



Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

Articles of Interest

October 2023



Recruitment & Retention

1. [**The US military's weighty challenge: 'skinny-fat' recruits**](#)
(1 Oct) Wall Street Journal, By Ben Kesling
The Pentagon is doing a gut check on how it decides if a soldier is fit. Goodbye measuring tape, hello full-body scans.
2. [**Only 43 of more than 8,000 discharged from US military for refusing Covid vaccine have rejoined**](#)
(2 Oct) CNN, By Oren Liebermann
Only 43 of the more than 8,000 US service members who were discharged from the military for refusing to be vaccinated against Covid-19 have sought to rejoin eight months after the vaccine mandate was officially repealed, according to data provided by the military branches.
3. [**After missing goal again, Army announces sweeping recruiting reforms**](#)
(3 Oct) Army Times, By Davis Winkie
The Army has launched far-reaching reforms that will transform how it attracts and recruits new soldiers, its top leaders said in a press conference today.
4. [**Air Force's marijuana waiver program proves more popular among applicants than expected**](#)
(3 Oct) Military.com, By Thomas Novelty
The Air Force anticipated only 50 cases annually when it announced a new pilot program last year that would allow some applicants who drug-tested positive for THC, the active compound in marijuana, a chance to retest and possibly enlist.
5. [**Exclusive: The inside story of how the Army rethought recruiting**](#)
(9 Oct) Army Times, By Davis Winkie
The Army's top civilian told Army Times how the decisions were made and offered new details about the changes.
6. [**Navy misses active duty, reserve recruiting goals for 2023**](#)
(10 Oct) Navy Times, By Diana Stancy Correll
The Navy missed its recruitment goals for active duty enlisted sailors by more than 7,450 troops in fiscal year 2023.
7. [**Army targets California to boost recruitment numbers**](#)
(10 Oct) Army Times, By Todd South
When it comes to Army recruitment, California is in a deficit.
8. [**The US isn't planning to order young men to enlist in the military, despite claims made online**](#)
(10 Oct) The Associated Press, By Philip Marcelo
Defense officials confirm the armed forces have made no such recommendation to Congress or the president, which are the entities empowered to authorize a draft.
9. [**Here's how training will change for the Air Force's newest officers**](#)
(11 Oct) Air Force Times, By Rachel S. Cohen
The Air Force is shaking up its Officer Training School as it looks to prepare a new generation of airmen for an era of increasingly complex, fast-paced military operations.



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10. [No, the US military isn't 'laying the groundwork' for a draft](#)
(11 Oct) The Associated Press, By Philip Marcelo
Defense officials confirm the armed forces have made no such recommendation to Congress or the president, which are the entities empowered to authorize a draft.
11. [Marine Corps exceeds its enlistment goal by 21 people](#)
(13 Oct) Marine Corps Times, By Irene Loewenson
The Corps was the only branch other than the relatively small Space Force to hit its recruitment targets.
12. [Big bonuses, relaxed policies, new slogan: None of it saved the military from a recruiting crisis in 2023](#)
(13 Oct) Military.com, By Thomas Novelly, Steve Beynon, Drew F. Lawrence, and Konstantin Toropin
Of the five Defense Department service branches, only two met their active-duty enlisted recruiting goals for fiscal 2023.
13. [Military Spouses to Gain More Job Ops Thanks to Growing Employment Partnership](#)
(16 Oct) DoD News, By Katie Lange
While recent Defense Department actions have helped to put more money into the pockets of military families, for many, financial security isn't possible unless both spouses are working. A dual-income household contributes to military readiness, allowing service members to focus on their jobs and not worry about their finances.
14. [US Army, Navy and Air Force struggle for recruits. The Marines have plenty.](#)
(17 Oct) New York Times, By Staff
As the other large military branches fall short of their goals despite offering signing bonuses and other incentives, the Marine Corps easily fills its ranks on swagger alone.
15. [Did the women of TikTok just make getting drafted seem fun?](#)
(18 Oct) Military Times, By Sarah Sicard
Though recruitment and retention numbers may be down, there is no such plan to force American citizens into military service, nor is there a specific plan to draft women.
16. [Restrictive abortion laws threaten our national security](#)
(23 Oct) Military Times, By Rep. Jason Crow and Allison Jaslow
Laws that restrict abortion access within the U.S. could impact military recruiting and retention.
17. [Southern California Army recruitment rises while the service misses mission in recent years](#)
(25 Oct) Orange County Register, By
While Army recruitment missed its goal nationally in 2022 by about a third of needed enlistments, Southern California recruiters came much closer to their mission — in part because of an upswing in interest among high school students, officials said.
18. [Marine Corps eyes national rebranding of recruiting centers](#)
(26 Oct) Marine Corps Times, By Hope Hedge Seck
Marine Corps recruiting offices across the country may soon be getting a major face-lift for the first time in more than 17 years as the service continues to make attracting young Americans a top priority.



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19. [The 42-year-old airman: Air Force and Space Force raise max age for active duty recruits](#)
(26 Oct) Military.com, By Thomas Novelty
Under a new policy change, active-duty Air Force and Space Force applicants can join up to the age of 42 -- meaning the services are now willing to take the oldest recruits out of all military branches.
20. [Air Force, Space Force raise max enlistment age to 42](#)
(30 Oct) Air Force Times, By Jaime Moore-Carrillo
Aspiring airmen and guardians now have until the age of 42 to join the Department of the Air Force.
21. [Patriotism's decline imperils the military](#)
(30 Oct) Wall Street Journal, By Owen West and Kevin Wallsten
Trying to appeal to woke young people will only make the recruitment problem more severe.

Employment & Integration

22. [Marines face camouflage shortage as new skirt policy unveiled](#)
(1 Oct) Defense News Weekly <Video>
Reporter Irene Loewenson updates you on a camouflage shortage in the Marine Corps and a new skirt policy for women Marines.
23. [Special Forces vs special operations forces — what's the difference?](#)
(4 Oct) Task & Purpose, By Joshua Skovlund
Yes, there is a difference. No, Navy SEALs are not Special Forces.
24. [How hundreds of volunteers help test Army Special Forces candidates](#)
(4 Oct) Fayetteville Observer, By Rachel Riley
Veterans are among the 800 volunteers who helped with the two-week Robin Sage exercises, a final test for the Special Forces Qualifications Course.
25. [The Marines are moving gradually and sometimes reluctantly to integrate women and men in boot camp](#)
(8 Oct) The Associated Press, By Lolita C. Baldor
While male and female recruits are now in the same companies, the smaller platoons remain segregated by gender.
26. [The Army's new fitness program team will come to you](#)
(9 Oct) Defense News, By Todd South
The command rolling out the Army's new, all-encompassing fitness program has a fresh way to get the program's expertise inside more units.
27. [Secretary Wormuth wants the Army Combat Fitness Test to stay as Congress debates its fate](#)
(11 Oct) Military.com, By Steve Beynon
As the Army tangles with Congress over the fate of the Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT, the service's top civilian leader says it needs to stay.



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28. [WIIS Releases its New Report on Advancing Gender Equality in Latin American and Caribbean Security Forces](#)
(12 Oct) Women in International Security By, Dr. Karin L. Johnston, Dr. Diorella Islas, and Larissa Abaunza
The study reveals that there is growing momentum in integrating gender equality in military and national police forces, though a gap between rhetorical commitment and action persists, challenging governments to apply the necessary political will and resources to advance gender equality in their security institutions.
29. [Nearly 70% of active service members are overweight, report finds](#)
(13 Oct) Military Times, By Meghann Myers
More than two-thirds of active duty service members are within the overweight or obese ranges of the body mass index, according to a report by the American Security Project released Thursday.
30. [US military has more work to do integrating women, report finds](#)
(20 Oct) Military Times, By Meghann Myers
Though women have technically been welcome in any military specialty since late 2015, it's been a slow process to integrate them into all units, according to a report released Thursday by the Rand Corp.
31. [Including women in security missions prevents violence, boosts intel, report finds](#)
(20 Oct) Military.com, By Kelsey Baker
Women serving in tactical peacekeeping and security operations often work better with the civilian populations they're charged with protecting because of cultural norms, according to a report released this month.
32. [Camp Grayling improves facilities for women](#)
(29 Oct) The Record-Eagle, By Travis Snyder
The addition of new facilities at Camp Grayling are intended to better serve women in the service, officials said. Michigan National Guard officials and state leaders applauded the upgrades during a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the addition of shower and toilet facilities and a lactation room at the camp's Army Airfield Armory.

Well-Being & Treatment

33. [October's Domestic Violence Awareness Events Call for Unity to End Abuse](#)
(3 Oct) DoD News, Immediate Release
The Defense Department is calling on the military community to help prevent abuse and support victims as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, which is recognized annually in October. This national observance was created to raise awareness about how to report domestic abuse and encourages community members to speak up if they suspect abuse. This year's campaign theme is "United Against Domestic Abuse."
34. [College president accused of sexting former student at Coast Guard Academy resigns](#)
(3 Oct) CNN, By Curt Devine, Audrey Ash and Melanie Hicken
A retired US Coast Guard captain stepped down as president of a college in Massachusetts on Tuesday after CNN revealed that he had been accused of sexual misconduct involving several students he taught at the prestigious Coast Guard Academy a decade ago.
35. [Service academies honor law allowing cadets to have kids even as Pentagon policy lags](#)
(4 Oct) Military.com, By Thomas Novelty
A Department of Defense official told Military.com that the formal written policy enabling cadets or Midshipmen to retain parental guardianship while attending an academy "will be published soon."



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36. [College president resigns amid Coast Guard Academy investigation](#)
(4 Oct) *The Associated Press, By Staff*
A former Coast Guard Academy professor whose tenure coincided with a sexual harassment scandal resigned as president of Nichols College in Massachusetts.
 37. [Air Force discovers higher salaries aren't the only answer to its child care shortage](#)
(9 Oct) *Federal News Network, By Jared Serbu*
The Air Force has made some significant progress in addressing its shortage of child care providers in just the past year. Amid a nationwide shortage, the service still has a vacancy rate of 20 percent. But that's compared to 35 percent in the summer of 2022. Officials think the improvement is largely due to new incentives that helped attract child care workers to the Air Force's child development centers.
 38. [Air Force announces more oversight, training to curb domestic violence](#)
(10 Oct) *Air Force Times, By Rachel S. Cohen*
It's the Department of the Air Force's latest attempt to reform how domestic abuse is handled, but critics say more could be done to address the problem.
 39. [Air Force charges 2-star general with sexual assault, other crimes](#)
(11 Oct) *Air Force Times, By Jaime Moore-Carrillo and Rachel S. Cohen*
The Air Force announced Wednesday it has formally charged Maj. Gen. Phillip Stewart, the service's former pilot training boss, with sexual assault, dereliction of duty and multiple other crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.
 40. [Army program aims to make it easier for soldiers to obtain free maternity uniforms](#)
(16 Oct) *Stars & Stripes, By Matthew M. Burke*
The Army has expanded a pilot program in the continental United States that streamlines the process of obtaining free maternity uniforms.
 41. [Lawyers argue whether assault or affair occurred between Air Force 2-star and subordinate officer](#)
(24 Oct) *Stars & Stripes, By Rose L. Thayer*
Lawyers argued during a hearing Tuesday whether the evidence used to charge Maj. Gen. Phillip Stewart with sexual assault points to a commander abusing his power over a junior officer or a woman regretting an alcohol-fueled night of infidelity with her boss.

Servicewomen in the News

42. [Marine faces felony charges for neglecting dogs, cats during pet-sitting gig](#)
(2 Oct) *Island Packet, By Evan McKenna*
Victoria Marie Spencer, a Marine from Beaufort's Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) faces several felony charges of animal cruelty for reportedly neglecting five pets she was hired to watch during a Hilton Head man's vacation, leaving one dog to die of starvation after not visiting the owner's house for a five-day period.
43. [Patrol Squadron 45 conducts rare, all-female P-8A Poseidon flight](#)
(16 Oct) *Military Times, By Diana Stancy Correll*
When Lt. Sahara Graft checked into Patrol Squadron 45 in February 2021, she and a few other women in the squadron shared a dream: to one day complete an all-female flight together aboard the one of the squadron's P-8A Poseidon aircraft.



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44. [Navy petty officer indicted in alleged murder-for-hire plot that killed woman and baby](#)
(17 Oct) NBC News, By Marlene Lenthang
Prosecutors say Leoda Bradshaw orchestrated the plot to kill Toshyna Patterson, 27, and her 10-month-old daughter, Sarayah Paulwell, last month. The victims were connected to a member of the Jamaican parliament.
 45. [Sailor arrested over alleged murder-for-hire plot in Jamaica](#)
(20 Oct) Military Times, By Jonathan Lehrfeld
Jamaican authorities arrested and charged a U.S. Navy sailor for allegedly orchestrating a murder-for-hire plot that resulted in the deaths of a mother and baby, Jamaican law enforcement officials said.
 46. [Navy promotes first female mortician to senior chief petty officer](#)
(24 Oct) Navy Times, By Diana Stancy Correll
For the first time in Navy history, the service promoted a female mortician to senior chief petty officer. Senior Chief Jessica Zugzda, originally from Perth, New York, is also just the second Navy mortician ever to become a senior chief petty officer, the Navy said Monday.

Women Veterans

47. [Legal uncertainty over Veterans Affairs abortion policy worries staff](#)
(5 Oct) Military Times, By Leo Shane III
Veterans Affairs staffers worry they could run afoul of state laws banning abortion services despite department leaders' promises of legal protection, according to a recent report released by the VA Inspector General.
48. [VA says it performed 88 abortions in the past year, but Congress again threatens subpoenas in pursuit of more details](#)
(19 Oct) Military.com, By Rebecca Kheel
The Department of Veterans Affairs provided 88 abortions in the first year that it offered the procedure, according to a document sent to Congress this month that was obtained by Military.com.
49. [Veterans who are younger, female and LGBTQ are reporting more mental health issues, study finds](#)
(25 Oct) Military.com, By Kelsey Baker
Veterans who are female, LGBTQ and served after 9/11 are more likely to have experienced recent serious psychological distress compared to other veteran groups, according to a report released this week.



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Upcoming Events

Event: **Fireside Chat with Hon. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense**

Date: Tuesday, November 7

Time: 10am-11am Eastern

Location: Virtual

Register: [Click Here](#)

Purpose: The United States marked the 50th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) on July 1, 2023. To reflect on the challenges and opportunities the services face in the next 50 years, Deputy Secretary Kathleen Hicks will join Katherine Kuzminski, Deputy Director of Studies and Director of the Military, Veterans and Society Program at CNAS for a virtual conversation. They will discuss military professionalism, challenges to recruitment, service member retention, and policy options for a resilient future force. Live audience viewers will have the opportunity to ask questions during the event.

Event: **Women's Health is a Readiness Issue: Addressing Health Disparities in the U.S. Military**

Date: Thursday, November 9th

Time: 1pm-2pm Eastern

Location: Virtual Congressional Briefing via Zoom Webinar

Register: [Click Here](#)

Purpose: This Congressional briefing is sponsored by HealthyWomen, dedicated to educating women ages 35 to 64 so they can make informed health decisions, advocate for themselves and prioritize their health and wellness. The Congressional briefing will educate Congressional staff on HealthyWomen's Ready, Healthy & Able program that is aimed at narrowing the health gaps that exist for servicewomen and service members assigned female at birth. Panelists will discuss findings from the pilot program, share personal experiences in the military, and provide recommendations for Congress and federal agencies.

Event: **[DACOWITS' Quarterly Business Meeting](#)**

Date: Tuesday, December 5th

Time: 8am-3pm Eastern

Location: AUSA Conference Center, Arlington, VA

Register: Open to the public; to attend virtually register via osd.pentagon.ousd-p-r.mbx.dacowits@mail.mil

Purpose: The Committee examines specific topics on behalf of the Defense Department. The Committee will gather information from multiple sources, to include briefings and written responses from Defense Department, Service-level military representatives, and subject matter experts.