

VIEWPOINTS

In this issue of **DyNAMC** we focus on “Military”

In this issue we featured service members, veterans, their families and those who work tirelessly in various capacities to lend support and advocacy.

While we may have differing opinions, we can all surely agree that without the sacrifices made and the courage displayed by our military, the world would be a very different place today.

We believe each individual featured in our military edition issue embodies what it means to be a **DyNAMC** Leader for a Changing World and we are proud to share their stories with our readers.

For our Viewpoints section we asked them,

“Over the last few years, the military has made major strides in leadership roles and policy regarding diversity. Is the military the model for a diverse society?”

We wanted to know what they thought, and we thought you would, too.

Be Enlightened!

The perception of the military has historically been a white alpha male culture. Ironically over the last few years, the military has made major strides in leadership roles and policy regarding diversity. Is the military the model for a diverse society?



Sgt. Jasmine Jacobs

**Veteran, Army National Guard
Atlanta, GA**

“In many ways the military is the model for a diverse society. The military is such a unique organization. It is the only one that is basically self-sufficient; with its own branches of government. This provides the armed forces with a unique opportunity to be a role model in that sense, although that is not always the case. While strides are certainly being made at a high level, such as with leadership roles and policies for people of color, women and the LGBT community, these same individuals are still targeted at a troop level.

I recall the comments I saw from a lot of my brothers in arms on articles written about the regulations I was involved with. They were some of the most racist comments I have ever seen, many of which called for un-namely things to be done to me, supporting a rape culture that is often swept under the rug in the military.

Unfortunately, while we evolve on the surface, there are still some issues with those diverse leaders being antagonized and disrespected; women being assaulted and then those assaults never seeing the light of day; and mem-

bers of the LGBT community living under wraps for fear of possible homophobic retribution.

So, the ability and the opportunities are certainly there, and strides have been made. The fight now is to evolve the mindsets of the individuals who make up the core of the armed forces, because that is when the real change occurs.”

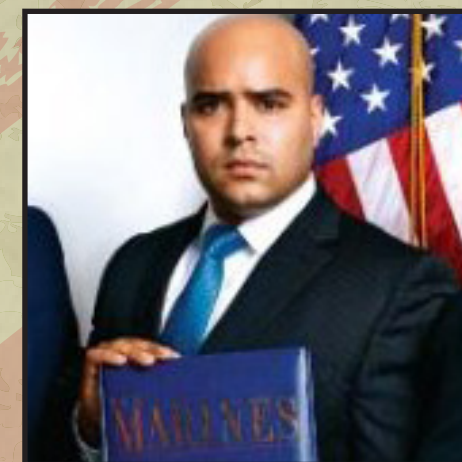


CMSGT Danny Wells, USAF

**Air Force Equal Opportunity Career Field Manager (CFM) and Chief, Equal Opportunity (EO) Operations
Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center,
Randolph Air Force Base, Texas**

“I don’t see the military as a model for society, but rather, a reflection of society and those who are willing to place service before self. As an African American male, I can’t think of a more inclusive and diverse organization to be a part of. The U.S. Air Force has done an excellent job in confronting inequities and barriers that impede maximum utilization of diversity or prevent our Airmen from achieving high levels of success. Our culture is con-

“I am confident that the Air Force will conquer these challenges and reach a point where society itself proclaims us to be the model profession for diversity.”
- Wells



Daniel Morales

**Marine Veteran
VP Equity Sales, Drexel Hamilton
NYC, New York**

“I do believe the military is ahead of our society when it comes to diversity. The military made integration mandatory in 1948; well before the civil rights movement was able to get minorities basic civil liberties. I feel the modern military is more diversified than corporate America. It is very common to see people of color in leadership roles in the military. I think that for decades it has been common for minorities to join the military knowing that the culture is more open to diversity. The military in general is solely about results; it is a team oriented and result driven organization.

“So, the ability and the opportunities are certainly there, and strides have been made.”
- Jacobs

“I think that for decades it has been common for minorities to join the military knowing that the culture is more open to diversity.”
- Morales

People care less about who you are and more about what you're capable of. I do feel, however, that the military is lagging slightly when it comes to diversity in regards to the LGBTQ community. But knowing its history of diversity, I feel the military will quickly catch up with society at large and it'll probably become more open and diverse as it has proven with persons of color.”



Dr. Vicki A. Brown

DoD Chief Learning Officer,
Title 5 Civilian Workforce Chief, Leadership, Learning, and
Development Division (LL&D)
H. R. Strategic Programs and Advisory Services,
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

“I would have to say that, from my personal perspective and many years of experience, the military has served as a model for a diverse society providing opportunities for people of color, women, and the LBGT community. Yet, we must remember that the military is a

microcosm of our society. While the Department of Defense (DoD) is quite large, it has to take into consideration the diverse aspects of all of its members and their talents.

Having been associated with the DoD for more than 37 years, I have seen the military slowly shift from its traditional roots to a more diverse community while becoming more accepting of that diversity and, more importantly, maximizing that diversity. Like our global partners, our military has recognized the benefits of a multicultural workforce, and I believe it has tried to create more inclusive work environments.

Maximizing diversity is fundamental. Create a truly inclusive work environment, where people from diverse backgrounds with diverse talents and skills feel respected and recognized, and the organization excels. Don't, and it won't. I am not sure if the public has noticed, but our society is experiencing a significant demographic transformation. We are growing fast, and racial and ethnic diversity is rapidly increasing. More women are entering the labor market, and many baby boomers, who represent a certain demographic, are poised to retire. As such, if the military is a microcosm of our society, our military will also be making a transformative shift--increasing its diverse members. I believe it will continue leading the way by embracing diversity as we move to a majority minority nation.

Has the military done all it can do? I'm not sure how to answer that question. I can say that the Department's leadership is truly focused on creating a culture and climate that encourages all of its members to contribute positively to the accomplishment of the mission. However, as a community of millions of employees representing almost every segment of society, and depending on whose aperture you are looking through, I am sure there will always be more work to be done.”



Major Gary Richardson, Veteran

Program Manager/Senior Leader Training, DEOMI
Florida

“I am not sure if the military is THE model but it most certainly is a very good one. As one of the nation's largest employers, the military's ability to evolve with emerging social issues has consistently been proven. Not only does it implement the policies essential to equal opportunity, it enforces them by promoting its leaders from within the organization, regardless of their demographics. It is one of the few employers that deliberately put women and minorities in positions of power, based on merit first.

It is a fact that the military has had issues concerning discrimination and sexism throughout its history; but for an agency with over two million members, it is bound to have some of the same problems in the larger scope of our nation. However, the military doesn't shy away from these issues or simply sweep them under a rug to discuss another day. It addresses them head on and makes the changes it needs to effectively protect the citizens of the United States.

“We are growing fast, and racial and ethnic diversity is rapidly increasing.”
- Brown

“The military is not perfect. It can move slowly at times because of the size and mission, but it is successful at making diversity work.”
- Richardson

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Jackie Robinson-Burnette, SES

Associate Administrator of
Business Development (AA/BD)
HQ, US Small Business Administration
Washington, DC

“I've worked as a Department of the Army civilian and served my country as an Army spouse for well over 20 years. Yes, the military is a model for a diverse society. The significant change in diversity in the military is partly due to the significant push by the President. It all starts with leadership. In addition, the Department of Defense is serious about the implementation of its strategic plan for diversity and inclusion of all people; including people of color, different religions, women and the LGBT community. The Department of Defense calls this the 'battle for talent', with a focus on recruiting an all-volunteer force that represents the country it defends. The military has really come full circle and gained im-

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mense benefit from different perspectives and linguistic and cultural skills of all Americans. I’ve noticed more minority and female General Officers than ever in our history within the last 8 years, including the first female 4-star Generals. From my humble perspective, the military is a model for a diverse society.”



John Cruzat

Army Veteran
Principle Partner, EPIC
Chicago

“During the course of my military career, a career that spans 20 years, 8 months and 20 days, I personally witnessed a dynamic shift in the way race, culture, age, gender, orientation, language, education and physical ability were handled in the day-to-day work of soldiers; this included the way awards, punishment and promotions were recommended and given to service members. The command emphasis placed on parity, equity and fairness throughout the military cultivated a culture that could now—in 2016—very well be considered a model for a diverse society.

Following my induction into the Army immediately following high school graduation in 1981, it became apparent that racism and sexism were still a very integral piece of the institution’s social contract. There were still so many in command that were openly racist and biased against anyone desiring to excel who did not appear to be white and male from a certain socioeconomic and/or educational background (physically fit, well-spoken white males).

While there had already been significant shifts in policy, protocol and promotion since the 1960s, the few non-white and non-male leaders who had managed to move into senior leadership positions, both in the enlisted and officer ranks, were few and far between. During the early part of my career, the efforts to find and promote non-white/non-males who more accurately reflected the status quo were in full swing.

Prior to the organizational change efforts focused on diversity during that time, antiquated and ineffective EEO offices handled the complaints and coercively led the early training efforts to reposition racism and minimize its negative effects on unit morale and welfare. As the command structure “browned” and the efforts to cultivate a command structure that more accurately reflected the institution as a whole as well as the nation as whole began to bear fruit, the Army was able to leverage the diversity effort to new and exciting victories around the globe.

Although there were many mistakes and missteps along the way, business, education, healthcare, social services, nonprofits and others would do well to model this effort.”



Ginger Miller

Veteran
Founder and CEO
Women Veterans Interactive
2013 White House Champion of
Change for Women Veterans
Long Island, New York

“The military is making excellent progress in becoming more diverse. It makes me proud to be a woman who has served my country to see so many women in high level leadership roles in the military. While the military has become very diverse and inclusive, they have also become very receptive and reactive to the needs of military members, and that’s outstanding.

I’ve witnessed the great strides the military has taken to become more diverse. However, I cannot say the military is the perfect role model for a diverse society because I don’t believe one exists. If I had to rate the military on a scale of 1 to 5 on diversity and inclusion, I would give it a score of 4.5 because there is always room for growth and improvement. Salute!”

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LCDR Leedjia Svec, Ph.D.

Director of Military Programs
Naval Officer, NASA Ames
Mountain View, CA

“The military has historically expanded both technological and social boundaries, and I believe it continues to strive to be a model of diversity and inclusion. Technologically, advantages came from being on the leading edge. This edge is often obtained by diverse participation. For example, in the past, key strategic military needs were achieved by infusing diverse groups into the military; including Navajo code talkers, the Tuskegee airmen, women pilots and computation experts (computers). I believe the military continues to recognize the importance of facilitating an environment where diversity and inclusion enables a winning edge. From inclusion of gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals, opening more positions for women, the examination and prevention of hazing, the military strives to be a model of and for modern society. Diversity is not just nice to have or just the right thing

“Diversity is not just nice to have or just the right thing to do, it is essential to successful mission accomplishment.”
- Svec

to do, it is essential to successful mission accomplishment. Diversity and inclusion require education, effort, work and continued participation by all involved. It is not always easy, but it is always worth it. There is much still to be done regarding individual behaviors, influencing policy, cutting edge research in social perception and neurodiversity, however, there is much that has already been achieved. Each and every person has the potential to create a spark of insight, an innovative idea or have the solution to the next great challenge. The military as I have experienced it continues to push both technological and social boundaries in the pursuit of global peace and a prosperous America.”



Julia Hubbel, CPSPD

Disabled Decorated Vietnam Era Army Veteran
President, The Hubbel Group, Inc.
Lakewood, CO

“First, the military has made enormous, powerful and positive strides in making this traditionally white male and rather archaic institu-

tion a far more egalitarian place for people to thrive, move up the ladder, and succeed. In some ways, the military has done a better job than some major corporations, especially if we look at regional disparities in progress.

Second, the unique command and control environment of the military creates a special situation which is mirrored only by similar institutions such as the police and fire departments. The absolute rule of Rank Has its Privileges, or RHIP, which is understood by all, creates an environment where the temptation to abuse power over others can be too much for those whose moral code is less strong. Until a soldier can feel safe in a tank, a barracks, or a foxhole with another soldier without fear of sexual attack or attack due to sexual orientation or race or religious preference, we have a long way to go. While there is a certain element of RHIP in corporate America, in the military it is backed by law and serious consequences. Herein lies the greatest challenge.

The greatest hope lies in the steady promotion of women, people of color, and soldiers of varying faiths and sexual preference to the highest commands. As they take on these Pentagon positions and affect policy, they can do the greatest good. We’ve already seen this, but it is slow. The military is an organization steeped in tradition, but there are real visionaries rising to the top. It is up to them to influence traditional thinking.

Combine this with the recruitment of more diverse soldiers and, ultimately, change is inevitable. Steady and slow, but inevitable.”

“The greatest hope lies in the steady promotion of women, people of color, and soldiers of varying faiths and sexual preference to the highest commands.”
- Hubbel



SSG Kiaveth Vasquez

Los Angeles, California

“The military is becoming a model for our diverse society. What once seemed impossible to accomplish is now taking place. In the military I was mentored and trained by different leaders of different ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. I used to tell my soldiers the only color that mattered was “green” (the color of our uniform) and that their potential and willingness to learn was the key to promotion, as well as doing what was morally and legally right.

The military welcomes all who volunteer to fight for our freedom and way of life and, in turn, accepts them for who they are and what they believe, without forgetting respect. I have learned that my brothers and sisters do not have to be related by blood. Sometimes the sweat and blood shed together creates that bond amongst us.”

“I have learned that my brothers and sisters do not have to be related by blood.”
- Vasquez



Chaplain Carl M. Barnes, CDR, CHC, USN

Command Chaplain,
USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)
Carrier Strike Group Nine

“Diversity is a key component to maintaining our highest state of readiness. Diversity encompasses more than race and gender -- we seek to include diversity of thought, background, language, culture and skills. Our force comes from a diverse populous, and certainly our military is better served when it reflects the nation it serves.”

“We seek to include diversity of thought, background, language, culture and skills.”
- Barnes