Protect Our Defenders

INDUSTRY STUDY REPORT

JANUARY 2019

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INTRODUCTION

Since 2011, Protect Our Defenders has worked to ensure a respectful and inclusive work environment in the US Military by reducing sexual harassment, assault, and misogyny, which will enhance recruitment, unit cohesion, and readiness across the Armed Forces.[1] In pursuit of this mission, Protect Our Defenders has partnered with Deloitte Consulting LLP (Deloitte) to better understand the current state of women's experiences in the Armed Forces. This industry report will provide a "point in time" perspective on the gender demographics across four branches of the Armed Forces, the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps based on extensive quantitative research. This report also provides a sentiment analysis of the female service member experience, using ethnographic interviews and social media sentiment analysis software to parse through social media postings, groups, and headlines. This sentiment analysis aims to paint a picture of the "on-the-ground" experiences of female service members and veterans, as well as understand what programs and services are available and effective to promote woman leaders within the Armed Forces.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Female service members are an important piece of the well-oiled machine that is national security. However, as combat and the military have modernized and transformed, the experiences of female service members have not kept pace. The Armed Forces struggle to promote and retain women. As of September 2018, women made up just 16.55% of active duty service members. Female service members are even fewer in higher ranks, making up just 2.5% of O10s across all branches of the service. Women in the military report feeling "othered" during their service, though their initial interactions with the Armed Forces painted a picture of an organization that could provide a high-quality education and numerous career opportunities. Social and environmental factors contribute to reported gender bias across branches, inequitable family and social practices, and repeated incidents of sexual harassment and assault. The Armed Forces should evaluate the tangible and intangible elements of its culture and identify ways to make women service members to feel that they are not only welcome but actively included in the service.

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[1] "Mission: Ending the Epidemic of Military Rape." Protect Our Defenders, www.protectourdefenders.com/about/.

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN THE ARMED FORCES[2]

Equality and equity in gender representation and service is a continuing challenge for the United States Armed Forces as they tackle actively promoting and retaining women. As of September 2018, the total number of active duty military women in the U.S. was 215,787, culminating roughly 16.55% of active duty military personnel. The representation of women in active duty military has grown slightly over the last 3 years with 210,285 women or 16.25% in 2017 and 204,592 or 15.88% in 2016. In this time period, the total active duty military personnel population grew from 1,288,232 in 2016 to 1,294,137 in 2017 to 1,304,032 in 2018. This growth constitutes a 1.2% growth in total active duty military personnel, a 5.19% growth in active duty women and a 0.42% growth in active duty men. There is a steady growth of women in the Armed Forces and it even outpaces the growth of men. However, women are still a far cry from being equally represented to their peers.
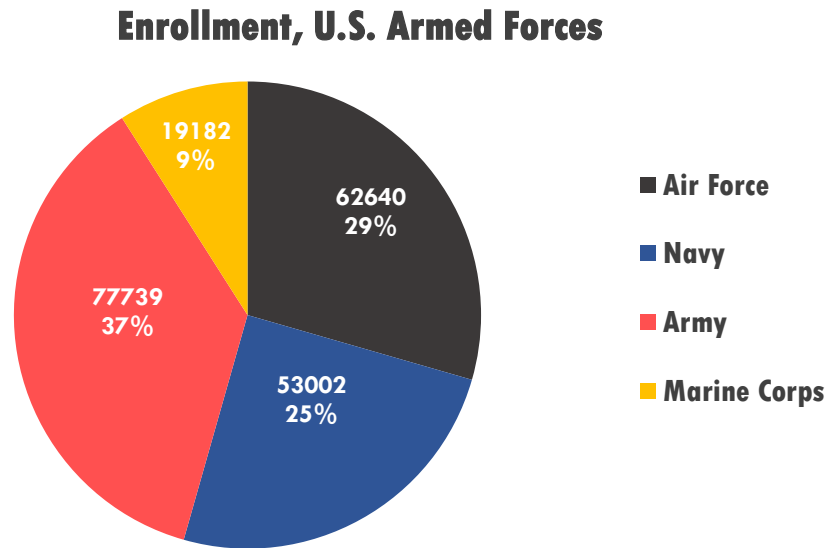
Table 1. Annual Population of U.S. Armed Forces Active Duty

Active Duty Personnel, U.S. Armed Forces								
2018			2017			2016		
Women		Total	Women		Total	Women		Total
#	%	#	#	%	#	#	%	#
215,787	16.55	1,304,032	210,285	16.25	1,294,137	204,592	15.88	1,288,232

Despite the steady increase of women in the Armed Forces, the majority of active duty women are concentrated at the junior ranks and are not advancing to leadership positions at equal rates to their men counterparts and in some cases, they do not advance to leadership at all. Cumulatively across the Armed Forces, women represent 20% of junior officers (O1-O3) and 17% of junior enlisted (E1-E3). For both officer and enlisted ranks, the number of women decrease across the promotion cycle to senior ranks. In 2018, women represented just 2.5% of O10s and 9.9% of E9s, an 18% and 7% drop from junior rankings, respectively. There are clear structural, social and developmental barriers to advancement for women in the forces that impede their trajectory to senior ranks. Without addressing the structural barriers and a strong presence of women leaders in addition to men who actively advocate for the increased equity of experiences for women personnel, the Forces may continue to experience high rates of attrition for women in the military.

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[2] Defense Manpower Data Center, Active Duty Military Personnel by Service by Rank/Grade, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp.

Figure 1. Total Enrollment of the U.S. Armed Forces

Enrollment, U.S. Armed Forces

Legend:
- Air Force
- Navy
- Army
- Marine Corps

- 19182 — 9%
- 62640 — 29%
- 77739 — 37%
- 53002 — 25%

Gender Representation by Rank[3]

For officer ranks in the U.S. Armed Forces, women experience the greatest attrition from O4 to O5 ranks. Given promotion from O1-O3 for most services is based on time in rank and good behavior, the failed retention of women as they attempt to advance to O4 and beyond signifies a disproportionate investment into or the unfair limitation of women by military leadership to the necessary resources, knowledge, development opportunities and sponsorship required for promotion. The numbers shrink even more for military promotion to Generals and Admirals (O7-O10) when more senior officials, both within and outside of DoD, take a particular interest in flag officer promotion. In 2018, women constituted just under a 7% aggregate of the O7-O10 ranks denoting an arena for advancement and a culture for developmental that is overwhelmingly dominated by men. To break down the numbers further, there were 921 officers at the O7-O10 rank and just 69 of them were women. Essentially, for every woman with the title of General or Admiral in her rank, there are 13 men in the same role.

> "As a leader, I learned what to do by watching my leaders and taking note of what NOT to do."

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[3] Defense Manpower Data Center, Active Duty Military Personnel by Service by Rank/Grade, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp.

Figure 2. Officer Breakdown of the U.S. Armed Forces by Gender
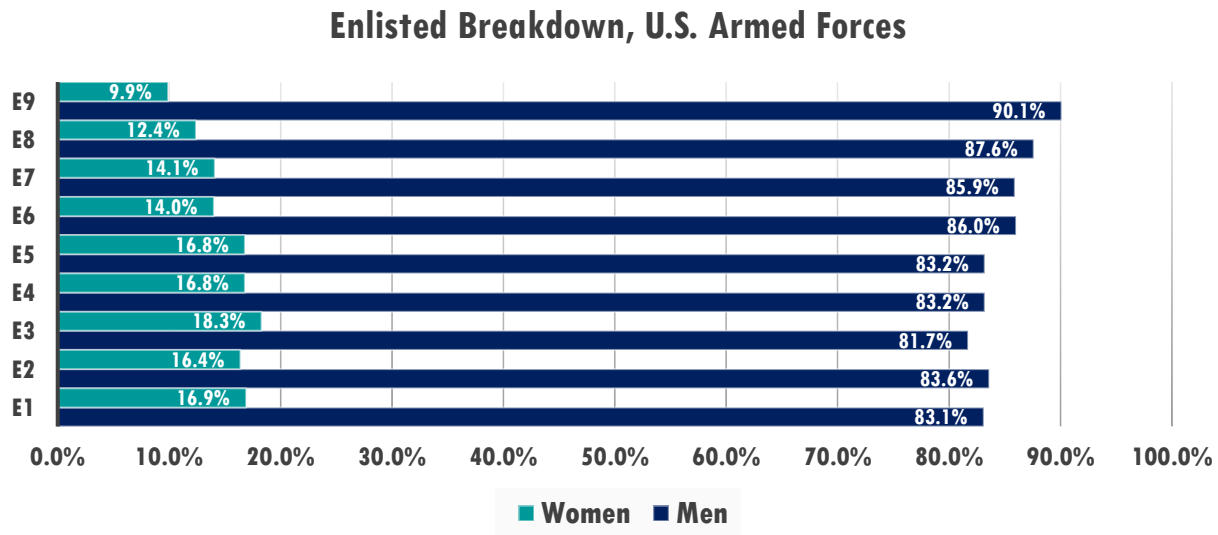
Officer Breakdown, U.S. Armed Forces
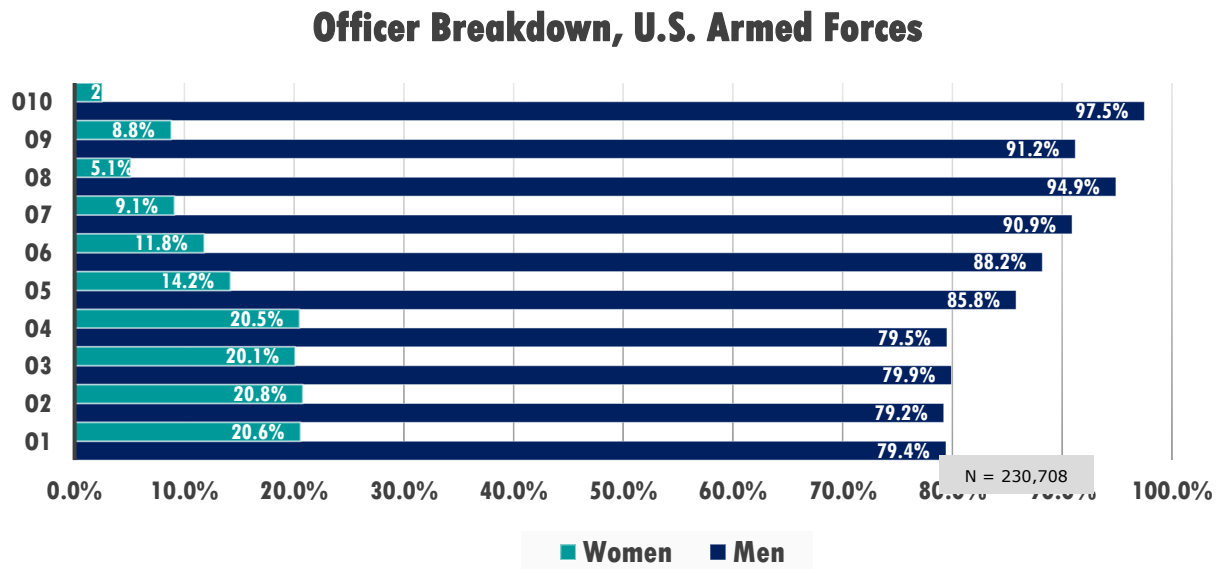
Similarly, for enlisted ranks of women service members the attrition of women increases through promotion cycles. Women have the greatest representation at E3 with 18.3%. Upwards from E3, the representation and advancement of women enlisted steadily declines. Enlisted servicewomen have a more gradual rate of attrition than officer servicewomen. Whereas senior ranking women officers make up 7% of their grades, senior ranking women enlisted (E7-E9) culminate 12% of the leadership population. However, there are about five times the number of enlisted as there are officers in the services denoting a much greater population of promotion eligible women enlisted and a broader sample size. In 2018, there were 230,708 officers and 1,073,324 enlisted personnel. Moreover, while there are much more women represented at the E9 level (9.9%) than women at the O10 level (2.5%), the designation of the roles and responsibilities between enlisted and officers reflect a prominent lack of women leaders as officers outrank enlisted.

"Instead of everyone doing the right thing, it's who can I push down to climb up myself further?"

Figure 3. Enlisted Breakdown of U.S. Armed Forces by Gender

Enlisted Breakdown, U.S. Armed Forces

Rank	Women	Men
E9	9.9%	90.1%
E8	12.4%	87.6%
E7	14.1%	85.9%
E6	14.0%	86.0%
E5	16.8%	83.2%
E4	16.8%	83.2%
E3	18.3%	81.7%
E2	16.4%	83.6%
E1	16.9%	83.1%

Gender Representation by Service[4]

While the Armed Forces as a whole have seen steady growth of active duty women personnel in recent fiscal years, the gender representation of branches are improving at disproportionate rates with the Air Force leading the way and the Marine Corps falling behind. For both officers and enlisted, the Air Force is the service with greatest average representation of women in their ranks. On the contrary, for both officers and enlisted, the Marine Corps has the lowest average gender representation and the lowest representation per rank across the services, falling almost 5-10% below the DoD average. These differences highlight service specific practices that may exude women from opportunity to advance their careers. Moreover, the varying metrics by service demonstrate that there are effective programming and initiatives that effectively promote women in the Armed Forces. While every service has much room to grow, the Air Force has increased the numbers, roles and opportunities for women in their ranks.
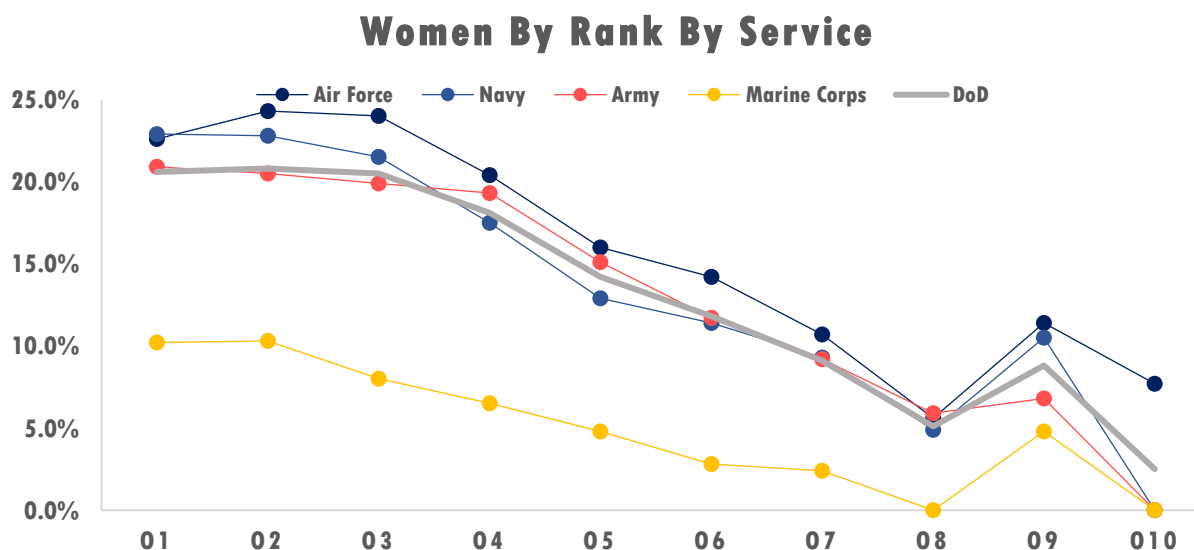
Officers by Service

For officers, the Air Force averages 15.7% active duty servicewomen followed by the Navy, 13.4%; Army, 12.9%; and finally the Marine Corps, 5.0%. At the O1-O3 levels, women represent almost one-fourth of active duty personnel in the Air Force. The top three services – Air Force, Navy, and Army – all land above or within the DoD average for gender representation at the officer level. The Marine Corps falls drastically behind the other services with 10% of active duty personnel being women at the junior officer ranks and this number steadily decreases to senior officers. While the Marine Corps has substantially less personnel than all other services, the data may highlight a disproportionate placement of female in combat roles as compared to their male

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[4] Defense Manpower Data Center, Active Duty Military Personnel by Service by Rank/Grade, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp.

peers. Assuredly, there is a culture within the Marine Corps that is not as inclusive and structurally supportive of the recruitment and retention of servicewomen.

Figure 4. Gender Representation of Women Officers by Rank and Service in U.S. Armed Forces

## Women By Rank By Service

Enlisted by Service

For enlisted personnel, the Air Force averages 20.1% active duty servicewomen followed by the Navy, 17.9%, Army, 13.6% and finally the Marine Corps, 7.7%. Similar to officer personnel data, the Air Force is the DoD leader for gender representation for enlisted servicemembers. The Air Force and Navy are far above the DoD average of 15.1% while the Army falls shortly under and the Marine Corps is significantly below. The Air Force and Navy do the best job of supporting enlisted servicewomen and set the standard for the Armed Forces. The enlisted data also reflects similar results that for all active duty personnel, there are cultures within the Air Force and Marine Corps that actively affect their abilities to retain and advance servicewomen.

"I feel a huge sense of obligation —— I put a lot of people in the Military. I don't want this to happen to any other women. It's not supposed to be like this. I know that it's not going to change things for me, but it will change things for other women in service."

Figure 5. Gender Representation of Women Enlisted by Rank and Service in U.S. Armed Forces
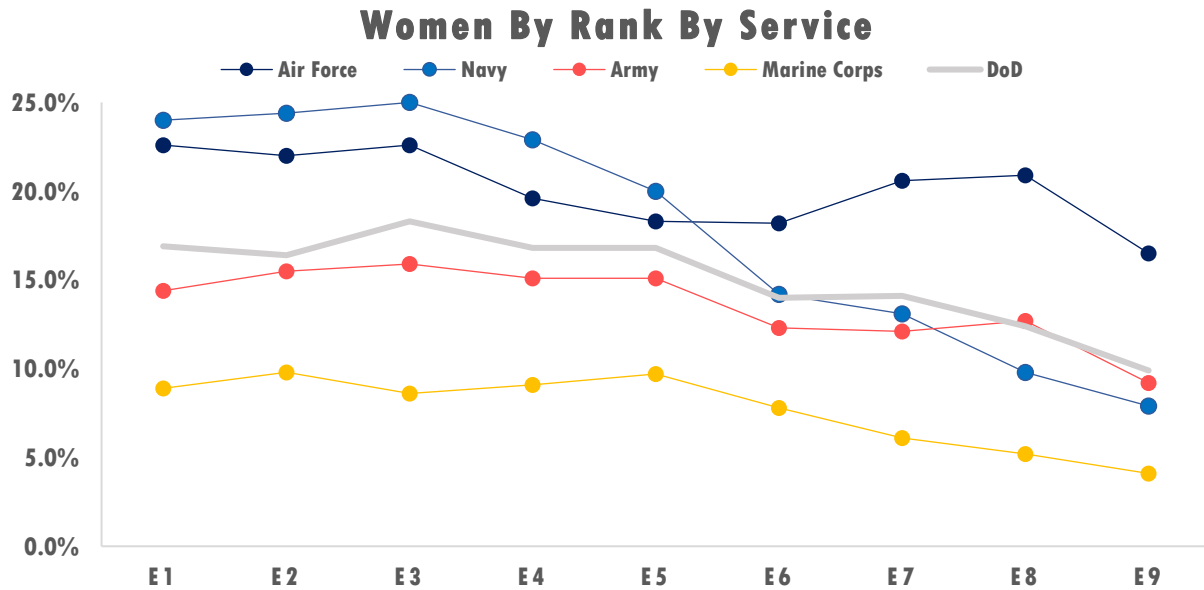
Gender Parity

There are clear impediments to the retention of women across the U.S. Armed Forces for both officer and enlisted personnel. Senior officials have acknowledged that the military could not meet its manning requirements without women, and yet these challenges remain. The key to change is in representation, accountability, operationalizing value and changing the culture. Representation starts with recruiting. It is "the goldfish pond" of diversity and inclusion where the right people with the right attitude teach the right values.[5] Starting a diverse and inclusive pipeline is an opportunity for early culture change. Beyond recruitment, accountability is essential to retention and most effective when it is an integral component of formal evaluation processes for military leadership. Metrics around recruitment, inclusive programing and retention incentivize change and can influence a culture where punitive actions go under review by command boards and inclusive behaviors are rewarded for good conduct. To develop a more gender-aware culture, services need to operationalize value by sharing critical stories about servicewomen's contributions. What is the value add of women in the military? How do women uniquely contribute to the mission of the service? A culture of gender parity includes gender supportive policies, clear lists of values and behaviors, and a studied understanding of the effects of children/parental leave on men and women.

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[5] Protect Our Defenders Strategy Lab, Anonymous Stakeholder

JOURNEY OF A FEMALE SERVICE MEMBER[6]

Data on the leadership pipeline for women in the Armed Forces sheds light into the human journey women experience as they enter and advance in the military – specifically, the challenges and obstacles they potentially face uniquely due to their gender. While the broader representation of women in the Armed Forces has steadily increased from year to year, data shows that women comprise only 17 and 16 percent of officer and enlisted populations respectively, suggesting similarities in women's trajectory across these areas. This low representation results unsurprisingly from a progressive decrease in women across the services as they move from entry to level to higher ranks in leadership. In 2018, while women represented 20.6 percent of O1 level officers and 16.9 percent of E1 enlisted servicemembers, they comprised only 3 percent of top-ranking officers and 9 percent of top-ranking enlisted servicemembers. Women even serving in top-ranking officer and enlisted roles is something to call out – in 2018, the Air Force was the only branch to have women at the O10 rank and in 2017 – the Air Force and Navy were the only branches to have women O10s. While the Air Force had the highest representation of women at the E9 enlisted level with 16.5 percent, the Marine Corps had the lowest at 4.1 percent. Uniquely, women are more represented in top-ranking enlisted positions than in top-ranking officer ones. Yet, the strongest trend is clear across qualitative and quantitative – women are increasingly less likely than men to advance across all branches.

> ## "It takes a lot of internal strength to do something different from everyone else around you – and be willing to say when something's not right."

Representation of racial and ethnic minorities also decreases progressively across services and rank starting at entry level, suggesting the presence of even more obstacles for women of color who likely struggle simultaneously from biases associated with both gender and skin color. While data provides the what and the when for women's stifled advancement in the Armed Forces, ethnographic research helps fill in the how and the why - the more human story associated with why women struggle to advance in the military and how real-life challenges play out and hold women back. Their stories move from recruitment to training to advancement, or possible separation from the military – with more women than men, across all four branches, ultimately

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[6] Defense Manpower Data Center, Active Duty Military Personnel by Service by Rank/Grade, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp.

separating from the military and women being consistently more likely to separate compared to men after various years of service.

For the purposes of this study, over twenty women across varying ranks and branches of the Armed Forces were interviewed about their experiences. These interviews revealed that for many women, during their first touchpoints with the military as recruits, the Armed Forces was painted as a place where they would receive a high-quality education and hand-pick a job that best fits their interest and needs. Recruiters also emphasize an equal playing field – a place where women can advance and be promoted on pace with their male counterparts. These messages resonate with women, as the promise of education, equality in advancement, and independence all represent reasons women report joining the military. Women also note that serving their country and, if from a military family, following in their family's footsteps also contribute to why they chose the military as a next step. Yet, at early points in their journey – whether in an academy or in training – women begin to sense the social and environmental cues that make them feel like they don't belong. They're called out for being attractive or too feminine, they hear soldiers being told to 'not run like a girl', they sit through harassment trainings where facilitators laugh and make jokes, and they're told 'not be that girl' when it comes to reporting situations of bias, harassment, or assault. Early on, women report facing a pressure to do everything they can to differentiate themselves from their gender – they are made to feel, both through indirect environmental cues and explicit comments and behaviors from leaders, that they inherently do not belong.[7]

"Being in a male dominated field, we don't have a voice. We can't complain about it because we'll be seen as too sensitive, and we can't be sensitive while serving."

This early contrast between perceived opportunity and real-life experience in the military suggests why, across all military branches, women separate at higher rates than men and generally represent increasingly lower proportions of leadership as one moves up the ranks. It is important to acknowledge that as service members reach higher ranks, greater scrutiny is

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[7] Ethnographic interview data with active duty and separated women service members from the Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps, 2018

applied to the promotees. At lower ranks some promotions can be characterized as "automatic", in that if a service member meets certain empirical performance criteria, they are typically promoted. This structure may play a role in the decrease of women service members at certain ranks. The starkest drop in representation of women occurs from O4-O5 for women officers and from E5-E6 for women enlisted. Specifically, in 2018, women comprised 18.1 percent of officers at the O4 level and then only 14.2 percent of officers at the O5 level. In the enlisted population, a similar trend occurs when women move from E5-E6 levels. For example, women in the Army make up 15.1 percent of E5 level personnel and then only 12.3 of those at E6. Trends suggest that the challenges women face become particularly critical or consequential at this stage of advancement. Qualitative research with women servicemembers illustrates that these stages of advancement are those that rely most on interpersonal relationships and networks – both elements where biases can seep in to impact decision-making. Rather than promotions resulting from testing or passing specific protocol as in previous levels, promotions at these levels suddenly start to depend on who you know and what those people think of your perceived competency and leadership ability. It is the stage of promotion that tests one's reputation and whether one has higher-ranking leaders that champion them. Women share that physical strength, weapon knowledge, and likeability served as stronger indicators of leadership ability than ethics, behavior, or actual demonstration of leadership ability at this stage of advancement – a distorted assessment that benefits men more than women. These opportunities for advancement, as women share in interviews, are those where women with strong qualifications and leadership ability are passed over for men that have high physical testing scores (e.g. "Oh, you got 300 on your PT? You're going to make a good leader"). Women shared that higher-ranking leaders would say they weren't qualified or prepared to advance, even when those women did have all the necessary recommendations and sponsors. Ultimately, at this general stage, promotions start to depend on subjective opinions – an area ripe for bias and gendered perceptions of competency.

Beyond this shift in performance assessment a specific point in the journey, women also report other obstacles that stifle their advancement as they try to move up in ranks. Ethnographic data suggests that women face different types of challenges throughout their journey, specifically those that relate to job and assignment opportunities, gender bias, family policies and practices, and sexual harassment and assault. Data and ethnographic research highlight the many ways in which these challenges can individually and concurrently pose challenges for women as they seek to advance.[8]

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[8] Ethnographic interview data with active duty and separated women service members from the Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps, 2018

Job and Assignment Opportunities

Job and assignment opportunities representing a challenge for women aligns with what women shared in interviews regarding a broader lack of sponsorship and support for women. Women shared the difficulty in finding a mentor or sponsor in other leaders (likely due to gender bias and no formal sponsorship programs) and found it even more difficult to find supportive women leaders. The competitive environment in the Armed Forces, both within and across genders, created a constant sense that, according to one woman, "instead of everyone doing the right thing, it's who can I push down to climb up myself further?"[9] This observation was continuously validated in interviews, where women noted how the notion that women were inferior cause women to be pit up against one another and disincentivized higher-ranking women to support junior women. Interviewees shared that this environment is ultimately counterproductive in helping create a more equal playing field for women, creating difficulty for women to find leaders that would champion them for the right opportunities and at times of promotion. As mentioned earlier, even when they did have this support, women were many times passed up by male counterparts with stronger reputations or physical strength.

Gender bias and sexual harassment also intersect with this challenge, as some women shared that they were forced into staying in certain job assignments after reporting discrimination or assault. In these scenarios, they were forced to stay in an assignment with their attacker, or forced to relocate somewhere else, both with little regard to what was best for their career or advancement.

Gender Bias

Ethnographic research with women across all four services of the military suggest there exists strong pressure to not be feminine or emphasize their gender or femininity. More, according to interviews with women servicemembers, leaders across all ranks participate in the perpetuation of gender stereotypes. This results in gendered comments of ability (e.g. "Don't run like a girl"), women being pit up against one another in relation to men, (e.g. "She must've done something to get where she is," implying the use of sexual leverage instead of strong professional performance), and the broader normalization of the belief that women are inferior – reinforced by both men and women service members in daily micro-behaviors. Further demonstrating the gender norms imposed on women, ethnographic research highlighted how women feel that they are not viewed as 'talent' but rather as 'women' – where their gender plays a primary obstacle in the effort to advance. The stigma of being a woman in the military appeared as a consistent challenge – with biased behaviors, language, assignments, and discrimination all stifling.

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[9] Ethnographic interview data with active duty and separated women service members from the Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps, 2018

Family Policies and Practices[10]

Women across all levels constantly face decisions regarding marriage and children, and how to balance that as a woman in the military. According to Military Services data, between 2007 and 2016, women represented 65 to 83 percent of parenthood-related discharges – highlighting the magnitude to which women's retention and advancement in the military is influenced by familial decisions. While data from this study doesn't isolate where these decisions might make the most impact in terms of attrition, interviews with current and former women servicemembers strongly validate the lurking presence of this decision as an obstacle in their journey. When already faced with gender biases and the socialized belief that women are inferior in the military, the choice to get married or start a family represents an even further explicit denotation of being a woman. Women shared they were asked about when they would get married or have children and were warned not to 'go off and get pregnant' once they got promoted.

Beyond the explicit pressure and stigma associated with their familial decisions, many women reported leaving the military due to the lack of flexibility and work-life balance. One woman shared that during the two times she experienced miscarriages, she was receiving calls about work and no support that helped her manage personally or professionally. A strong theme in ethnographic research was whether one had a supportive leader – women shared that when they had a leader that considered their needs as a new mother, listened during their frustrations or challenges, and helped with executing a balance between work and family.

> **"My Master Chief was the only person I knew to turn to when I had questions because I trusted her. I honestly don't know where I'd be today if she wasn't my supervisor – probably not in the military."**

Without this support, women shared that having a military career and having a family were incompatible. This sentiment drives home the impact that the military's poor family policies, low flexibility, unsupportive leadership, and negative stigma can have on retention of women – particularly given that familial decisions disproportionately affect them. When faced with these challenges, women seem to feel progressively pushed out.

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[10] DACOWITS 2017 Annual Report,
https://dacowits.defense.gov/Portals/48/Documents/Reports/2017/Annual%20Report/DACOWITS%202017%20Annual%20Report_FINAL.PDF?ver=2018-02-28-222504-937

Sexual Harassment and Assault[11]

Data highlights the undeniable evidence of misogyny, sexual harassment and assault in the military a domineering force in pushing women out as they try to advance.[12] Interviews highlighted that while inferior views of women certainly play a role, the root of the problem also exists in how the military teaches others about its policies and attitudes on the topic. Women share stories of being forcibly discharged, repeatedly harassed and assaulted despite sharing with leadership, and being deemed mentally and emotionally incompetent to serve after trying to report their assault. Many women service members shared stories of leaders not believing them, retaliating against them, or forcing them to continue working with those that assaulted them. Women also repeatedly discussed how their attackers would receive no formal punishment and later get promoted or retire honorably, while the women were many times facing ruined reputations and forced discharge. Some women also discussed the lackadaisical and jovial attitude higher-ranking leaders or peers showed toward the topic, facilitating sexual harassment trainings with crude jokes and laughter.[13] These stories represent the strong cues women pick up over time that assault and physical and sexual violence is not taken seriously before, during, or after it happens[14].

"I had no idea where to turn, or who I could trust for support."

Similarly, women shared that a key part of this challenge is the military's lack of support in believing these stories: a majority of women interviewed cited that the single most important thing the military could have done to keep them in service was to listen to them, believe their experiences, and provide them the support they needed to get back to the job after a situation of assault or harassment. Instead, what they faced was cynicism, discrimination, forced exits, and sometimes, even further and more vicious harassment and retaliation.[15]

These challenges each highlight the individual and intersectional ways in which women are held back in their journeys, and paint a starkly clear picture of why the military struggles with retention of women leaders across both enlisted and officer populations. The Navy, the Air

[11] SWAN 2016 Annual Survey, https://www.servicewomen.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/02/SWANannual2016_online.pdf

[12] "Sexual Assault and Harassment in the U.S. Military." RAND Military Workplace Study, 2014. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR800/RR870z7/RAND_RR870z7.pdf

[13] "Retaliation Against Sexual Assault Survivors in the US Military", Human Rights Watch, https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/05/18/embattled/retaliation-against-sexual-assault-survivors-us-military#

[14] Ethnographic interview data with active duty and separated women service members from the Navy, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps, 2018

[15]Department of Defense Annual Report of Sexual Assault in the Military, 2016, http://sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/FY15_Annual/FY15_Annual_Report_on_Sexual_Assault_in_the_Military.pdf

Force, and the enlisted are areas that demonstrate the largest representation of women and the best retention of women in higher rankings – this data suggests that the Armed Forces could benefit from further study into the factors in those environments that enable higher retention of women and higher representation in leadership ranks and the related barriers hindering progress in this regard.

> "On my second deployment, my work center supervisor knew I was having mental health problems after my sexual assault. After I went to medical and was being sent back to San Diego, [my supervisor] locked me out of my office. That treatment was worse than my sexual assault."

BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN SECTORS

There are many best practices regarding recruitment, retention, eliminating gender bias and preventing sexual harassment and assault that have proven to be effective that should be considered for implementation in the United States Armed Forces. This section outlines several best practices within the United States Air Force, foreign militaries, and the civilian sector.

Armed Forces

United States Air Force - In an effort to increase diversity in higher levels of leadership, the Air Force introduced an initiative to establish diverse slates for key military developmental positions among several other diversity and inclusion initiatives. This initiative requires that at least one qualified, diverse candidate be included in the pool of Airmen considered for key military developmental positions. This presents diverse candidates a greater opportunity to be considered for such positions but does not mandate hiring decisions[16]. The approach that the Air Force has adopted to promote diversity is based on the National Football League's (NFL) Rooney Rule. In 2003, the NFL instituted the Rooney Rule, which requires NFL teams to interview at least one candidate who is a racial/ethnic minority for vacant head coaching positions. From 2003 to

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[16] "Tri-Sig 2016 Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives." United States Air Force. https://www.af.mil/Portals/1/documents/diversity/Tri-Sig%202016%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion%20Initiatives%20-%2030%20Sep%2016.pdf?ver=2016-09-30-111308-717

2011, the number of minority head coaches jumped from one to eight[17]. With policies in place to penalize for lack of compliance, this initiative has proven to have a positive impact on representation in the NFL.[18]

Foreign Militaries[19]

It is worth examining successful strategies that foreign militaries have implemented to recruit and retain women. The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) requested a literature review to explore successful strategies the military services of other countries have used, which includes four case studies of militaries who have women serving in combat: Australia, Canada, Norway, and South Africa. This section highlights a few unique strategies in two of the four case studies.

Australia: The Australian Defense Force (ADF) has been exemplary in promoting transparency on their strategies to improve the experience of female service members and their progress on them. The ADF releases an annual "Women in the ADF Report" detailing their progress toward recruitment and retention goals in order to hold themselves accountable. A few recruitment strategies that the Australian Air Force has implemented in each branch include:

1. Air Force: An experiential camp for young women aged 16-24 to get a hands-on experience to increase awareness of potential Air Force employment opportunities.
2. Army: An Army Pre-Conditioning Course and Army Physical Fitness Program pre-enlistment training to assist female recruits meet initial fitness requirements.
3. Navy: A "Women in the Navy" webpage profiling current female service members in nontraditional roles and job categories.

Canada: The Canadian Armed Forces has faced significant challenges in recruiting and retaining women, similar to the United States Armed Forces. However, they implemented new strategies in 2016, specifically related to increasing flexibility for female service members including:

1. Flexible parental leave: The Canadian Armed Forces offers up to 35 weeks for parental leave, which can be taken any time during the 52 weeks after the day the child is born or placed with an adoptive family. The eligibility period is extended to 109 weeks for service members who cannot collect all their parental benefits during the 52-week eligibility period because of an imperative military requirement.
2. Childcare: On every CAF base, a Military Family Resource Center exists, which offers childcare to military parents. These centers provide regular and emergency childcare and offer discounted rates for childcare that exceeds 24 hours because of lengthened shifts

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[17] "The number of black head coaches in the NFL is once again on the rise." Business Insider, January 2017. https://www.businessinsider.com/nfl-head-coaches-race-2017-1
[18] "Rethinking The NFL's Rooney Rule For More Diversity At The Top." Five Thirty Eight, May 2016. https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/rethinking-the-nfls-rooney-rule-for-more-diversity-at-the-top/
[19] "Foreign Military Strategies to Recruit and Retain Women." DACOWITS. May 2017. https://dacowits.defense.gov/Portals/48/Documents/General%20Documents/RFI%20Docs/March2017/Insight%20RFI%203.pdf?ver=2017-03-17-113845-857

or other emergencies. In order to ensure that the center meets the needs of its community, each center has a locally elected board.

Civilian Sector

Federal Government[20]: While women make up only 14.6 percent of executives in the private sector, women hold 34% of Senior Executive Services positions within the Federal workforce. This disproportionate representation of women in leadership can be attributed to recent government diversity initiatives. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) developed the Recruitment, Engagement, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Roadmap as a data-driven strategy to help agencies recruit, hire, develop, and retain women in the Federal Workforce. OPM is leveraging the REDI Roadmap, the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, and other sources to collect data for its inclusion efforts.

Technology Sector[21]: Of any industry, the technology industry has among the lowest representation of women, with women making up 36 percent of entry-level positions, higher than only the energy and basic materials industries. In order to combat this low representation of women, a number of large companies like Facebook, Pinterest, Amazon, and Microsoft have implemented the Rooney Rule to be more inclusive in their hiring practices by interviewing at least one woman or underrepresented minority for a position. Despite it taking longer than usual to find candidates and hire, the initiative has paid off for several companies.

Cross-Industry: Other cross-industry organizations have implemented innovative solutions to curtail gender bias, discrimination, and other barriers to inclusion and diversity across their unique workforces. At American Express (AMEX), senior leadership implemented a "colleague lifecycle assessment" to benchmark existing diversity and inclusion efforts across the company and learn about the unique barriers that its employees face as they seek to advance.[22] Other large organizations like Johnson & Johnson have promoted leadership and company-wide engagement by launching a series of live video conferences on mutual perceptions, diversity and respect.[23] Meanwhile, international chemistry corporation BASF has ensured that talent metrics reflect inclusive leadership – providing employees with a dashboard that gauges D&I progress by posing questions about their thoughts on the hiring process and retention trends.[24] These

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[20] "Women in Federal Service, A Seat At Every Table." U.S. Office of Personnel Management. 2014. https://www.opm.gov/fevs/archive/2014files/2014_Womens_Report.pdf

[21] "Tech Firms Borrow Football Play to Increase Hiring of Women." Wall Street Journal, September 2016. https://www.wsj.com/articles/tech-firms-borrow-football-play-to-increase-hiring-of-women-1474963562

[22] "Why Many Leaders Don't Build Inclusive Cultures." Forbes. November 30, 2018. https://www.forbes.com/sites/kathycaprino/2018/11/30/why-many-leaders-dont-build-inclusive-cultures-and-how-amex-aims-to-change-that/#7cf195a07e99

[23] "Johnson & Johnson Takes Top Spot on 2017 Thompson Reuters Diversity & Inclusion Index." 2017. https://www.jnj.com/latest-news/johnson-johnson-takes-top-spot-on-2017-thomson-reuters-diversity-inclusion-index

[24] "BASF Talent Diversity & Inclusion Dashboard". August 2014. http://www.diversityjournal.com/14058-basfs-talentdiversity-inclusion-dashboard/

organizations have each seen improvements in reported gender bias, discrimination, and overall inclusion and diversity by focusing on meaningful recruitment and training, engaging their workforces in the process of developing solutions, holding leadership accountable, and engaging in culture change through reflective performance metrics.

These are just a few examples of initiatives and policies that have been working well to establish a culture of inclusion and advancement for women leaders. As military inclusion advocates seek to improve the experience of women service members across the United States Armed Forces, these initiatives may serve as a driving platform for additional policy proposals brought forth to key decisionmakers.

KEY DRIVERS OF DIVERSITY IN THE ARMED FORCES

Deloitte and POD have partnered to identify key factors that play a role in female service members' experiences. Through extensive interviewing and a Strategic Visioning Lab, we were able to align on three key factors that may play a role in improving retention for women and in increasing their prevalence in leadership across the Armed Forces. An increased focus on these factors in future initiatives that can drive improved inclusion and diversity across the branches, and improve experiences for women service members as they seek to move into leadership positions in the military.

(1) **Recruitment & Training.** Current recruiting practices do not focus on improving retention for women service members. In fact, the Marine Corps maintains a segregated boot camp for new recruits. This leaves female service members at a disadvantage as they are separated from their peers during basic training.

(2) **Leadership Accountability & Transparency.** Leaders in the Armed Forces are not effectively incentivized to change the culture surrounding implicit gender bias and sexual harassment and assault. Some women leaders report that they felt they needed to "shed their woman-ness," in order to advance in the ranks. Other women leaders reported being provided less opportunities for career growth due to implicit gender bias from their superiors, even when the woman service member was surpassing her male colleagues in performance across multiple field metrics. Not only does this indicate that women don't feel comfortable bringing their authentic selves to their jobs, but it indicates there has been little meaningful movement in changing the male-dominated culture and attitudes that devalue and degrade women of the military through pragmatic policies and accountability mechanisms that would ensure leadership is actively engaged in culture

change. Encouraging improved measures to increase transparency and hold leaders accountable for supporting an inclusive culture is a step towards making lasting change.

(3) **Culture and Community.** Gender disparities in the Armed Forces has been a challenge for some time. Though some branches may have already begun to take initial steps towards addressing this challenge, a larger cultural shift is necessary to accelerate meaningful change across the military. Female service members have noted that they are not comfortable approaching leaders who they fear are embodying the "status quo." Leaders must be encouraged to expand their understanding of the military experience for diverse members, in order to provide them the support they need to thrive.

METHODOLOGY

The Industry Study Report provides Protect our Defenders with in-depth, qualitative and quantitative data analysis –enabling the organization to better understand its target audiences and tell meaningful stories about POD's potential impact to improve representation for women in leadership across the Armed Forces, while benchmarking standards and best practices across the industry.

Determine Scope

The Deloitte team worked with Protect Our Defenders to determine the scope and potential research topics of the Industry Study.

Assess Feasibility

An initial data search informed a preliminary understanding of the data availability for the Industry Study. The Deloitte team shared potential data sources and a list of feasible deliverables with POD based on initial findings.

Validate Research Topics

The Deloitte team conducted an analysis planning session with POD to define the parameters of the Industry Study, confirm the research topics, and share knowledge of additional databases and other reliable sources of information.

Collect Data

The Deloitte team utilized many sources to collect data for the Industry Study, including:

- Open-source DOD workforce, employee engagement, and org. culture data
- Social Media Sentiment Analysis (leveraging QUID platform)
- Data provided by Protect our Defenders
- Insights provided through ethnographic interviews with POD stakeholders, as available