the position since December 2014.

Seen as a rising star in the Air Force, Robinson has shot through the ranks, adding a star a year from 2012 through 2014.

In June 2012, just before current Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh took office, Robinson was a two-star serving as deputy commander, US Air Forces Central Command; less than a year later, she pinned on her third star in May 2013 and became vice commander, Air Combat Command.

Then in October 2014, she pinned on her fourth star and took over as commander, Pacific Air Forces. With the PACAF assignment, Robinson became the first US female four-star to command combat forces.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/03/18/lori-robinson-head-northcom/81958708/>

22. This is what the Navy's occupation fitness test should be

(24 Mar) Navy Times, By Meghann Myers

If the Navy wants a fitter force, it has to be comprehensive: Better access to healthy food, command PT and a fitness test that has something to do with the job.

That's according to a 33-year Navy vet who did a stint as a command fitness coordinator during his enlisted years, on top of playing semi-professional football for the San Diego Saints and tackle football with the Marine Corps.

"It seems like nowadays, that kids that are coming in aren't as fit as the people that came in at my age," Cmdr. Patrick Lancaster, 51, who served for 16 years as enlisted. "We did more active outside stuff, rather than gaming on the couch."

In response to a reader query, Lancaster offered his ideas for how the Navy can whip itself into shape:

Eating clean

More than anything else, Lancaster said, what you eat will determine how much you weigh — and many fitness experts agree.

"You lose weight by cutting calories and eating properly," he said in a recent phone interview. "Working out is a very small piece of the equation."

That can be tough where food options are limited on long deployments, and greasy comfort food is readily available.

"I think the work schedule — you're running off minimal sleep, you're working 18-hour days, the six hours that you are off watch, you're usually getting calls throughout the evening, so you're not getting good sleep," he said. "You're looking for sugar, you're looking for caffeine, you're looking for anything to keep you going."

But trying to live on fried chicken and mozzarella sticks will only make things worse. Working out and eating right, on the other hand, can take the edge off.

"Sticking with a fitness routine, even when you're tired — it seems like if you can get in the gym, do your time, burn some calories, keep your metabolism up a little bit — I think it helps deal with that stress," he said.

And, added the one-time vegan, cutting out sugary, fatty foods will boost energy, too.

All together

Giving sailors time to hit the gym during the work day is a solid idea, Lancaster said, but it would be easy to take advantage of the extra free time. That's why he recommends command PT, even if it takes a chunk out of the workday.

"I think it's an important part of our culture in the military — to get out there as a command with PT two or three times a week as a group, because it encourages those maybe struggling with the gym to get out there and do it," he said. "Plus, you're seeing your department heads and leadership get out there in their PT gear ahead of the ranks, and show the young enlisted guys that they're out there doing it also."

Lancaster, who is an information professional, said his best experience was a shore tour at Naval Computer Telecommunications Area Master Station Pacific in Hawaii, but that some of his seagoing jobs also carved out exercise time, like a more individual program with weekly deck runs and regular fitness challenges on the carrier Nimitz.

An operational test

The Navy has been battling around the idea of two different fitness tests, one basic and one operational, switched off in fall and spring.

As far as fitting in with deployments, he suggested doing the general PRT while underway and the operational test back home.

"I think firefighting is probably the test with the most direct correlation to what we do on the ship," he said. "The Navy will basically — without having to rewrite the book on their own — will be able to look at what shore-based firefighters do and just do a shipboard translation."

He recommends the Navy model an occupational assessment off the firefighter's eight-step Candidate Physical Ability Test, or CPAT:

- 1. Stair climb.** Testers must complete three minutes at a fast setting on a stair climbing machine while wearing 12.5-pound weights on each shoulder.
- 2. Hose drag.** Must drag a hose 75 feet and then turn and drag for another 25 feet while avoiding obstacles.
- 3. Equipment carry.** Pick up and carry tools 75 feet.
- 4. Ladder raise.** Tests the ability to place a ground ladder and extend it to reach higher lever.

5. Forcible entry. Hit a measuring device with a sledgehammer to show your ability to smash a wall or force open a locked door.

6. Search. Crawl through a tunnel maze past turns and obstacles.

7. Rescue. Drag a 165-pound dummy approximately 70 feet.

8. Ceiling breach. Secure a six-foot pole to the ceiling and push and pull it to imitate breaking a ceiling to search for fire.

<http://www.navytimes.com/story/military/2016/03/18/what-navys-occupation-fitness-test-should/80575840/>

23. Keeping Marine Corps Boot Camp Gender-Divided Ensures It's Separate But Not Equal

(24 Mar) Task & Purpose, By Ellen Haring

The Marine Corps' plan to keep boot camp training segregated by gender demonstrates its unwillingness to embrace integration.

On Dec. 4, 2015, Secretary of Defense Ash Carter made the historic announcement that he is opening all military occupations and units to women; “no exceptions.” He directed the services to provide new integration plans that would open positions no later than April 1, 2016.

The new deadline is just around the corner and it looks like the Marines are going to get an exception after all. The Department of Defense recently released the newest set of integration plans. The Marine Corps, the only service that asked to keep some occupations closed, will keep Marine Corps boot camp training segregated. [The integration campaign plan](#) says that the Corps will develop a study plan to consider the “possible options to increase gender-combined training during boot-camp.”

At the March 5 Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services meeting, the Marines were asked about continued segregated training. Marine Corps representative Col. Raul Lioness responded by saying, “We have a current model that we believe is effective and is working.” The Marines have long maintained that segregated training is [good for female recruits](#).

The problem with the notion of separate but equal is that we have a well-established history that documents the poor outcomes of such a practice. The military did it to Japanese Americans and African Americans, but eventually discarded the practice. We have only to look at the discredited Jim Crow-era laws that segregated people by color to know how this establishes structural inequalities and perpetuates bias and discrimination. The reality is that separate is never equal. In fact, “separate” creates a very negative two-class culture that disadvantages one group, but cloaks the disadvantage by claiming that it actually benefits the minority group.

Here is how it plays out in the Marine Corps today. The Marines have eight boot camp training battalions, four on the East Coast and four on the West Coast. Only one — [4th Recruit Training Battalion at Parris Island](#) — trains female recruits. Because the Marine Corps maintains a narrow training pipeline, just one battalion for female recruits, they ensure that women make up less than 8% of the Marine Corps. This, in turn, causes the only battalion that trains women to be perpetually understaffed. The result is that there are [negative training outcomes](#) for the female recruits. They don't receive as much instruction and the women graduate from boot camp with lower average training scores than their male colleagues.

Even if the Marine Corps were to dedicate two segregated training battalions to female recruits — adding one on the West Coast where there are none, thereby doubling the training pipeline — there would still be negative outcomes for women and for the Marine Corps by maintaining this practice. Last summer, one of my son's high school buddies came home on “boot leave” after graduating from Marine Corps boot camp at Parris Island. He said that not only did his drill sergeants constantly deride the 4th Battalion, but that for two months the only thing he and the other recruits were called by the drill sergeants was “girls,” “bitches,” and “faggots.” My son's friend joined the Marine Corps young and impressionable, but even he was disturbed enough by this practice to tell me about it.

More important than what this reveals about structural inequality and the culture of the Marine Corps is how it circumvents the added benefit that mixed gender teams will bring to combat units. [Collective intelligence](#) experiments at MIT have shown that teams are exponentially and reliably more intelligent when teams include both men and women. The Marine Corps' own research bears out this finding. Furthermore, when Col. Lioness briefed best practices for integration, one of his slides highlighted the importance of “cohesive cohorts,” which is achieved by assigning male and female Marines who completed “school together to the same previously closed unit.” Diversity has never harmed us and research shows that mixing the sexes strengthens teams. Furthermore, training

together reduces bias by ensuring that there are no double standards and no doubt about who has met all qualification standards.

It is time for the Marine Corps to give up the practice of separating and segregating. If the Marines are allowed to continue this practice then they will have, in fact, received an exception to policy because seven of the eight Marine Corps bootcamp battalions will continue to be closed to all women.

<http://taskandpurpose.com/keeping-marine-corps-boot-camp-gender-divided-ensures-separate-not-equal/>

24. Air Force assistant vice chief fired over unprofessional relationship

(18 Mar) Air Force Times, By Oriana Pawlyk

The Air Force assistant vice-chief of staff has been removed after an Inspector General investigation found he exchanged inappropriate emails with a female lieutenant colonel.

The emails, sent between March 2010 and May 2011, showed that Lt. Gen. John Hesterman and the Air Force female corresponded in what the IG concluded was an "unprofessional relationship," according to an Air Force statement.

Between July 2010 and June 2011, Hesterman was the deputy commander of U.S. Air Forces Central Command, at a time when the U.S. was overseeing the air war in Afghanistan and Iraq. He also served as the deputy commander of the Combined Force Air Component and vice commander of the 9th Air Expeditionary Task Force, Air Combat Command, in Southwest Asia, according to his biography.

Hesterman, a major general at the time of the misconduct, relinquished his duties Thursday, and filed his paperwork for retirement.

Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein, who issued the reprimand, initiated the process on whether Hesterman will keep his stars, the release said.

An initial complaint alleges Hesterman made advances on the female lieutenant colonel while she and her husband, an Air Force colonel at the time, were both stationed at RAF Lakenheath, England, according to the IG report. Hesterman was the commander of the 48th Fighter Wing between June 2007 and August 2008.

The investigation notes that while there was no evidence of "physical contact" the husband believes "the affairs and marital problems had begun during his 'Lakenheath days'."

The statement did not identify the female lieutenant colonel, nor did it specify her current whereabouts.

Hesterman made lieutenant general on Nov. 17, 2011. He and his wife of over 22 years have one daughter, the report said.

An Air Force spokeswoman called Hesterman on behalf of Air Force Times, but he could not be reached for comment.

The Air Force said the investigation did not uncover any additional misconduct.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2016/03/17/air-force-assistant-vice-chief-fired-over-unprofessional-relationship/81936772/>

25. More high-ranking officers being charged with sex crimes against subordinates

(19 Mar) The Washington Post, By Craig Whitlock

The U.S. military has stepped up investigations of high-ranking officers for sexual assault, records show, curtailing its traditional deference toward senior leaders as it cracks down on sex crimes.

Since September, the armed forces have court-martialed or filed sexual-assault charges against four colonels from the Air Force, Army and Marines. In addition, a Navy captain was found guilty of abusive sexual contact during an administrative hearing.

Historically, it has been extremely rare for senior military officers to face courts-martial. Leaders suspected of wrongdoing are usually dealt with behind the scenes, with offenders receiving private reprimands or removal from command with a minimum of public

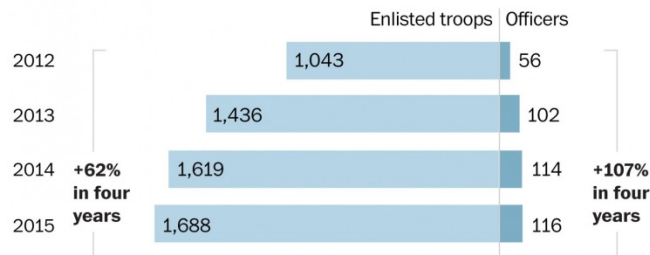
explanation.

“There’s not a lot of transparency when it comes to senior-officer misconduct,” said Don Christensen, a former chief prosecutor for the Air Force who now is president of Protect Our - Defenders, a group that advocates for victims of sex crimes in the military. “They don’t like the American public knowing what’s going on, so they drag their heels in getting information out.”

That has gradually changed as the Defense Department — under pressure from Congress and the White House — has revamped its policies to prevent sexual assault and to hold perpetrators accountable.

Military discipline in sexual-assault cases

Although the numbers have risen in recent years, officers are rarely punished for sexual assault in comparison to enlisted personnel.



Note: Disciplinary actions include courts-martial, administrative punishments, reprimands and discharges from the military. Numbers are for federal fiscal years.

Source: Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office
DENISE LU/THE WASHINGTON POST

During the federal fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, 116 officers of all stripes were court-martialed, discharged or received some sort of punishment after they were criminally investigated for sexual assault. That was more than double the number from three years earlier, according to Defense Department figures.

Of last year’s cases, eight were against senior officers holding a rank equivalent to colonel or Navy captain or higher. While that figure may seem small, it represented a fourfold increase from 2012.

Overall, the vast majority of troops investigated for sexual assault are enlisted personnel, who accounted for 94 percent of all cases last year. In the active-duty military, enlisted troops outnumber officers by a ratio of 4.6 to 1.

But high-ranking leaders are finding they no longer off-limits as allegations of cringe-worthy behavior increasingly come to light in military courtrooms and public records.

This month, during a court-martial at Fort McNair in Washington, an Army colonel who worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency pleaded guilty to sexually abusing a 15-year-old girl and taking photos of her nude. He was sentenced to eight years in prison.

In February, the Marine Corps charged the commander of its Wounded Warrior Regiment with sexually assaulting a female corporal, violating protective orders and other misconduct.

In January, at a disciplinary hearing, the Navy found the former captain of a guided missile cruiser guilty of abusive sexual contact and sexual harassment. An investigative report chronicled in embarrassing detail how he got drunk with crew members at a Virginia bar and brazenly pressured a junior officer to have sex with him to advance her career.

In December, the Air Force charged a colonel at Schriever Air Force Base in Colorado with raping or assaulting four victims, committing adultery with four other women, and taking photographs of himself in uniform at his office — with his genitals exposed.

Pentagon officials say the rash of cases is evidence that senior officers will be held to the same standards as everyone else in uniform.

“We’ve made it abundantly clear that this is not tolerable,” said Nathan Galbreath, senior executive adviser for the Pentagon’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. “The numbers suggest that people are reporting when they see the officers appointed above [committing a crime], and they really do expect that their bosses walk the walk and talk the talk.”

A scene from a training video

The unofficial taboo against putting senior leaders on trial in sex-abuse cases was shattered three years ago when the Army prosecuted Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair on charges of forcible sodomy, adultery and other offenses. It was only the third time in 60 years that the Army had court-martialed a general for any type of offense.

Prosecutors ended up dropping most of the charges and cutting a plea deal that spared Sinclair jail time. But the spectacle of a general sitting in the dock as witnesses testified about his volatile affair with a junior officer captivated the military.

Since then, the Defense Department has tried to reassure lawmakers, the public and its own troops that it takes sex-assault allegations seriously. It has expanded awareness training, bolstered support for victims and required command-level review of all investigations.

There are signs that the training is starting to pay off.

Crew members from the U.S.S. Anzio, a guided missile cruiser, blew the whistle on their commanding officer for sexual misconduct last year, leading to his removal from the ship and his probable ouster from the Navy.

According to a Navy investigative report, the Anzio's captain, Brian K. Sorenson, got drunk Aug. 30 at a pub party in Yorktown, Va., and began to make advances toward a female sailor who needed his approval to become certified as a surface warfare officer.

The sailor told investigators that Sorenson asked her how many people she had slept with, whether she liked having sex with women and whether she would let him have anal sex with her.

Her account was buttressed by an eyewitness who said he overheard the captain saying, "Does anal interest you?"

At some point, he also grabbed the woman on the buttocks and told her to report to his quarters on the Anzio the next morning, where he again pressured her to have sex, the Navy investigation found.

Crew members quickly intervened at the pub, with one telling investigators that the situation resembled a scene from "one of the Navy's Sexual Assault Bystander Intervention Videos." The ship's executive officer grabbed the captain, and the party ended.

During the van ride back to the ship, however, an intoxicated Sorenson kept acting out and asked the male driver if he "liked anal," according to the investigation.

As rumors spread on the ship about the captain's behavior, crew members revolted. Other officers confronted the captain in the ship's wardroom and demanded an outside investigation.

Sorenson apologized to the officers for his conduct the night before, according to the Navy's investigative report. But he also blamed them for not intervening sooner.

"He said it was our fault for letting him drink too much," an unidentified officer told investigators.

After an administrative hearing in January, Sorenson was found guilty of sexual harassment, abusive sexual contact and conduct unbecoming an officer, Navy officials said. He faces discharge proceedings from the Navy.

In an interview with Navy investigators, Sorenson admitted to drinking that night but declined to answer questions about whether he pressured the female subordinate for sex.

His attorney, Greg McCormack of Virginia Beach, did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Six counts of adultery

Other cases indicate that military investigators are pursuing evidence more aggressively than they may have in the past, regardless of the rank of their target.

During a court-martial at Fort McNair last week, Army Col. James C. Laughrey, a career intelligence official, pleaded guilty to child pornography charges and abusive sexual contact with a 15-year-old girl.

According to court documents, his actions started in 2009 and came to light years later only by chance. The victim, then a young adult, took a polygraph test during a job interview with an intelligence agency and was asked if she had ever been the victim of a crime.

The woman divulged the abuse but didn't want to cooperate with an investigation or press charges against Laughrey, according to his

defense attorney, Haytham Faraj. The intelligence agency nevertheless reported the matter to the Army, which found corroborating evidence on Laughrey's computer.

"Frankly, they harassed her," Faraj said, calling the case "an abusive government investigation."

Laughrey admitted to his actions in court. When asked by the judge why he did it, he replied: "Your honor, I cannot give you a good answer for that. I do not understand or defend why I did it."

Under the military justice system, senior officers are responsible for deciding whether individuals under their command should be prosecuted.

Some lawmakers and advocacy groups are pushing to strip commanders of that power and to give it instead to uniformed prosecutors. The Pentagon has resisted such proposals, saying they would undermine command authority.

When senior officers themselves are charged with sexual assault, it "makes it appear as if the fox was guarding the henhouse," said Christensen, the president of Protect Our Defenders, which has lobbied Congress to change the law.

He cited the case of Col. Eugene Marcus Caughey, formerly the vice commander of the Air Force's 51st Space Wing. In December, Caughey was charged with rape, assault and other charges in a case involving four women in Colorado, where he served at Schriever Air Force Base.

According to charging documents, Caughey raped one woman as he held her against the wall and floor, groped women on two other occasions, and violated an order from a two-star general to stay away from another victim.

In addition, the married colonel is charged with six counts of adultery — a crime in the military — for allegedly having consensual sex with four other women, according to the documents.

A preliminary hearing was held Friday to determine whether Caughey will face court-martial. A decision is pending. His attorney, Ryan Coward, declined to comment.

Hiding public records

In other cases, even after charges have been filed against senior officers, the armed forces still cling to their old habit of trying to shield commanders from public embarrassment.

In November, the Air Force announced in a news release that Col. David S. Cockrum, former commander of the 51st Medical Group at Osan Air Base in South Korea, had been charged with sexual assault. The Air Force said he had been previously relieved of command for "fraternization" and "unprofessional relationships" but gave no other details.

When The Washington Post requested public records in the case against Cockrum, the leadership of the 7th Air Force, which oversees operations in South Korea, at first refused, citing a need "to protect the rights of Col. Cockrum and the integrity of ongoing legal proceedings."

After repeated appeals, however, Air Force officials released documents showing that Cockrum had been charged with sexually assaulting men in two separate incidents in South Korea in 2014. He also had been charged with conduct unbecoming an officer.

Cockrum's court-martial is scheduled for April 11. His military attorney did not respond to requests for comment placed through the Air Force.

The Marine Corps filed criminal sex-abuse charges on Feb. 12 against Col. T. Shane Tomko, the former commander of its Wounded Warrior Regiment in Quantico, Va.

The Marines kept the charges a secret, making no public announcement about the case. In response to a query from The Post last month, Marine officials at the Pentagon confirmed that Tomko had been charged with abusive sexual contact, obstruction of justice, illegal possession of steroids and other crimes.

Officials also revealed that Tomko had been relieved as commander a year earlier because of "a loss of confidence in his leadership." But they would not provide other details or release public records in the case.

According to a copy of Tomko's charging documents, seen by a Post reporter, the colonel was accused of sexually assaulting a female Marine corporal in October 2014 by forcibly kissing her on the mouth. He later referred to her as "a hot intriguing dyke who makes

me wish I were a woman,” according to the documents.

Tomko faces a preliminary hearing scheduled for March 23 to determine if he will be court-martialed.

His military defense attorney, Marine Col. Stephen Newman, declined to comment.

Documents filed in civilian court show that Tomko has also been investigated by the Marines on allegations of sexually assaulting other women after he took charge of the Wounded Warrior Regiment in July 2014. As commander, he was responsible for overseeing battalions across the country that care for wounded and injured Marines.

According to a lawsuit filed against him in Circuit Court in Prince William County, Va., Tomko allegedly got drunk during a official trip to London in September 2014 and assaulted a civilian woman who worked for him by “shov[ing] his face into her breasts.”

Tomko denied the allegation in court filings and noted that the woman had also filed an administrative discrimination complaint against him with the federal government. The woman withdrew the lawsuit in January.

In an interview, the woman said she dismissed the lawsuit because her discrimination complaint was subsequently upheld. (The Post has a policy of not identifying victims of sexual abuse.)

She also said that Tomko had been disciplined — but not charged criminally — by the Marines last year for sexually assaulting her in London, as well as for a separate incident involving another female civilian working for the Wounded Warrior Regiment.

The Marines, she added, were slow to pursue her complaint against Tomko and dragged the case out.

“He’s the commander, that’s why it went on so long,” she said. “He’s the kind of guy everyone loves.”

Julie Tate contributed to this report.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/more-high-ranking-officers-being-charged-with-sex-crimes-against-subordinates/2016/03/19/3910352a-e616-11e5-a6f3-21ccdbc5f74e_story.html

26. The Military’s suicide-prevention fight has moved to Facebook and Twitter

(20 Mar) Military Times, By Patricia Kime

Marine Corps Sgt. Raheem Boyd was in his barracks room at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, last May when a friend sent him an urgent message through Facebook. Another Marine had made some troubling posts, and while Boyd can’t recall the exact words, they hinted at suicide.

“It seemed strange,” he recalled. “Just didn’t seem right.”

Boyd, who knew the Marine from a previous assignment in Okinawa, immediately looked up the command’s phone number, dialed the duty office and headed to find the devil dog. The Marine’s barracks room was empty but a search was underway. Someone spotted him in his car in the parking lot with an assault rifle beside him. But as the searchers approached the vehicle, the troubled service member took off.

Boyd took off after him, and when the Marine pulled into another lot, Boyd did too, placing his vehicle close to block any escape route. He approached the Marine, identifying himself and speaking calmly, with an eye to the weapon that was within arm’s reach.

When other vehicles — including police cars with their flashing lights — started filling the lot, the Marine panicked and reached for the gun. But Boyd reacted just as swiftly, hurling himself through the open window, pushing the gun away and locking the Marine in a bear hug.

Crisis averted.

“If it wasn’t for social media, we never would have known what was going on in his head and he would have gone through with [suicide],” Boyd told Military Times during a phone interview from Uganda, where he is deployed with Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force Crisis Response-Africa.

“My instincts and genuine concern for this Marine told me I needed to act.”

The Defense Department has not released an official tally of suicides among active-duty troops in 2015, but a Pentagon source with access to the data said the number was close to 290, including the 28 confirmed suicides by Marines from January through October. While the number of active-duty suicides has remained somewhat steady since it reached a peak of 321 in 2012, the rate — nearly 20 per 100,000 troops in 2014 — remains significantly higher than before Sept. 11, 2001, when it hovered around 10 per 100,000 service members, and the military appeared to offer protective measures against a rising suicide trend in the U.S. civilian population.

In an effort to save lives and return to those lower rates, the military services and the Defense Department have waged a decadelong war on the problem, mandating suicide prevention training for personnel, spending millions to fund mental wellness programs and launching numerous awareness initiatives at all levels of rank and leadership.

But the department also has been at the forefront of some notable suicide research, especially in the realm of social media. In 2015, the Defense Personnel and Security Research Center, working with researchers from Northrop Grumman and the University of Utah National Center for Veterans Studies, undertook two studies on suicide cues in social network posts.

Social media’s role in contributing to or preventing suicide has not been well studied, despite reports of deaths linked to cyber bullying, suicide clusters among online friends and numerous saves, experts say.

“I wouldn’t say there has been a lot of research. There has been some, most of it in other countries, but it’s scant. It’s hard to get the data the way that is needed for studies,” explained Dan Reidenberg, executive director of Suicide Awareness Voices of Education.

Keita Franklin, director of the [Defense Suicide Prevention Office](#), said the hope was that the research would be useful to integrate understanding of social media observations and cues into suicide prevention.

“In these studies ... we found similar things to things we already know about factors that contribute to suicide, including high financial stress, isolation, depression,” Franklin said. “What we’d like to do is tell people not to ignore the signs, online and in life — get out of your own comfort zone.”

In phase one of “Indicators of Suicide Found on Social Networks,” researchers looked at the suicides of 700 troops in 2010 and 2011 and compared them with a matched group of service members who died by means other than suicide in the same time frame. Narrowing the group to those with public social media sites — 315 service members — the researchers looked at their public posts up to a year before their deaths and also a month before they died.

They found that those who died by suicide were most likely to show indications of hopelessness, social withdrawal and insomnia the year before, and 30 days prior, were more likely to discuss general distress, relationship problems and religious affiliation.

In the study’s second phase, the researchers looked for recurring themes in the posts to try to identify those who may be at risk for suicide. In the year before, the suicide group expressed a more pessimistic outlook on life than those who did not die by suicide and/or had a social network that communicated a “more pessimistic worldview.”

They also were more likely to avoid interpersonal situations, lacked interest in social activities and frequently discussed sleep problems, according to the study.

Examining the posts 30 days before death, the suicide group frequently expressed generalized stress and posted about relationship problems. Surprisingly, though, they were less likely to communicate feeling any anger, which “may suggest the service member had “resigned” themselves to their situation,” according to the researchers.

“These clues on social media are very consistent with what we see are the warning signs in life — expressing their intent to die, hopelessness, a sense of being a burden and having no purpose in the world. It’s just another way for us to communicate,” said Reidenberg, who did not participate in the research but has been working with the International Association for Suicide Prevention to develop guidance for bloggers and “citizen journalists” on writing about suicide and the Internet.

The telegraphing of suicidal intent has not escaped military personnel and veterans in their online lives. After a number of high-profile farewells in the past five years, including at least one by a Marine who documented his death on Facebook in 2014, groups have formed on various social media platforms to reach personnel in crisis. The nonprofit “Battle in Distress” was founded after Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Dan Caddy received a cry for help in 2012 regarding another guardsman in crisis, while the Durkheim

Project, a collaboration by the Veterans Affairs Department and the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth, offers an opt-in program monitoring veterans' posts on Facebook, Twitter and other social media for warning signs.

A number of veterans-only social media sites have popped up, as have informal friend- and unit-based groups. A series of [New York Times articles](#) last year documented the ongoing efforts by former members of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, to keep tabs on their fellow Marines, 13 of whom have died by suicide since the unit deployed to Helmand, Afghanistan, in 2008.

In at least two cases in 2/7, veterans rallied to respond to posts by their fellow Marines that they were “done with life” or they “can’t do it anymore.” A swift response to the posts helped save one of the service members’ lives.

“The upside to this is that social media gives us the opportunity to intervene because there are so many people involved and it can be done so quickly. That’s the real benefit,” Reidenberg said.

In 2015, Facebook introduced a feature for reporting suicidal content that provides support to the person who created a concerning post as well as those reporting the content. A user can send messages to a troubled friend through the option or reach out to a fellow friend who might be located closer physically to the friend in need. It also can send messages to the person who posted, telling them someone is concerned about them and providing links to the National Lifeline, suggested friends to speak to or tips for dealing with stress.

“People say, is this going to make them mad, is this going to upset them? No. The reality is when someone is struggling with thoughts of suicide, you have to connect with them at that level — you have to reach them where their head is at. So, having things like [the Facebook reporting] allows them to engage and be part of something ... those are the kind of things that are going to help someone through that situation,” Reidenberg said.

The recent DoD studies yielded several recommendations to improve the department’s understanding of suicides and prevention, to include integrating social media data in psychological “autopsies” conducted after a service member dies by suicide and figuring any publicly available social media data into wellness assessments.

The research also suggests the department add social network awareness and response to its suicide prevention training for troops and commanders and continue to promote lifestyle choices and factors that can bolster resilience.

“This study found evidence supporting established risk and protective factors, including positive family interactions, having children, engaging in sporting activities, animal companionship, gratitude, access to lethal means, and employment issues,” the authors wrote.

In saving a fellow Marine’s life, Boyd said he relied on his own gut instincts as well as compassion to intervene. But he also recommends service members pay attention in their annual suicide prevention classes, as trying as that might be.

“I think for a lot of Marines, [the suicide prevention training] goes in one ear and out the other, because they think it’s not going to happen to them or they will never be in that position. But listen. It does help. You need to act,” Boyd said.

The Veterans Crisis Hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at 800-273-8255, press 1. Services also are available online at www.veteranscrisisline.net or by text, 838255.

<http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/2016/03/20/facebook-may-help-stop-your-friend-killing-himself/81960906/>

27. The Army offers job perks to those who help prevent sex assault

(21 Mar) Army Times, By Jim Tice

Active-component soldiers who serve full-time in support of the Army’s Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Prevention Program qualify for an array of assignment incentives under a directive issued March 11 by acting Secretary of the Army Patrick J. Murphy.

The incentives, consisting of assignment preferences and stabilization options, encourage soldiers to serve in SHARP positions as program managers, sexual assault response coordinators, victim advocates and trainers.

Information provided by the Army's human resources office at the Pentagon indicates there are 188 authorizations for coordinators, and 46 for military victim advocates, although it is not clear how many of those have been filled. Officials did not provide

authorization totals for the program managers who head SHARP efforts in large commands or the trainers who work with units.

"The initiatives captured in (Murphy's directive) are reflective of Army efforts to professionalize the SHARP program, and to recruit the best talent possible to serve in these positions of significant trust," according to a March 17 statement from human resource officials.

Under the provisions of the directive, soldiers who serve in the designated positions may request a follow-on assignment location, or stabilization at their current location, but not both.

Assignment preference option

Full-time program managers, response coordinators, victim advocates and trainers may request assignment to one of three location preferences after successfully completing a two-year tour in a SHARP position.

If the requested locations do not have a valid requirement for the soldier's MOS, the assignment manager will provide the soldier with three location choices that can be supported.

To qualify, soldiers must:

- Request assignment to three locations with a valid manning requirement for their military occupational specialty and grade.
- Submit a DA Form 4187, personnel action request, through the first lieutenant colonel commander in their chain of command, to their assignment manager at Human Resources Command.
- If serving stateside, submit requests 12 months in advance of the end of their 24-month SHARP assignment.
- If serving overseas, submit requests 12 months before the end of the SHARP assignment or their DEROS (date eligible for return from overseas), whichever occurs first.
- If serving in an overseas short-tour area, use the Homebase/Advance Assignment Program to request a follow-on assignment location. Such requests should be submitted no later than nine months before the end of their 12-month tour or DEROS, whichever occurs first.

Stabilization option

Soldiers may request stabilization at their current location for 12 months following completion of a full-time 24-month SHARP assignment.

To qualify for the incentive program, soldiers must:

- Request stabilization in a position for their primary MOS and grade at their current location. Requests should be submitted on DA Form 4187, through their first lieutenant colonel commander, to their HRC assignment manager.
- Submit requests within the time lines described above for the assignment preference option

The new incentive policies will be incorporated into future revisions of Army Regulations 614-100 (Officer Assignment Policies, Details and Transfers) and 614-200 (Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management).

<http://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/2016/03/17/army-offers-job-perks-those-who-help-prevent-sex-assault/81925724/>

28. Bill would give military dads, adoptive parents 12 weeks leave

(21 Mar) The Hill, by Rebecca Khell

All military parents, regardless of gender or whether their children are adopted, would get 12 weeks of paid parental leave under a bill introduced by Rep. Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.)

“Our military readiness also depends on the strong and resilient families that make up its backbone—families that deserve a 21st century parental leave policy that allows them the time they need to bond with their new children,” Duckworth said in a statement on Monday.

The bill follows Defense Secretary Ash Carter's [announcement in January](#) that all women in the military will get 12 weeks maternity leave. That's double the amount the Army and Air Force offered but three weeks less than what the Navy and Marines had before.

The changes are part of Carter's "Force of the Future" initiative, which aims to attract and retain recruits by modernizing policies to better compete with the private sector.

In his announcement, Carter said he wants to increase paternity leave from 10 days to 14. He also wants to allow a second parent to take two weeks of adoptive leave on top of the three weeks one parent is allowed now.

But changes to both paternity and adoptive leave require acts of Congress.

Under Duckworth's bill, fathers, both adoptive parents and service members who take in a foster child would get 12 weeks of leave.

“I applaud Defense Secretary Ash Carter's recognition that a modern military demands a modern benefits package to continue recruiting and retaining the world's finest troops, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to help our Armed Forces better compete for talent,” said Duckworth, who is vying for a seat in the Senate. “I hope Congress will step up and pass my Military Parental Leave Modernization Act to secure the rights and protections that all new parents, both in and out of uniform, deserve—doing so will only make our military stronger and more competitive.”

Two leading organization on family leave laws, the National Women's Law Center and the National Partnership for Women and Families, endorsed Duckworth's bill.

“Moms and dads need time for family when a new baby is born or adopted,” said Emily J. Martin, the National Women's Law Center vice president for workplace justice, in the statement. “Your ability to take time to bond with your baby shouldn't turn on your gender or your marital status or on whether you are a service member or civilian.”

"Military families make enormous sacrifices to keep our country safe, and they need and deserve policies that make it possible to remain economically secure when they need time off to care for their families," added Debra L. Ness, president of the National Partnership for Women and Families.

<http://thehill.com/policy/defense/273751-bill-would-give-military-dads-adoptive-parents-12-weeks-leave>

29. Coast Guardsman Found Guilty of Sexual Assault

(22 Mar) The Virginia-Pilot, By Amir Vera

A 27-year-old Coast Guardsman was found guilty of sexual assault and other charges Sunday during a general court-martial in Norfolk.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Jerry W. Clift pleaded not guilty to all charges but was found guilty of one count of giving a false official statement, one count of sexual assault and two counts of assault. Clift was found not guilty of two other counts of assault.

According to a press release from the [Coast Guard](#), Clift was sentenced to four years in prison, reduction of rank to seaman recruit, total forfeiture of pay and allowances as well as a dishonorable discharge.

Lt. Scott McBride, Coast Guard Atlantic Area public affairs officer, said Clift was assigned to the Maritime Force Protection Unit in Bangor, Wash., from 2009 to 2012. The two incidents of assault occurred during his time in Washington, McBride said, in July 2011 and November 2011.

McBride said Clift was assigned to the Maritime Security Response Team Chesapeake beginning in July 2012. The sexual assault occurred in Virginia Beach in July 2014 while he was assigned in Chesapeake.

Vice Adm. William Lee, commander of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area, referred Clift's case to general court-martial on Oct. 1, 2015.

Cliff is serving his sentence at the Naval Consolidated Brig in Chesapeake.

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2016/03/22/coast-guardsmen-found-guilty-sexual-assault.html>

30. Army backs bill to allow female pilots' ashes at Arlington

(16 Mar) The Associated Press

The acting Army secretary has signaled his support for legislation that would reverse a decision by his predecessor and allow female World War II pilots known as WASPs to continue placing their ashes at Arlington National Cemetery.

Patrick Murphy said during congressional testimony Wednesday that Congress needs to act because he doesn't have the authority to unilaterally fix a problem that stems from a decades-old law. Despite the backing, Murphy came under fire from a Republican lawmaker who criticized his response as an overly bureaucratic solution.

"He seems to think that no one in the executive branch has the authority to let the WASPs in as a group," Rep. Martha McSally, R-Ariz., said at a Capitol Hill news conference. "He said the fastest way to fix this is an act of Congress, which sounds sort of ironic."

The WASPs served in a special unit called Women Airforce Service Pilots. They flew noncombat missions to free up male pilots for combat.

During the war, the women were considered civilians. But since 1977, federal law has granted them status as veterans. Since 2002, they have been eligible to have their ashes placed at Arlington with military honors.

But in March 2015, then-Secretary of the Army John McHugh ruled that WASPs never should have been allowed in and revoked their eligibility.

Just over 1,000 women were accepted into the WASP program, which ran from 1942 to 1944. There are an estimated 112 WASPs still alive, according to Kate Landdeck, a history professor at Texas Woman's University. Landdeck has researched the WASPs and advocated for their inclusion at Arlington.

McSally, a retired Air Force fighter pilot, introduced legislation that would change McHugh's ruling and allow the women's ashes to be inurned at Arlington. Her bill has 181 co-sponsors.

"I think it's ridiculous that at a time when the Pentagon has decided to open up every single military position to women, which I support, they are closing the gates to Arlington to the pioneers who paved the way," McSally said.

The family of a WASP who died after McHugh's ruling, Elaine Harmon, is pushing to have the eligibility restored. Her ashes are sitting in a closet in her daughter Terry Harmon's home.

Harmon, 69, of Silver Spring, Maryland, said Wednesday she's confident McHugh's ruling will be reversed. "When the WASPs did anything they always had no doubt," she said. "There's no doubt this legislation will get passed."

A petition on change.org to overturn McHugh's directive has received more than 170,000 signatures.

Eligibility for in-ground burial at Arlington, which has severe space limitations, is extremely tight, and not even all World War II veterans are eligible for burial there. But eligibility for placement of ashes, or above-ground inurnment, is not quite as strict. Arlington's rules state that "any former member of the Armed Forces who served on active duty (other than for training) and whose last service terminated honorably" is eligible to have their ashes placed at Arlington.

A group of senators led by Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., called on Murphy in February to restore WASPs' eligibility.

Murphy's response on Tuesday, released by Blumenthal and Isakson, said legislation to make the WASPs eligible for inurnment is "the clearest and most expedient path." But he also urged that the bill be narrowly written because of the overall capacity limitations at Arlington.

<http://gazette.com/army-backs-bill-to-allow-female-pilots-ashes-at-arlington/article/feed/326934>

31. Women veterans can find a mentor through American Corporate Partners

(22 Mar) Military Times, By Charlsy Panzino

[American Corporate Partners](#) announced Monday a new mentoring program focusing solely on female veterans.

ACP and the Army Reserve signed a memorandum of understanding to work together on the Women's Veteran Mentoring Program

initiative that offers yearlong mentorships for transitioning female service members who have served at least 180 days since 9/11.

After joining the program, each service member will be matched with a female business leader based on career compatibility. The mentor and mentee talk at least once a month, usually via phone or video call — the mentor can help with anything from resume writing to career guidance to tips on navigating a civilian workplace.

The original program, founded in 2008, is open to both men and women vets, but the company's founder noticed there was more that could be done specifically for women.

Sid Goodfriend, chairman and founder of ACP, said more than 7,000 veterans have completed the original program, and about 16 percent were women.

Goodfriend thought that number was low, but he discovered 16 percent is roughly the number of active-duty female service members. Even though the number wasn't that low relative to where it should be, he said he realized he should be evaluating whether they should be higher.

"My wife was the first woman partner in her division, and I'm probably a little bit more sensitive to women's issues than some people are," he said. "My employees are mostly women and my board is mostly women."

After discussions with his advisory board about diversity and speaking with a wide variety of female veterans and board members, "it struck me that perhaps we needed to do something more than we were doing already for the women who had served and were coming home."

One difference between the original program and the one for female veterans is how mentors are recruited. With the traditional program, veterans are paired with mentors from one of ACP's more than 60 corporate partners.

"We're going to open this program up to individuals who are successful women professionals whether or not they're associated with our companies," Goodfriend said.

Female entrepreneurs will be able to mentor veterans in the new program; however, if a female veterans prefers a male mentor, Goodfriend said the program is open to that, as well. American Corporate Partners is putting \$400,000 toward the program, with a goal of matching at least 500 female veterans with mentors in the upcoming year.

Army 1st Lt. Alisha Guffey found a mentor through the original program in 2015 who helped her grow both professionally and personally.

Guffey, who was active duty for about eight years and is now in the Army Reserve, is working on a master's degree in international business but also has a passion for the media industry.

She was matched with Debbie Reichig, the senior vice president of media sales research and insights at 21 Century Fox's Twentieth Television.

"It's good to have a mentor when you're going through the process of grad school and you're trying to figure out what to do," Guffey said. "Had I not met with Debbie I don't think I would have pursued an internship in the media industry."

Guffey said she and Reichig spoke almost every week, and she was able to ask Reichig questions whenever she needed. Guffey said even though many opportunities for veterans exist, not every veteran knows how to navigate the system.

"When I might think I'm not going to be able to do this, she can step in and say, 'Look at your past history and your resume.'" she said. "I think that's very important for vets to hear."

Guffey said Reichig helped build her confidence, especially since depending on the HR process someone is going through, they might not always encounter positive feedback.

"Someone like Debbie can tell you what stands out and give you talking points for interviews," she said.

Reichig said women have a harder time adjusting to the workplace in general.

“Workplaces are still male-dominated and sometimes women just need that extra bit of encouragement to understand how to play the game,” Reichig said.

Besides career advice, Guffey said Reichig taught her how to slow down and take some time for herself.

“I feel like I had a real friendship with her, but she also has a professional background,” Guffey said.

“Post-graduation, I plan to go to D.C. for government work that meets at the nexus of my communications, security and business background and experience on a global platform,” she said.

Army Lt. Col. Jeanne Hull, who has been in the Reserve for about two years after 14 on active duty, participated in the original program in 2015.

After transitioning from active duty in September, Hull moved into a consultant career path with an IT focus.

“[Without this program,] I would have been in a job I didn’t like as much for a lot less pay and a lot less clarity about the future,” she said.

Hull knew she didn’t want a civilian version of her Army job, but she didn’t have the time to go back to school, so she realized she’d be moving into a new career without much background experience.

“[My mentor] read over my resume and gave me an assessment of my strengths and weaknesses,” she said.

Since Hull’s mentor had experience being on both sides of the interview process, she and Hull would go over practice questions, which gave Hull more confidence going into the interview.

Hull said a major breakthrough was when her mentor helped Hull realize what she’s worth in terms of salary — and it was \$30,000-\$40,000 more than she would have asked.

“Women tend to undervalue themselves more than men,” Hull said. “Talking to [my mentor] helped me push back that barrier.”

It also helped Hull apply for jobs at a higher level that she didn’t think she’d be qualified to do.

“I think that our expectations of what we think we can do are lower than what they actually are,” she said.

<http://www.militarytimes.com/story/veterans/careers/civilian/2016/03/22/american-corporate-partners-announces-female-veterans-mentoring-program/81778654/>