



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Women Veterans Forum

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Women have formally been part of the United States Armed Forces since the inception of the Army Nurse Corps in 1901, but have informally served since the inception of our nation's military. Since 1901, women of all ages, ranks, and levels of authority have entered every branch of service, made significant contributions, and suffered the same sacrifices as men.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recognizes the importance of caring for our women Veterans and VA is getting better at serving women. More needs to be done, however, not only in the area of program development, but also in policy, strategy, and research space to understand how we can better support women Veterans. On February 7, 2017, the VA Office of Enterprise Integration and the University of Southern California Center for Innovation and Research for Veterans and Military Families convened a one-day roundtable to collaborate on policy and research with a special focus on women Veterans. Ms. Kayla Williams provided the group with a mental model that is helpful in framing women veteran issues. Dr. Marilyn Flynn, Dean, Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, provided the keynote address. Several University of Southern California professors provided key questions on various topics related to women Veterans and based on research they have completed.

Approximately fifty participants, representing a range of experience and viewpoints from federal government agencies, the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and academic institutions attended the event. These participants provided firsthand insights on the opportunities and challenges facing women Veterans through two roundtable discussions on policy and on research.

## A Growing Population

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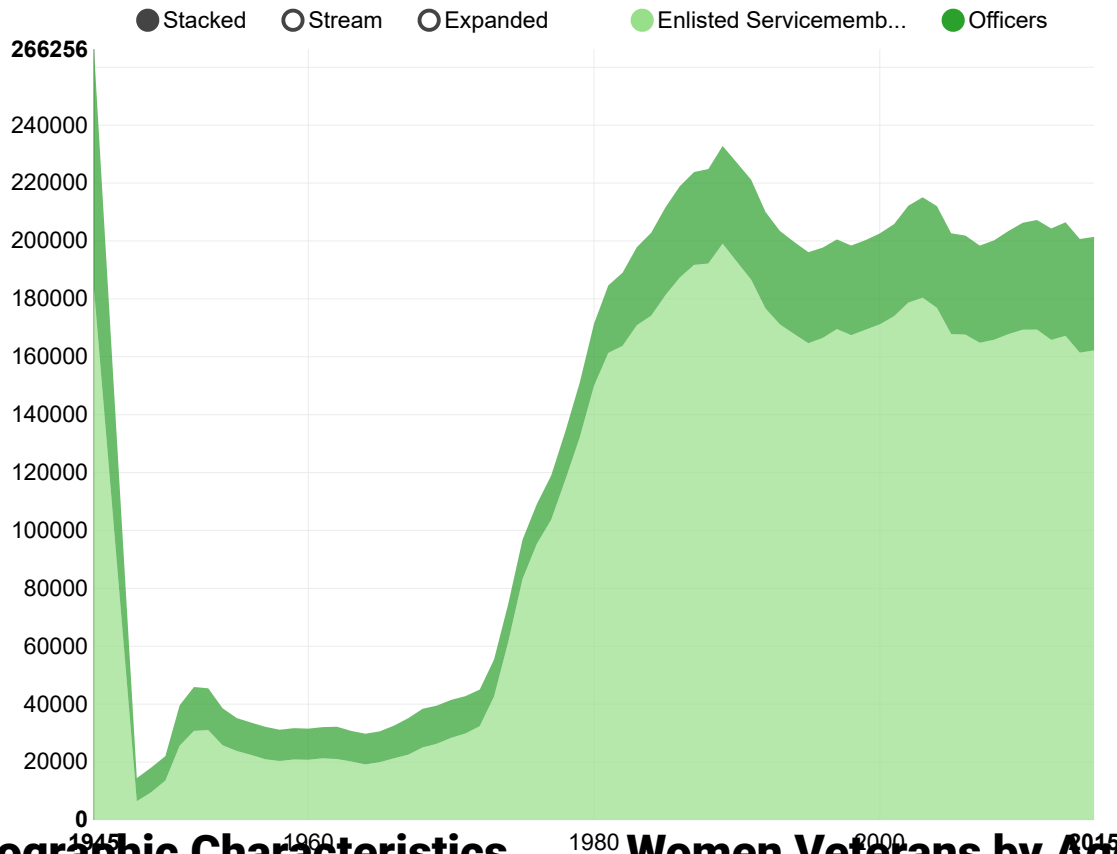
Since the time of the All-Volunteer Force, the number of women serving in the military has grown. Ultimately, these women make the transition from Servicemember to Veteran. In 2015, women comprised 9.4% of the total Veteran population in the United States at 2.05 million total female Veterans. By 2043, women are projected to make up 16.3 percent of all living Veterans, at a projected 2.4 million.

In 2015, 19 percent of women Veterans were Black, compared with 12 percent of non-Veteran women. African American women are also overrepresented compared to African American men in the military. In contrast, the percentage of women Veterans who were Hispanic was almost half that of non-Veterans (9 percent compared with 16 percent). The percentage of women Veterans who were Asian is less than half that of non-Veterans (2 percent compared with 5.5 percent).

## Female Active-Duty Military Personnel: 1945 to 2010

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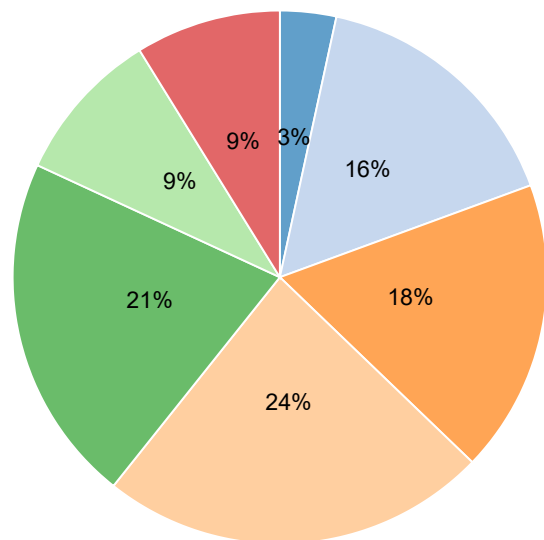
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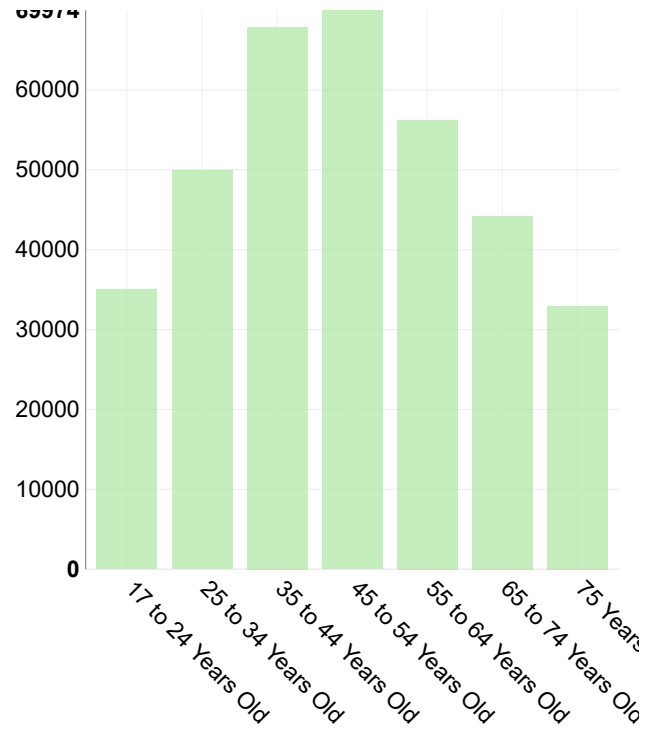
## Demographic Characteristics Women Veterans by Age Group

- Women represented about 9.4 percent of the total Veteran population in 2015.
- The median age of women Veterans in 2015 was 50, compared with 46 for non-Veteran women.
- Generally, as the percentage of Hispanics in the general population rises, their representation in the military rises as well, therefore the percentage of Hispanic women Veterans is expected to increase in the future.
- Women Veterans were more likely to have ever married than non-Veteran women. In 2015, 84 percent of women Veterans were currently married, divorced, widowed, or separated compared with 72 percent of non-Veteran women.
- In 2015, 23.4 percent of all women Veterans were currently divorced compared with 12.6 percent of non-Veteran women.
- In 2015, 28.6 percent of all women Veterans under the age of 65 had children 17 years old or younger living at home, and 29.9 percent of non-Veteran women had children 17 years old or younger living at home.

- 17 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 and older



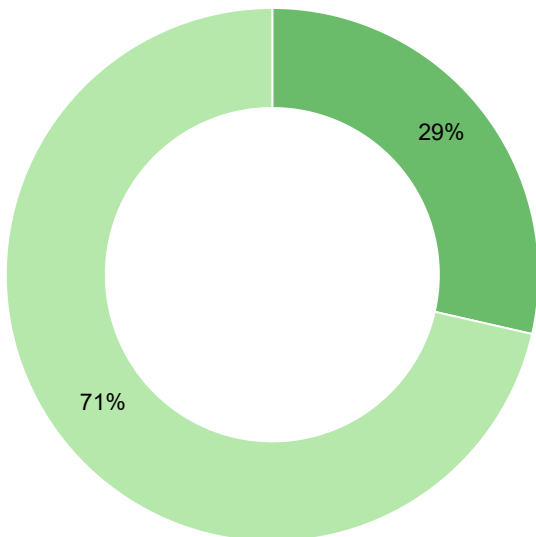
## Median Household Income by Age Group



## Working age women with children under 18:

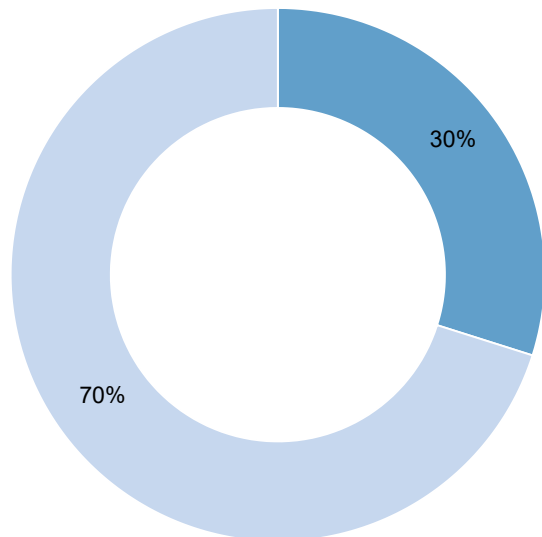
### Veterans

● Have children under ... ● Have no children

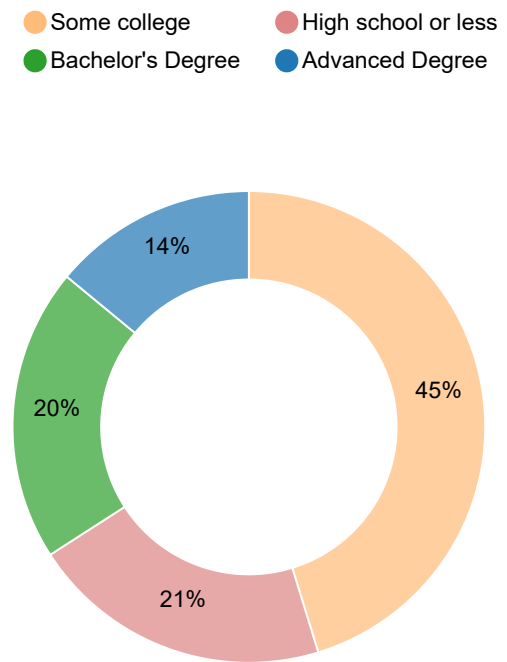
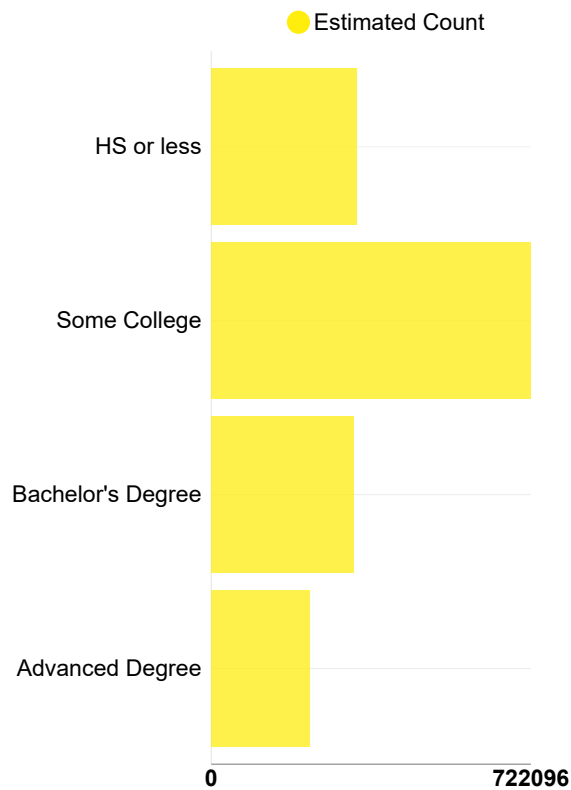


### Non-Veterans

● Have children under ... ● Have no children



## Women Veterans' Educational Attainment, 2015



## Number of Women Who Served and Casualty Counts, by Wartime Period

Military Conflict	Dates	Number Served	Casualties	Ratio
Spanish-American War	1898 to 1902	1,500	22	1.5%
World War I	1917 to 1918	36,000	500	1.4%
World War II	1940 to 1947	400,000	400	.1%
Korean War	1950 to 1955	50,000	2	.004%
Vietnam Era	1964 to 1975	265,000	8	.003%
Pre-9/11	1990 to 2001	374,000	15	.004%
Post-9/11	2001 to 2015	700,000	172	.02%



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