

**RECORD VERSION**

**STATEMENT BY  
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**BEFORE THE**

**MILITARY PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE  
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**ON DIVERSITY IN RECRUITING AND RETENTION**

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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Madam Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of this committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of the men and women of the United States Army.

America's Army stands prepared today to deploy, fight and win our Nation's wars as part of the Joint Force because of our courageous People – Soldiers, Families, Army Civilians, and Soldiers for Life. Our number one priority is the Army's People for they are foundational to the Army's Readiness, Modernization and Reform priorities. Today the Total Army Force is the most diverse, the most talented, and the most lethal in our nation's history.

This Congress continues to support our need for end strength growth as we navigate today's challenging recruiting environment. With your continued support, we will meet our adjusted growth projections to reach the appropriate end state across our Active and Reserve components. The growth you have authorized is enabling our readiness recovery and will provide a more diverse and lethal mix of Soldiers to protect and defend our Nation today and tomorrow. Additionally, the Army continues to make full use of the new talent management authorities granted by this Congress in the 2019 NDAA. These authorities allow us to amplify diversity in how we manage our officers and eventually our enlisted populations.

The *Army People Strategy*, signed in October 2019, reaffirmed that a diverse force is one of four Strategic Outcomes for 2028. Signed by the Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Sergeant Major of the Army, it affirms that the Army is a standards based organization, committed to equality of opportunity and providing all of our talented people with fulfilling and rewarding professional careers. The *Army People Strategy* mission and vision are clear – *The Total Army will acquire, develop, employ, and retain the diversity of Soldier and Civilian talent needed to achieve Total Army readiness.* Our vision: Build cohesive teams for the Joint Force by maximizing the talents of our people, the Army's greatest strength and most important weapon system.

The Army People Strategy's main effort, Acquire Talent, is defined as the ability to identify and recruit the diverse military and civilian talents needed to organize, train, and equip a force ready for prompt and multi-domain conflict, including sustained ground combat. As an inclusive and representative American institution, we ensure that our people possess a diversity of *talent* – knowledge, skills, behaviors, and preferences – drawn from all corners of our country and its vibrant, diverse population.

Exceptional Soldier and Civilian support programs also engender trust between the Army and its professionals, simultaneously improving talent acquisition and retention efforts. We deliver an effective and carefully targeted mix of programs, services, and policies that support diversity, equality of opportunity, and inclusion, as well as reduce barriers to long-term wellness, and increase emotional and financial well-being.

We are building upon the positive and powerful aspects of the current Army culture, creating a people-focused ethos that builds trust and reduces negative behaviors across our formations. We will amplify the positive behaviors that align with our vision of cohesive teams: civility and positive relationships; diversity, equity and inclusion; honor and respect; empathy; and care for our Soldier, Family and Civilian well-being.

Under this *Army People Strategy*, we will continue to recruit and retain a diverse force and sustain our progress to date.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in July of 2018, the race/ethnic makeup of the U.S. population was as follows:

- White, not Hispanic: 60.4% (Total Army 58.8%)
- Hispanic: 18.3% (Total Army 14.6%)
- Black: 13.4% (Total Army 19.2%)
- Asian: 5.9% (Total Army 4.7%)
- Two or More Races: 2.7% (Total Army 1.2%)
- American Indian/Alaskan Native: 1.3% (Total Army 0.6%)
- Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian: 0.2% (Total Army 0.8%)

As the country has become more racially and ethnically diverse, so has the U.S. Army.

### Recruiting a Diverse Enlisted Force

Today, only about 29% of 17-24 year-olds in the U.S. are eligible to serve in the Army, without a waiver and only one in eight has a propensity to enlist in the military, making Army accessions a challenging and resource-intensive activity. Further, America's youth are increasingly disconnected from the military and lack knowledge about military service. Individuals who are related to a service member make up most of our applicants, with 79% of new recruits having a relative who served and 28% having a parent who served. Among the Qualified Military Available (the population eligible for recruitment) (Age 17-24), 60% are White, 10.3% are Black, 19.4% are Hispanic, 9.8% are Asian Pacific Islander, and 0.5% are Native American. Given the challenging recruiting environment, it is crucial that the Army leverage every tool available to understand and employ what motivates qualified individuals to serve in the military.

To ensure a diversified pool of recruits, the Army produces marketing products in multiple languages including but not limited to commercials, social media posts, and posters, to attract different audiences. We also conduct recruiting and outreach activities focused on educating the minority population about the opportunities available in the Army.

The U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) uses FOCUS 22, a market initiative that focuses on 22 cities across the United States that have fewer recruits in relation to what would be expected given their population size. FOCUS 22 also concentrates on urban populations to ensure diverse representation across the Army.

Further, USAREC identifies 10 pacing battalions in critical markets that have the largest impact on ethnicity in recruiting. Pacing battalions are the 10 battalions holding the largest youth population age 17-24 for each ethnicity. Pacing Battalions tailor their marketing plan and recruiting strategies to maximize the recruitment of these ethnicities.

#### Other Initiatives to Increase Diversity in Recruiting

Through USAREC, the Army uses a variety of other programs designed to increase the diversity of Army recruits. For example, the Foreign Language Recruiting Initiative (FLRI) is intended to increase accessions from foreign language speaking segments of the population. The program allows foreign language recruits with low English proficiency to enter the service with a lower Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score. Since the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is given in English, many applicants from non-English speaking regions fail due to the language barrier. For example, applicants from Puerto Rico historically make up more than 75% of FLRI enlistments. FLRIs go to the Basic Skills Education Program at Lackland Air Force Base, then receive their Military Occupational Specialty after language training and AFQT retesting. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Army enlisted more than 400 Soldiers under this program. Recruits can take part in English as a Second Language Programs before they go to Basic Training. In Fiscal Year 2019, the Army enlisted more than 230 Soldiers under this program.

During Fiscal Year 2019, the Army conducted information sessions and recruiting efforts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Birmingham, Orlando, and New Orleans. These efforts produced approximately 1,480 leads on individuals who expressed interest in joining the Army. The Army also regularly engages with a multitude of local community groups and programs to include: Society of Women

Engineers, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, Boys and Girls Club of America, College Expos, High School Challenge, and 100 Black Men of America.

### Recruiting a Diverse Officer Corps

The Army thanks Congress for nominating prospective U.S. Military Academy (USMA) cadets that represent the diversity of their constituents. In 2019, the graduating class at USMA included 34 black women, a record number that's a sign of concerted efforts to increase diversity. USMA has been boosting efforts to recruit women and blacks by changing its marketing approach. Admissions officials have increased outreach to metropolitan areas like New York City, Atlanta, and Detroit to broaden the search for qualified candidates. The addition of NCAA women's lacrosse and rugby also helped West Point attract female high school athletes.

The 2019 graduating class included 223 women, the largest number since the first female cadets graduated in 1980. The class had 110 African Americans, double the number from 2013, and graduated the largest number of Latinos, 88. West Point hosts a STEM camp annually for 7th and 8th grade students with a focus on diversity.

West Point also has mobile STEM camps that travel around the country to support interest in 7th and 8th graders of diverse backgrounds. Additionally, West Point hosts the Summer Leaders Experience for over 1,000 high school juniors. West Point also has a diversity admissions team that focuses their efforts on expanding the candidate pool.

The U.S. Army Cadet Command (USACC), partners with universities to recruit, educate, train, and commission officers for the Active Component, the Army National Guard and the Army Reserves through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). Further, USACC is the largest provider of merit-based scholarships in the country, awarding more than 14,000 ROTC scholarships annually.

The Urban Access Initiative Pilot Program uses special recruiting teams in Houston and Los Angeles in areas that are high in diversity and low in officer representation. These teams work locally to increase recruitment of college bound students into ROTC programs. USACC supports the teams' efforts with additional marketing resources and scholarships.

The General Patton Tactical Broadening Assignment Program assigns senior Combat Arms Lieutenants to ROTC program at 22 Historically Black Colleges and Universities across the United States to increase the propensity of minority students to branch into Combat Arms.

The Army partners with ROCKS, Inc., to identify deserving minority students for selection as part of the National High School Scholarship process. The ROCKS, Inc. is a tax-exempt non-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) comprised of ROTC and Military Academy Cadets, active duty, reserve component, commissioned officers and active duty or reserve component warrant officers and Department of Defense GS12 and above civilians.

USACC conducts multiple recruiting events in conjunction with diversity groups across the United States. These diversity groups include organizations such as: Hispanic Access to Colleges and Universities; 100 Black Men; League of United Latin American Citizens; The National Urban League; Black Engineer of the Year; Society of Asian Engineers; Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association.

Officer Candidate School (OCS) is another important source of commissioning for the Army. In order to ensure a diversified pool of recruits for OCS, the Army develops marketing products in multiple languages to attract different audiences. USAREC also conducts recruiting and outreach activities focused on educating the minority population about the Officer opportunities available in the Army.

## Marketing to a Nation of Diversity

We want our Army to look like our nation. Strategically, it is imperative that the Army successfully recruit Soldiers from every corner and culture of the country, so that it reflects the country it protects and defends. To that end, all marketing created for recruiting purposes is targeted from the beginning to factor in prospective recruits' cultural orientation so as to present opportunities in the Army for them in the most relevant and appealing manner.

For example within the newly reorganized Army Enterprise Marketing Organization, Hispanic strategists, African American strategists and general market strategists literally share a space and co-create every campaign brief for the Army. This is in contrast to other agency models where the multicultural team is often asked to execute from the General Market insights and drivers.

Similarly, the Army's marketing creative team is integrated with multicultural experts working directly and in concert with general market experts. This creative team represents the multicultural spectrum personally as well as professionally, and regardless of one's cultural expertise, everyone works from the same brief provided by the strategy team. One outcome of this blended approach is the new What's Your Warrior (WYW) campaign—which features men and women of all races and highlights diverse opportunities across the Army.

The WYW campaign resonates exceptionally well across the America's multicultural landscape of Gen Z prospects. In testing, WYW earned double-digit lift scores across the board on Effectiveness, Breakthrough, and Likelihood to Take an Action. WYW earned a 54% lift on likeability among Hispanic and African American audiences as compared to previous campaign advertisements. Importantly, African American prospects also reported the new campaign would drive them to action.

Developing a message with multicultural appeal is half the challenge, the other half is knowing where to place it in media and how to measure its performance. The



WYW campaign is being deployed across media segments designed from multicultural insights derived from a multicultural team, and the performance of the campaign is being analyzed. Initial results are very positive: Audiences have shared the 60-second WYW YouTube organically, through paid advertisements, and have posted it to other social media channels. Currently, 15% of those prompted to watch the video have engaged with it, which is a 300% increase above the industry standard. Of those who watch it, 40% view the entire video, which measures 140% above the industry standard. Throughout the first week of launch, the GoArmy.com mobile site received a 600% visit increase in comparison to the same time last year. The content is now optimized down to an individual prospect's engagement with it, thus maximizing resonance and relevance for prospects in every corner and culture in the country.

### Retaining a Diverse Total Army

The Army must continue to retain the most talented Soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers with the experience and skills necessary to meet current and future needs. Retention is one of the four foundational pillars of the Army Talent Management Strategy with the specific aim of keeping the most talented Soldiers in uniform.

The Active Component, Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserves each achieved their FY19 retention missions. Again in FY19, the Army retained above its historical average of 81% for the Active Component, retaining over 88% of the eligible population. Each component is on track to accomplish their respective retention missions while maintaining quality standards in FY20. These retention achievements support meeting our non-commissioned officer requirements in the near, mid, and far-term. These achievements would not be possible without the predictable funding support granted by Congress that allow us to plan and implement bonus structures, incentive pays, and marketing campaigns.

The Army has seen continued high rates of officer retention in FY19. Overall, the Army retained 91.4% of all officers in FY19. Since 2016, there has been nearly a 2%

officer retention increase. Approximately 70.4% of officers are staying at least one year past their Active Duty Service Obligation.

Madam Chairwoman Speier, Ranking Member Kelly, distinguished members of this committee, the Army appreciates the continued support from this committee over many decades. I thank you for your generous and unwavering support of our outstanding Soldiers, Civilian Professionals, and their Families and your emphasis on diversity in our military.