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**Hopeless to Homeless to Hired to Housing: Helping transition our homeless veteran heroes into American communities by identifying the potential short-term and long-term problems and risks that lower enlisted servicemen and servicewomen have when leaving the military that can lead to housing insecurity and homelessness in the post 9-11 era**

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*"Hopeless to Homeless to Hired to Housing: Helping transition our homeless veteran heroes into American communities by identifying the potential short-term and long-term problems and risks that lower enlisted servicemen and servicewomen have when leaving the military that can lead to housing insecurity and homelessness in the post 9-11 era"*

by Jeff W. Walsh  
Illinois State University

Abstract

My focus is what happens to our military men and women after they come home from wars “over there” and what happens after their last day when they put on civilian clothes and decide to hang up the uniform for good. The Vietnam War ended 50 years ago, yet the effects on those who came home is still being felt in 2023. Nearly every country in the world has a standing Army. America has had one since its inception in 1776. Our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have fought bravely stateside and around the world. from General George Washington’s soldiers at Yorktown, the last major battle of the Revolutionary War to Colonel Chamberlain’s defense of Little Round Top at Gettysburg by the 20<sup>th</sup> Maine Infantry Volunteers, our military has fought bravely. From the Marines at the Battle of Belleau Wood in WWI to the Army Air Corps and Doolittle’s Raiders over Japan in WWII our military has fought bravely. The Korean War started in 1953 and never ended. The Gulf War. 9-11. Iraq. Afghanistan. There will always be wars and will always be a need to help care for and help integrate combat veterans back into everyday society in America. Both the soldier and his family will need help. A recent motto of Department of Veteran’s Affairs office was borrowed from Abraham Lincoln- “To help care for him who have borne the battle, and his widow and his orphan”.

The title of capstone is also a preview of my research: “One Homeless Hero is Too Many: Hopeless to Homeless to Hired to Housing. Eliminating housing insecurity by getting the right job and the right job training the right veteran. Quantifying the Potential Short-Term and Long-Term Problems and Risks That Lower Enlisted Servicemen and

Servicewomen Have When Leaving the Military That Can Lead to Future Food Insecurity, Job Insecurity, Housing Insecurity and Homelessness in the Post 9-11 Era". On any given day, in the world's richest country, 1 in 4 Americans who experience chronic homelessness and housing insecurities are Veterans. Unfortunately, government initiatives from previous administrations have not always directly addressed the root causes of veteran homelessness and veteran unemployment, merely throwing money at the problem. However, homelessness in the veteran population is preventable. America's heroes return from combat zones from all corners of the globe trained as tankers, infantrymen, and artillerymen only to find no equivalent job in the civilian labor market leading directly to unemployment and housing insecurity.

My original hypothesis back when I started thinking about my capstone is as follows- with the proper active-duty job/career training and their wealth of knowledge and experience, America's veterans can significantly contribute to the American GDP and workforce. If we can use their skills appropriately in the 21st Century civilian workplace, we would likely see a significant reduction in veteran homelessness.

The Department of Defense has an internship program specifically for servicemen and servicewomen about to leave the service. Skillbridge is a program designed to address military skillset insecurities. The Department of Defense program Skillbridge is a military employment initiative started in 2014 open to all military branches that provides internships in a variety of civilian job fields. The soldier, sailor, Airman, Marine or Coast Guard personnel is allowed to participate in this program just before they separate from the service at discretion of their respective unit commanders.

I have looked at both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of Skillbridge to ascertain how well the program is working overall in helping eliminate job insecurity. In this study, I examine how the types of transferrable job skills post 9-11 veterans received during training affect their housing insecurity and homelessness once they return stateside. For my research methods, my research methods and research design have changed from 2021 to 2023 and I will explore that fully in my capstone.

Strides are being made. The author mentions success stories in both Texas and Montana. Since 2010, the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness in the U.S. has been cut almost in half, from 74,087 in 2010 to 37,252 in 2020 (U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, 2023).. My original dependent variable was a concern for lower-enlisted combat arms homelessness. My original independent variable is transferable military job skills. My control variables are Army combat arms veterans, PTSD, income, education, gender, and age. I used surveys and the quantitative method to test my hypothesis. I use deductive reasoning and specific research questions to learn about military job training and military jobs held by post 9-11 soldiers who rank E-1 to E-4 while on active duty. Finally, I rely on qualitative interviews of officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding any trends, patterns, and insights regarding veteran job insecurity and veteran housing insecurity. All of America's displaced veterans deserve the opportunity to go from hopeless to homeless to hired to housing. Finally, my capstone reads as an inverted triangle from the macro to the micro...and from the general to the specific\*. 580,000 homeless every night in America is a large number (HUD, 2020) yet is less than a fraction of 1% of the America's 330 million citizens and only 6.5% of the population who identify as veterans.

*Preface- Abstract*

identify necessary military jargon and military definitions before getting into the meat and potatoes of the veteran homeless experience. I also felt the need to introduce homelessness in different strata of society before getting into the nuts and bolts of veteran homelessness. To fully understand the concepts and facts I have presented for you today, I found it necessary to give mini-history lessons sometimes dating back to WWI and the Great Depression to place things in a historical context places today's veteran and today's bouts with homelessness in a proper perspective.

### About the Author

Jeff Walsh was in the military for 15 years and has been a veteran for 18 years. In the military, Jeff Walsh served in the Army with 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division as a Combat Medic at Fort Riley, Kansas and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division at Camp Casey, Korea. He also drove an Ambulance and worked in the hospital. In 1996, Walsh found himself without permanent housing. Walsh wrote about his own bouts with housing insecurity. (1)

Jeff Walsh has written articles for the Stars and Stripes (“10 Reasons to Stay In the Army”, 2001), Army Times (“10 Reasons to Get Out of the Army”, 2004), the Fort Sam Houston Post (A Mother and Daughter Join the Service Together, 2002) and for the Military Veterans in Journalism blog (2). Mr. Walsh has a cousin who served as an Army doctor and an uncle who served in the Merchant Marines.

Walsh is an advocate to eliminate both domestic homelessness.... especially veteran homelessness) and the international homelessness of refugee displacement. In Jeff Walsh’s eyes.... The word *refugee* is an acronym for opportunity (3). In Jeff Walsh’s eyes the word R.E.F.U.G.E.E. stands for Remarkable, Emboldened, Fascinating, Unique, Gifted, Enterprising and Earnest. As both a former soldier and a former Peace Corps volunteer Jeff Walsh believes that there are many ways one can serve one’s country with honor and dignity.

(1) [An Older Homeless First-Generation College Student – Euphemism 17.1 Fall 2021 \(illinoisstate.edu\)](https://www.illinoisstate.edu/17.1-fall-2021/euphemism/)

(2) <https://www.mvj.network/an-army-veterans-reflection-for-this-memorial-day-weekend/> .

(3) [The Peace Corps Community for Refugees | RPCV Voices: Providing On-the-Ground Support for Ukrainian Refugees in Poland \(pcc4refugees.org\)](https://pcc4refugees.org/)



"Homeless to Hopeless to Hired to Housing: One Homeless Hero is too many. Quantifying the Potential Short-Term and Long-Term Problems and Risks That Lower Enlisted Servicemen and Servicewomen Have When Leaving the Military That Can Lead to Future Food Insecurity, Job Insecurity, Housing Insecurity and Homelessness in the Post 9-11 Era"

By Jeff Walsh





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The author would also like to thank his cousin Roger Decook for his advice and support. Decook was an Army Doctor in Vietnam and went on to a civilian career at Good Samaritan hospital in Downers Grove, Illinois. The author would like to thank his father Dennis Walsh who recently turned 88 and has been tirelessly following the progress of this capstone over the last two years. Thank you, Congressman John Garamendi of California, for your work with the Committee on Armed Services and the Reauthorization Act for the Peace Corps as service, strength and diplomacy are of utmost importance in America's future. Finally, thank you for your continued to our country service combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth. Thank you to legislative assistant Grace Cason and your entire staff for setting up meetings for our Peace Corps and military advocacy in March of 2023.

Executive Summary

The persistent abandonment and lack of consistent funding and sporadic government support has resulted in an ever-growing homelessness crisis among the U.S. veteran community. Though many agencies are involved in tackling the veterans' homelessness crisis, their efforts are more than not combined efforts- often a matter of the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. Well intentioned government efforts since presidential administrations since the Truman era in post WWII have led to mixed results. To quantify the problem of abandoned homeless.

veterans on American communities, veteran's families and each individual homeless veteran requires three analyses: 1) an analysis of what exactly led up to veteran homeless during the transition of being a servicemen and the life away from the military including the on-base military preparation programs about jobs, housing, education and VA benefits that are designed to ease the transition, 2) a detailed look at the myriad of programs from both the government and civilian enterprises willing to give a soldier, sailor, airman, Marine or Coast Guard personnel a "hand-up" not a hand out. Many of these programs- are aimed at both the veteran and their families and include both mental health help and mental health counseling. Communities around the country are taking a "housing first" approach with both the general homeless population and the veteran population and 3) specific and targeted help for the job-insecure, housing-insecure and food-insecure as these three factors are a potential gateway to veteran homelessness and a homeless veteran family. Veteran homelessness is a complete disservice to the man or woman who serviced their country honorably. The chronic homeless relocate to warmer climate to avoid the

harsh winters of the Great Plains, the Midwest and the Northeast. California is just 1 of 50 states in the Union yet now contains 1 out of 5 of the United States homeless population.

The homeless in tent cities are left unidentified and uncared for- unable to self-advocate for programs that they don't know exist. There is no regular hospital "continuum of care" team looking out for these underserved Americans. Without a regular continuum of care team of often nameless and faceless homeless veterans, they can't receive the regular mental health counseling, drug counseling, alcohol counseling and job assistance that they need. To help stake a sizable foothold in the elimination of veteran homelessness the following recommendations:

- 1) There needs to be regular and consistent advertising on VA programs on the radio, television and social media outlets.
- 2) If the veteran does not want housing and wants to stay in tent city- label their tent with their name and provide regular check-ups on their well-being
- 3) Find a way to eliminate the "siloing" of well-meaning government agencies (FEMA, HUD, etc.) to require each vet homelessness agency project to partner with the Department of Veterans Affairs *first*.
- 4) Throwing money at the problem is not a solution. Targeted efforts making sure veterans and homeless veterans know their options.
- 5) No expiration dates on GI Bills. An expiration on a GI Bill is a slap in a face to all veterans. Many veterans are simply not ready for many years to pursue higher education due to PTSD, homelessness and/ or their socioeconomic status.
- 6) Find a way share the "feelgood" stories involving soldiers, sailors, airman and Marines as mentioned at the War Horse symposium at University of Chicago in 2023

“Don’t you know life is like a military campaign? One must serve on watch, another in reconnaissance, another on the front line... So, it is for us- each person’s life is a kind of battle, and a long and varied one too. You must keep watch like a soldier and do everything commanded.... You have been stationed at a key post, not some lowly place, and not for a short time, but for life.”

Epictetus, *Discourses*, 3.24.31-36

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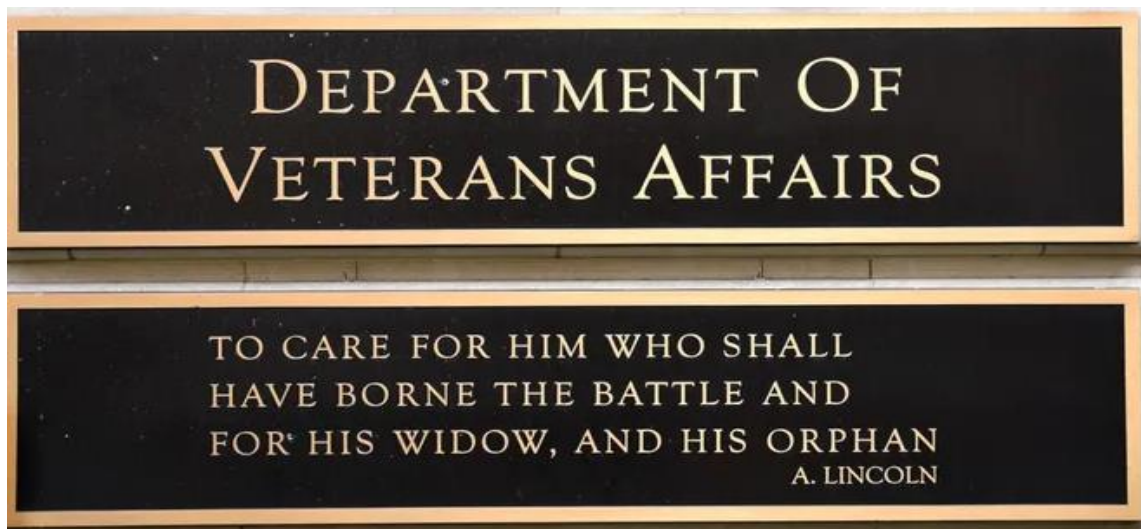
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Military Working Definitions:

**Echo Tango Suitcase:** Slang for Expiration of Term of Service or ETS. Your enlistment and your contract are finished.... you are free to go.

**Veteran:** A veteran is someone who serviced on active duty (full-time) in the military, air or naval forces and released other than honorable conditions. The Veterans Administration can make certain exceptions as the Army, Navy, Marine or Coast Guard reserves can be activated for extended periods of time of 180 days to 6 months to a year. American Veterans numbered 18 to 21% in late 70s and early 80s. In 2023, veterans are 6 out of 100 Americans.

Figure a. The mission statement of the Department of Veterans Affairs is quote borrowed from the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln. In 2023, the VA mission statement has been given a newer, more inclusive update: ““To fulfill President Lincoln’s promise to care for those who have served in our nation’s military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors” This plaque is outside the front doors of the VA headquarters in Washington, DC.



**A.R.M.Y.:** Slang for the Army acronym: “Ain’t Released Me Yet”.

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:** The famed Mayo Clinic in Minnesota states a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that's triggered by a terrifying event — either experiencing it or witnessing it. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares and severe anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event. Most people who go through traumatic events may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but with time and good self-care, they usually get better. If the

symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, and interfere with your day-to-day functioning, you may have PTSD. Contrary to popular belief- it's not just soldiers in the combat zone who experience PTSD.

**Short-Timer**". The formal dictionary definition is a military man or woman who has less than a year of service left in their service contract. The informal / urban dictionary definition mentions side-effects of being a short-timer-a blasé, indifferent attitude toward one's military job because the Marine or soldier is focused primarily on the future and getting out. Hence, the three-day TAP (Transitional Assistance Program) should possibly be attended 2 or 3 times for reinforcement and better comprehension.

**Enlisted soldiers**": These are the soldiers that complete missions and carry out orders. In civilian parlance, the enlisted soldiers are the "worker bees". (Examples: Private First Class, Specialist). An overview and summary of other military rank structure of all the ranks is as follows: The upper echelon of ranks are called "officers". Officers are the "planners". (Examples- Captain, Major). The middle ranks are known in the Army as the "backbone" and are "non-commissioned officers". Sergeants are the "enforcers" (Examples- Sergeant First Class, Sergeant)

**Lifer**: Often seen as a derogatory term, it can also be a backhanded complement. For one, the so-called lifer is probably not going to be struggling with homelessness. A lifer is the 20-year man or 20 year woman (except for a brief period during the Clinton administration when middle-management and senior management aka the NCOs were allowed to get out after 15 years).

**SNAFU**: Situation Normal All F\*\*\*\*d Up. Military acronyms can often contain salty language (see FUBAR and BOHICA). Murphy's Law of when things can go wrong, they will apply in full force in the military. SNAFU, FUBAR, BOHICA and clusterf\*\*k are among the more colorful to describe a situation that has gone haywire.

**Conscientious Objector**: A draftee who has taken a principled stand against using force against other human beings. A serviceman who has religious or moral reasons for not wanting to fight as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

**Army Recruiters and MEPS**: The root of all evil to many a soldier, sailor or Marine. This is your first stop before you get shipped off to Boot Camp or Basic Training. Somewhere at a field problem or during a deployment in the 120-degree desert sun or in a cold, rain-soaked sleeping bag – the enlisted man or woman yells to no one in the middle of the night "WHY didn't I join the Air Force?"

**Space Force**: Brand new branch of the military. The jury's out. Based on Star Trek? A branch destined to become a subset of the Air Force? My hunch, is the Space Force



Guardians.....do a lot with cybersecurity. They only have 2,000 personnel right now. Since the Space Force is its infancy and enlistments are down among all branches.... does the new enlistee get to choose his or her own rank? LoL. Just kidding.

**“Dear John” letter:** Soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen can end up separated from their significant other or spouse for extended periods of time. The serviceperson could end up getting a letter from their civilian other half.... signifying that in the battle of hearts....”absence makes the heart grow fonder” has officially lost to “outta sight, outta mind”. A painful and often cowardly way to break up.

**Merchant Marines-** There were 243,000 mariners that served in WWII. And 9,521 perished while serving—a higher proportion of those killed than any other branch of the U.S. military. (National WWII Museum, 2022)

**G.I.** The term G.I. is short for “Government Issue “and “galvanized iron” ... Though sounds like a generic and impersonal term, it came to be a term of endearment meaning “one of the guys” or “one of Joes”.

**National Guard/ Army Reserves:** Military reserve components were as likely to get called up to go overseas as anyone else. A much-maligned entity. Iraq and Afghanistan changed that....the National Guard really needs a “back-up National Guard unit” while they are overseas on a deployment. This author spent 5 years in the Army National Guard. There was a perception that the Guard met once a month, 3-day opportunity to play cards in the Armory. Or fill sandbags for a flood. And then there was the old joke- What’s the difference between the Boy Scouts and the National Guard? The Boy Scouts have adult supervision. No one’s laughing now.

**MRE:** MRE is yet another Army acronym. MRE stands for “Meal Ready to Eat”. Servicemen and servicewomen out in the field away from the barracks and garrison will receive pre-prepared pouches and packets of food. It is rumored during WWII, the French soldiers received a small bottle of red or white wine along with their MRE field rations.

**Got Your 6:** Military jargon for “got your back”. In a field environment, locations of something you want the rest of the squad to know are identified by numbers on a clock: 12, 3, 6 and 9. 12 is directly in front of you. 3 O’clock is on your left, 9 O’clock is on your right and 6 O’clock would be directly behind you.

**Mosquito wings, Teardrops, Butter bars and Train Tracks:** Some of the ranks have nicknames: The Private E2 rank wears what are called mosquito wings- which can be seen as a degrading term or a term of endearment depending on the particular soldier and unit. The E3 Private First-Class rank is literally shaped like a teardrop. The 2LT rank is often

*Preface- Homelessness Definitions*

called a “butter bar” because they are the lowest rank of officer often fresh out of college with no experience. The O3 rank of Captain is sometimes called *train tracks*.

**LES, DD-214 and Military Pay:** LES is short for Leave and Earnings Statement- i.e. your pay stub. DD-214 is your official military record. If you are an enlisted man or woman- “Military Pay” means “there’s too much month at the end of the money”

**Reenlistment:** What you do if you don’t want to get out. A soldier can stay another 2 to 6 years on active duty.

**Reclass:** What you do if you want to stay in the Army, but you want a new job. The sailor, coastie or soldier will be sent to another post to train in a new MOS.

### Homelessness Working Definitions:

**Homeless:** To be homeless, by definition, is to be a person without a home living on the streets. Different government agencies define the homeless and homelessness differently. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines homelessness in four categories: 1) Literally homeless, 2) Imminent Risk of Homelessness, 3) Homeless Under Other Statutes and 4) Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence.

**Housing First:** Housing First is a policy that offers unconditional, permanent housing as quickly as possible to homeless people, and other supportive services afterward.

**USICH:** An umbrella organization coordinating the efforts of 19 Government organizations. USICH, or the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness is coordinating with the Biden-Harris administration to cut homelessness by 25% by 2025 with their “All in” plan. 9

**SNAP:** Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program. EBT, Link and Food Stamps are often interchangeable terms for the SNAP program. The SNAP was designed to provide nutritional food for low-income Americans.

**Functional Zero:** Functional Zero describes the situation in a community where homelessness has become a manageable problem. That is, the availability of services and resources match or exceed the demand for them from the target population. Further, such resources are optimized, performing as intended with maximum efficacy.

**Streetwise:** A magazine for the homeless entrepreneur. The street vendor buys the magazine for 90 cents then sells the magazine in Chicago for \$2.00. Streetwise recently celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. 180, 000 magazines are sold annually providing 15,000 meals served.

**Homeless Czar:** In Illinois, the state homeless chief is Christine Haley. Haley’s role was created in 2021 by EO-2021-21 (Executive Order to Fight Homelessness in Illinois). A bill to fight homelessness in Illinois (Bill HB2831) passed both houses in May of 2023. The expansion of the role of the Illinois Interagency Task Force on Homelessness is a big win for the Supportive Housing Providers Association (SPHA) based in Springfield.

## Part 1- The Micro and Macro of Homelessness in America- An Overview

Figures 1a-1f Homelessness in America takes all forms as evidenced by the photos below. Tiny homes are a panacea. Yet in some cases there are enough time, materials and labor and sweat equity to build homes like the tiny homes and like Habitat for Humanity does. When I was serving in the Army National Guard on duty with the 1996 Olympics, I met a worker at the concession stands named Crystal Harmon. Her and her family were featured in the Atlanta Newspaper, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution in front of her home with her family- that they mostly built themselves.



**tiny homes**



0

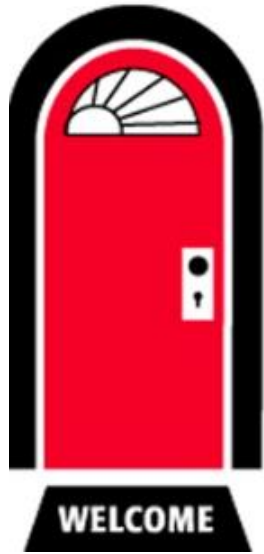
**young**



**living in your car**



**spikes under a bridge to stop the homeless**



# Red Door

## FAMILY SHELTER

*Ending family homelessness...  
one family at a time*

**families**



**tent cities**

### **Part 1: Introduction: The Macro and Micro of Homelessness**

- What is homelessness?
- Why are there homeless in a rich, first-world country?
- Why are the homeless so marginalized?

Homelessness in America is an epidemic. In December of 2022, the Department of

## *Part 1- Overview of Homelessness*

Housing and Urban Development found that there were 582,462 homeless in America and its territories in that point in time (HUD, 2020). Veteran Homelessness is merely one part of a much larger problem. Family housing evictions. Homelessness due to domestic violence. Katie Jennings from the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) stated that are currently 19 agencies attempting to tackle this problem of epidemic proportions. (Gillespie, 2016). The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists decided back in 1947 to design a doomsday clock and an end-of-the world scenario brought on by the precariousness of relations between America and the Soviet Union. Due to ongoing War in Ukraine and other conflict hotspots in the world, the current setting stands 90 seconds to midnight. *Perhaps an American homelessness doomsday clock should be established.* The current American homelessness problem cuts across multiple demographics in society. Child homelessness, Rural homelessness, student homelessness and homelessness among women (Guillen, 2021) are just a few more of the groups that need immediate help. The graphic below demonstrates in a word cloud the stigma surrounding those less fortunate. Whether housing insecurity or bad life choices, no one in America deserves to live on the streets. Unexpected, unplanned hospital bills, a death of a provider in the family or a missed rent payment can spell danger for any hard-working, taxpaying citizen. A CBS News report states that 40% of average Americans are just one paycheck away from homelessness and a second report on a website called “invisible people” offers a more negative prognostication stating that a full 59% on Americans are just one paycheck away from being without a roof over their head. (invisiblepeople.tv 2023). The word cloud



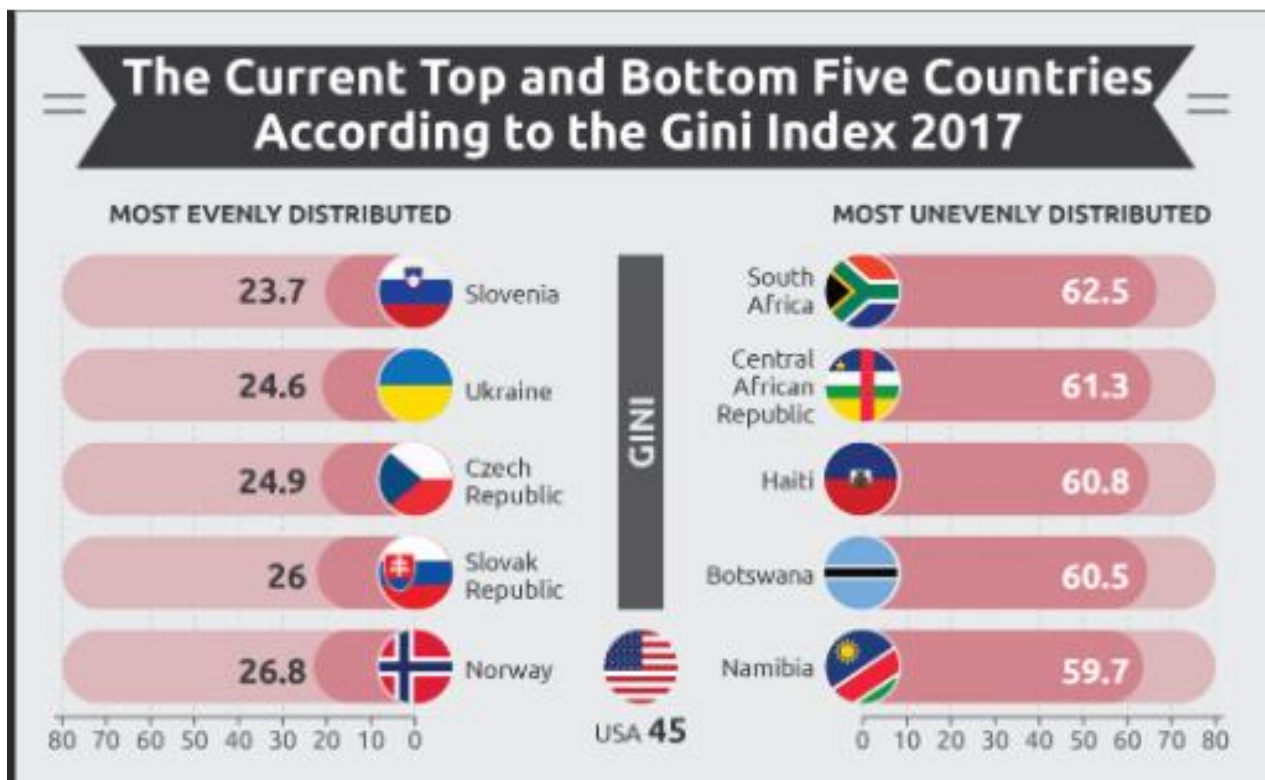
## Part 1- Overview of Homelessness

documents that homeless and housing-unstable individuals.

### Poverty and the GINI Coefficient

The GINI coefficient in America is 41.5. The GINI coefficient is a measure of the rich and poor in each country, territory or society. Zero or “0” stands for perfect equality where everyone gets the exact same salary. One or “1” stands for perfect *inequality* where just one man holds all the wealth – and the rest of the population has nothing. More specifically according to FRED (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis): “Gini index measures the extent to which the distribution of income or consumption expenditure among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution.”

Is America still the land of milk and honey? Is America still the land of opportunity? Where did the monies from the Reagan administration “trickle down” too? The GINI coefficient of wealth distribution. Six years ago- a GINI coefficient study put America right in the middle of the world’s countries. It will be interesting to see a “post-pandemic” survey to see if that still holds true.





## Part 1- Overview of Homelessness

. A Lorenz curve plots the cumulative percentages of total income received against the cumulative number of recipients, starting with the poorest individual or household. The Gini index measures the area between the Lorenz curve and a hypothetical line of absolute equality, expressed as a percentage of the maximum area under the line. Thus, a Gini index of 0 represents perfect equality, while an index of 100 implies perfect inequality”. (Sitthiyot 2021). U.S. Senator and former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders stated that “There have been several studies that have come out recently which have shown that low-income people have a life expectancy significantly lower than wealthy people. In other words, poverty is a death sentence,” Sanders told an audience at Marist College in the Hudson Valley (Frizzell, 2016)

Figure 1i. The Atlanta Homeless Union and mutual aid group Sol Underground at a protest in downtown Atlanta in 2022. Encampment sweeps and an affordability crisis were just two of the reasons for the protest.



### Drug Addiction

“Housing First” has often been touted as a possible end all to homelessness. In Portland, Oregon there are needle bins for drug users near tents and tent cities. The end result of homelessness often results in an endless cycle of substance abuse, and substance abuse often is a leading factor for housing insecurity and homelessness (Schutz, 2010). The National Coalition for the Homeless has found that 38% of homeless people are alcohol dependent, and 26% are dependent on other harmful substances. Often, addiction is a pipeline to those housing-challenged individuals. Drugs and housing insecurity often go together. It’s no surprise that there are negative health consequences due to factors like low socioeconomic status, homelessness, and a criminal record among drug users (Galea, 2002)

### Family Violence

The age-old *nature vs. nurture* argument rears its ugly head. How much of a role does family genetics play a role in poverty, drug addiction, family violence and homelessness? How much of a role does growing up in a violent environment at home and school play in food insecurity, job insecurity and housing insecurity and becoming a violent individual? In at least one study, a mother in violent household can end up exhibiting one or more signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Yasai, 2012)

### Psychological Problems

At a Housing Assistance Council conference on rural homelessness in Springfield, Illinois, a round robin of discussions revealed a common theme or two- (1) “housing first” and (2)

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those left unhoused out in the element will eventually exhibit mental health problems.

At a Housing Assistance Council conference on rural homelessness in Springfield, Illinois, a round robin of discussions revealed a common theme or two- (1) “housing first” and (2) those left unhoused out in the element will eventually exhibit mental health problems.

(HAC, 2023). Homeless Americans out in the elements can lead to physical injury, mental trauma and even death. In 2017, Old St. Patrick’s Church in downtown Chicago held a candlelight vigil in December for 33 homeless individuals who perished during the harsh Chicago winter. The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and other agencies were on hand to eulogize those who left this earth too early (Ellis, 2020).

### -Educational Level

How does education level play a role in Veteran homelessness? It starts at a young age- “Youth with less than a High School diploma have a 346% higher risk of experiencing homelessness” (Dukes, 2018). The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law that provides help and educational services to homeless people in the U.S especially homeless children and youth. (Pavlakis, 2017). In the context of this Congressional Bill, homelessness is defined as “lack of fixed, regular, adequate nighttime residence, and includes those living in shelters, motels, cars, parks, or other places not meant for human habitation”. It ensures that homeless children and youth are provided with a free, appropriate public education, and can enroll in schools regardless of their lack of a permanent address or a supervising parent or guardian. It was first enacted in 1987 and was later included in the Bush administration’s 2001” No Child Left Behind Act.”

### The American Homelessness Problem

“Squatters” have engulfed a worldwide tourist destination. The “Housing First” initiative is needed more than ever. The Venice Beach attraction in California has become a large homeless camp, with 200 people living in tents. Violence, shootings and fires have led to many unanswered questions (Levin, 2021). The homeless migration to Venice Beach has increased by .50% over the past five years, with over 1,000 nomads now calling Venice “their permanent home”. This is a case of “the inmates running the asylum” as local officials are working to take back the Venice boardwalk, but the homeless are simply answering with a dangerous game of “wack-a-mole”- and moving their living quarters nearby, like human turtles moving their shell on their back. The situation has become dangerous and violent, with used syringes, urine, and broken glass causing an eyesore for everyone.

One scholar tells us right up front about how she feels about tent cities and the dehumanizing coverage of those tent cities by the press. The title of her dissertation foreshadows the tragedy around the corner: “Marginalized, Ostracized and Omitted: What an examination of non-news claims reveals about press coverage of Tent City 4.” Marginalized, ostracized and omitted are just the beginning for these individuals. More negative words associated with homelessness and future word clouds (Goodheart, 2016)

### Homeless Job Fairs

The Rural Homelessness conference in Bloomington, Illinois was co-hosted by the Supportive Housing Providers Association of Springfield and the Housing Assistance Council in Washington, DC. The moderator and panelists posed a simple series question to

both panelists and room full of 50 to 100 attendees – *What else can be done to increase capacity?* Long-time social workers and case counselors rounded up the usual suspects- “we need more local funding” and “we need more national funding” and the predictable “where is the government?”. One attendee mentioned “homeless job fairs” The attendee brought up a number of interesting talking points about the homeless job fair he had heard

Figure 1j: The graphic lays out the statistics in stark terms. 70% of homeless Americans do not have proper identification such as a social security card, a driver’s license or a state ID. Should social service agencies, local officials or law enforcement provide “identification sweeps” and provide these necessities in-person to tent cities. It should not be a crime to be homeless. The “Housing First” advocates would argue this is the second step.



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about in Sacramento, California- 1) the stigma of invisibility would be eliminated in this all-inclusive hiring process, 2) a continuum of care team would be made available on-site for the homeless job fair participants allowing for “one-stop shopping” for homeless giving them potential access to jobs and treatment in one fell swoop, 3) as mentioned in Figure 1D above, maybe a team of law enforcement, municipal leaders and veteran affairs workers could run ID checks and order or print State IDs and Social Security Cards (or least put said individuals on a path to obtaining these items) and 4) there would be a greater awareness of a national epidemic that is simply growing too big to ignore. (Salvation Army, 2018).

A new job description has entered the lexicon due to the burgeoning homeless population across the country. Enter the Homeless Job Counselor. The homeless job counselor has big shoes to fill and a big, all-inclusive umbrella. The homeless job counselor potentially helps welfare recipients, ex-offenders, veterans and garden-variety homeless. Some homeless job counselors work for the Homeless Transition Employment Program (HTEP), a project sponsored by the Anthem Foundation in partnership with the California Workforce Association and undertaken in Sacramento. The project focuses on unemployed, homeless women and some homeless men. It seeks to place them into jobs and help them keep these jobs. (Bernick, 2022) If someone is homeless and wants to apply for a job at said job fair there are a good dozen questions looming on the horizon. Where do they shave? Where do they get clean clothes for the job fair? Where do they shower before the job fair? How do you tell the homeless about a job fair- do you post a Job notice on their individual

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tent? They want a job applicant who has done their homework for the company they want to work for. At a bare minimum, the job applicant should appear clean, shaven, nicely dressed and appear alert. Veterans struggling to stay above the poverty line may not have the proper interview attire. Maybe their teeth need repair or there are mental health issues. The simple fact of getting proper dental care has a profound impact on a veteran's job and housing status according to the study. "Evaluating the Impact of Dental Care on Housing Intervention Program Outcomes Among Homeless Veterans" (Nunez 2013) Often times, a veteran does not know where to turn for help. The Department of Veteran Affairs has many services available yet needs to do a better job of getting the message out to the veterans who need that message the most- the enlisted veteran.

### College Homelessness

College homelessness very well may be the most shocking kind of homelessness at all. Young and educated living on the streets or in their car proves that housing insecurity and homelessness prove that 1) there is no set stereotype of someone without a permanent place to live and 2) homelessness affects all social strata in different ways. Maybe it shouldn't be so surprising given that college tuition across the United States continues to spiral upward out-of-control. The bulk of students on most college campuses are traditionally 18- to 22-year-olds working part-time service industry jobs to offset college costs. College internships can be of the paid or unpaid variety. If the internship comes with a stipend, chances are it is going to be of the minimum wage variety.

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TikTok influencer “Allie” talks about the great things that students are doing to establish and keep drop-in homeless shelters in California (Thompson 2018). Another myth shattered – college homelessness exists on the so called “prestigious” college campuses. At the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). Even the Ivies have gotten into the act but in a different way. Y2Y Harvard Square is run by Harvard students, Harvard staff and community members but not necessarily Harvard students.

Figure 1k. A group of student architects in LA has come up with an interesting solution for the homeless. They look like a cross between a tiny home and a Japanese pod. There is no reason why a former homeless person can't live in something modern with modern conveniences and amenities.





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### Sheltered and Unsheltered

Homelessness continues to be an ever-present social problem in the United States and across the planet. Estimates point to nearly 150 million individuals are homeless worldwide, with 20% of the world's population being affected by unstable housing in some way. There are many educated guesses on why someone would want domicile outside rather than live in a shelter with a roof (Ahuja 2020). One theory is that the outdoorsman or outdoorswoman with no address doesn't want to follow the rules. Some shelters might be run by church groups and may require a temporary resident to attend church services. Other shelter requirements may require performing tasks and leaving by 0600 am under the understanding that the temporarily housed would spend the day seeking employment. A substance user may not want to give up his or her drug habits for the sake of cohabitation with others. Tent cities provide the "freedom" of a nomadic life but may not provide desperately needed social services for the homeless population. In the US, approximately two thirds (65%) of tabulated results revealed homeless were staying in emergency shelters or transitional housing assistance programs and the average lifespan of Americans who experience homelessness to be pegged at 50 years old (Ahjua 2020).

### Tent Cities

There are 27 tent cities in America- and maybe the most shocking part is that *not all the tent city encampments are in warm-weather areas*. Lakewood, New Jersey and Chicago, Illinois have tent cities. The tent cities are not restricted to a geographical area either. Ten of the 27 tent cities are in California but there is also a tent city in Las Cruces, New Mexico,

*Part 1- Overview of Homelessness*

Fayette County, Tennessee and the intersection of the Gunnison River and the Colorado River. The tent city names range from “optimism” (The Village of Hope in Fresno),

Figure 11: One San Francisco tent city has made what looks like “parking spaces” for tents to add a little bit of dignity and privacy to the homeless encampment. There are also showers available.



There are 27 tent cities in America- and maybe the most shocking part is that *not all the tent city encampments are in warm-weather areas.* (Conlin, 2020). Lakewood, New Jersey and Chicago, Illinois have tent cities. The tent cities are not restricted to a geographical area either. Ten of the 27 tent cities are in California but there is also a tent city in Las Cruces, New Mexico, Fayette County, Tennessee and the intersection of the Gunnison River and the Colorado River. The tent city names range from “optimism” (The Village of Hope in Fresno, California) to the “generic” (Tent City #4 in Eastern King County outside Seattle) to “potentially rough conditions” (The Jungle- San Jose, California). Dignity Village tent city in Oregon adds a little discipline with its list of rules and regulations.

Housing Insecurity and the Pandemic

The COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020-2022 opened a Pandora's box of problems for middle-class and working-class Americans alike. The trifecta of food-insecurity, job-insecurity and housing-insecurity were introduced to Americans who had never previously suffered from middle-class and working-class Americans alike. The trifecta of food-insecurity, job-insecurity and housing-insecurity were introduced to Americans who had never previously suffered from middle-class and working-class alike (Hernandez 2017).

Figure 1m: One out of five homeless are in California. Ten out of twenty-seven tent cities in America are in California. This tent city is right outside city hall. It's the outdoor 800-pound elephant that businessmen and politicians can't turn a blind eye to.

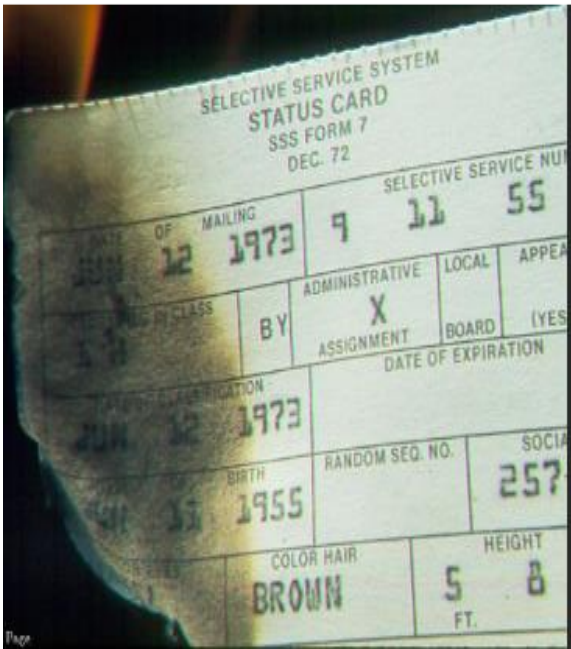


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Food-insecurity, job-insecurity and housing-insecurity were introduced to Americans who had never previously suffered from such inequities and inequalities. It seemed no one was immune – save the 1%ers. The rise of contact-free indoor job- led to the work-at-home and a hybrid culture. With corporate building after building nearly empty of employees.... led the hybrid culture. And with corporate building after building nearly empty of employees.... middle-management feared for their jobs- *if every employee is at home, what exactly does middle management manage?* It's a question yet to be answered correctly.

“ It’s a Lifestyle Choice”

Figure 1n-1o . A Vietnam Vet Won’t Think it’s a Lifestyle Choice. During the American males had to decide if they wanted to join the draft....or not. Draft cards didn’t discriminate. Whites, Asians, Hispanics and African-Americans could end up fighting side by side in Vietnam. One of the most famous conscientious objectors was former World Heavyweight champion Muhammed Ali. Ali felt very strongly about not fighting in Vietnam. He was quoted as saying: “The draft is about white people sending black people to fight yellow people to protect the country.” The photo is of a burning draft card.



LOTTERY DRAWINGS - Vietnam Era		
Induction Year	Drawing Date	Birth Year(s)
1970	December 1, 1969	1944-1950
1971	July 1, 1970	1951
1972	August 5, 1971	1952
1973	February 2, 1972	1953
1974	March 8, 1973	1954
1975	March 20, 1974	1955
1976	March 12, 1975	1956

Chart by TL;DR Civics - tldr-civics.wordpress.com

## *Part 1- Overview of Homelessness*

The hippie era ended long ago.... the one that young Americans and a few older ones chose to be homeless. Yet the myth persists that homelessness is a life choice. Mental Health Centers and continuum of care teams know better/. One housing expert in Colorado was asked to weigh in. Asked about what needed to be debunked about people experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness, Mental Health Center of Denver supportive housing provider Takisha Keese had an instinctive and immediate response: "That they want to be homeless." (Gourevitch, 2019) This "people want to be homeless' myth is a dangerous falsehood. The product of apathy and status quo is 1) they don't need help and 2) why should we help and 3) people are underestimating America's national crisis. Many people experiencing homelessness due to an urgent affordable housing emergency.

Are the homeless merely the 2023 version of the 1960's hippies. Hippies made a conscious decision to "tune in, turn on and drop out" - a catchphrase from 1960s lexicon. Young people turned their backs on corporate culture, cookie-cutter suburbs popping up all over America and the "squares" from their parent's generation. Ask a homeless Vietnam vet if he or she is making a lifestyle choice to be homeless. Today's tent cities are not the new peace-and-love hippie movement either. There are 27 acknowledged tent cities in America today. In the article by the California Society about Tent Cities there was no romantic notions about tent cities or homelessness: "Homelessness in the U.S. results in systemic and social barriers. Poverty, unemployment, rising rent, domestic violence, legal

## Part 1- Overview of Homelessness

problems, drug abuse, alcoholism and mental and physical illness are all significant factors.” (Cauf Society, 2020)

. Being a hippie seemed to be a lifestyle choice. Communal living, sharing love, money, food and mind-altering substances were the calling cards of the hippie. The hippie was destined to be a different type of non-materialist. These young people did not want to go to war. These young people did not want to join the military during war time or peace time. Homeless by virtue of no fixed address seemed to be romantic “rite de passage” for young people in search of answers and enlightenment. Long hair and colorful unkempt appearances clashed with the conformity of their parents and Uncle Sam’s rigid, do-as-you’re-told, uber-structured military machine. Hippie meant a follow-your-dreams and listen-to-your-inner muse vibe. One giant difference between average homeless people and the hippie- was that the hippie, more often than not, came from a middle to upper class background with a few years of college under one’s belt (Castro, 2021).

Figure 1p-q. The hippie. Their mantra was “tun in, turn on and drop out”. In this case, homelessness was usually a lifestyle and possibly communal living. Poverty and lack of earthly possessions also seemed to be a lifestyle choice.



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Later in life those said hippies that chose the nomadic lifestyle with the road as their home- many would become the dreaded “Boomer” with an affluent, capitalist lifestyle. Maybe the best example of a “hippie rags to riches” story is Apple’s Steve Jobs. Jobs and his partner Steve Wozniak were able to channel their youthful rebellion into Apple and Macintosh products that would later change the world. As a young man, he lived all over the place. Like the iconic 1960s band the Beatles, he headed East to India to experience Transcendental Meditation (TM) and experiment with mind-altering substances in an ashram- an Indian form of communal living.

Yes, the hippie was often someone who chose to live in semi-poverty relying on luck, astrology and like-minded friends to join them in the hippie grand experiment (Davis, 2017). Whereas some homeless ended up on the streets due to bad life choices, the hippies imagined themselves as “self-actualized” moving from party to party and adventure to adventure. The hippies often found themselves at odds with others of their own generation. While some did what they were told and reported for duty in Vietnam- others headed to Canada.

Those young Americans who came back from Vietnam often came back with very visible scars and the invisible wounds of war – that they have never really recovered from to this day. *The largest population of homeless veteran in 2023, almost 50 years after the war ended is the Vietnam veteran.* (Rosenheck,1991). The Vietnam Veteran was not treated well upon their return to the United States and no idea how to be a “hippie”. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was not an official clinical diagnosis from 1961 to 1975 when

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soldiers served in Vietnam. Laos and Cambodia. Returning veterans learned to stoically process their Vietnam experience to an often-unforgiving American public. "Survivor's guilt" was very real, and PTSD's symptoms might not surface in Vietnam vets until 20 years later.

Figure 1r. Before Apple and MacIntosh founder Steve Jobs lived a hippie lifestyle dropping in and out of classes at Reed College and living in an ashram in India. Things turned out well for Steve Jobs- so much so that it seems like every American has one or more of his products. Here is a job application that he submitted while in college. He got interested in calligraphy and typestyle faces at Reed College and found entrepreneurship suited him better.

Name: *Steven jobs* Birth Date: *24 February 1955*

Address: *reed college*

Phone: *none*

Major: *english lit* Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Past Employment:  
(Most recent first)

To \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ Position Held \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Business \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason for leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ Position Held \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Business \_\_\_\_\_  
Reason for Leaving: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License? *yes*

Access to transportation? *possible, but not probobale*

Skills:

Typing \_\_\_\_\_

Machines, Key punch \_\_\_\_\_ Computer *yes* Calculator *yes* Other \_\_\_\_\_

Special Abilities: *electronics tech or (design, tech)*

Interests: *design engines. digital. - from Bay area Hewitt-Packard.*



# Part 2: Life in the United States Military

- Why do Americans Join the military?
- Why aren't Americans Joining the military today?

There a couple of immediate differences between the civilian world and the military:

1) The more white-collar and high-paying job.... the more status in the civilian world. Some good examples would be a doctor, a lawyer or an architect. In the military, the tougher jobs, the dangerous jobs are at the top of the food chain. Some examples would be someone who joins Special Forces, an Army Ranger and a Navy Seal. There are at least 100 different reasons why someone might sign up for the Armed Forces (Clark, 2021). Three of the most popular reasons include job security, one's patriotic duty and comes from a military family.

Figure 2a-2b. Three of the four military branches tend not to be sedentary. Picture is a platoon performing Army Physical Training (PT). Its not the kind of job you can just put in a two-week notice either. The photo on the right is from a deployment in 2000. The author spent 5 months in Kuwait as a medic with a Combat Engineer unit out of Fort Riley, Kansas.



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**Engineers cross train on infantry, medical procedures**

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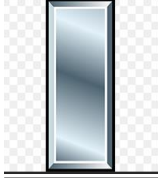


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Civilian to Soldier

Military Rank vs. Civilian Rank

2c. This chart is of the author's personal interpretation of the rank structure based on almost 15 years of service from 1990-2005. Though I have found that many agree with my interpretation of military rank and the civilian job structure, it is merely seen through one person's lenses. Other servicemen and servicewomen of the Army and the Army National Guard may have a different point of view as might veterans of other service branches.

	<p>E1/ Private E1-E3 are like the guys or gals on the production line in a warehouse. No authority They do what they are told. E2-E3/ Private Blue-collar guys. Sadly, in the civilian world at 19 they are fry cooks at McDonald's, but the military may teach the 19-year-old how to run a million dollar satellite system. And he will do a good job too! Indoctrination starts at a young age....</p>
	<p>E4 Specialist E4 is a favorite rank. You are still "one of the boys". Yet you are not getting every grunt job in Uncle Sam's Army. The team leader on the production line in the warehouse in the civilian world. The E4 still has mobility and can change jobs and posts frequently in the Army. The E4 is known as the "E4 Mafia". (*The Marine E4 is the is part of the "Lance Corporal Underground".) You're new to club? Welcome. Like the old Beatle song goes "I get by with a little help from my friends."</p>
	<p>E4 Corporal Hard stripe. Has either "done his time", been a field soldier or maybe seen combat. This is the beginning of the "NCO" rank structure. The NCOs "get things done....". E5 Sergeant E5. Not much rank but lots of responsibility. He or she oversees the employees of the production line and gives out the orders. Hands-on leadership role. Make a plan. "Let's go". "Execute the mission". A worker bee with some authority.</p>
	<p>E6 Staff Sergeant E6. Still blue collar with a few perks. May have a desk or an office. Has to attend boring meetings. Implements training and enforces standards in the Army. A shift supervisor in the warehouse...often times apart from the troops.</p>
	<p>E7 Sergeant 1st Class E7-E9 often run the whole show for both the enlisted and the officer as they have 10, 15 or 20 years "experience".</p>

	<p>E8/E9 Sergeant Major Both officer and enlisted will listen to what they have to say. Sergeant Majors are often "political animals". As they are senior enlisted, they spend a lot of time with officers- so its hard to know what side of an issue the Sergeant Major is really on sometimes. In the civilian world- they are in charge of the whole warehouse and probably attend some of the meetings the "suits" go to. They make sure "all the trains run on time...."</p>
	<p>01 Second Lieutenant The 01 doesn't usually get much respect. The 01 is pictured as a 22-year-old yuppie-in-arms fresh out of college with no Army experience. A boss's son in the civilian world. This is the young man in a suit and tie who thinks he's somebody. After he strolls into the warehouse and gives out a couple orders to the factory workers they laugh. (Yet, underneath, what enlisted man wouldn't want less work and more pay?). Another reason for the lack of respect- the enlisted man with 18 years in the Army and getting less pay than the Lieutenant is usually the one showing the new lieutenant "the ropes". Women like him though. They know he is on the path to making lots of money whether he stays in the Army....or not.</p>
	<p>02 First Lieutenant 02 is an 18 month "executive training program". The first lieutenant gets A LITTLE respect. The smart ones keep their eyes and ears open and ask a lot of questions realizing that even though they have more rank- the private doing all the work may know a lot more than the lieutenant about a lot of things. Power points and presentations. White-collar stuff. (Might be out golfing right now as we speak....)</p>
	<p>03 Company Commander The ultimate authority on most matters. Runs the day-to-day operations and calls company formations. Usually "in-the-loop" on everything. Sets the mood, the tempo and the pace of the organization. The smart ones delegate authority well to the NCOs and don't poke their nose in "NCO business".</p>
	<p>04 Major This is the beginning of the "board of directors" ranks in the Army hierarchy. To the little guy these folks are shadowy figures forever attending meetings, meetings and more.... meetings. They don't have any direct contact with the troops and are usually involved all day with a fuzzy concept called "planning".</p>



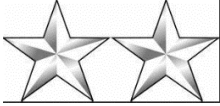



**05 Lieutenant Colonel** "So what does that guy do all day?" If he's an officer in the Infantry- even the field grade ranks might be out in the bush. If he or she has a lot of tabs on his or her uniform- you know he or she did some field time. Let's say the equivalent of an LTC in the real world is a partner at a law firm. If an attorney and the LTC are standing side by side- you won't know the attorney is an attorney. Even though he's wearing a suit, until he identifies himself as attorney no one is certain who he is. The military doesn't have that problem. Your uniform is your resume. Camouflage may hide the soldier in the woods but not in garrison. Everyone knows immediately - your status in the military, the unit you serve in, if you jumped out of an airplane or not and/or if he should salute you or not. In the Civilian world- the more white collar and "cushy" the job usually the more prestige and this is usually accompanied with a significant level of higher education to become a doctor, lawyer, etc. In the military generally speaking the more "grunt" the job- i.e. the Marines, 82nd Airborne, the Rangers - the more respect or prestige. True for all the ranks. (Among the military branches- the low man on the totem pole is the "chairforce"/Air Force are seen as "civilians in uniform") There is another big difference between the partner at a law firm and an LTC. The attorney's life consists of the courtroom, preparing cases and practicing law in general. The LTC might also be behind a desk in an office like the lawyer but he or she is still a soldier and property of Uncle Sam- and could potentially be deployed at a moment's notice halfway across the globe.



**06 Colonel** This man or woman commands respect and knows a thing or two. In the National Guard we all took a "test" a\*\*nd all ranks took the test (Colonel to Private, I believe, this was many years ago....). The test was filled with nonsense questions like "How many keys on a piano?" "What are the rules to Baccarat?" and "What words can make with these letters XZDOURT?", etc. Anyway, ALL the ranks failed the test. BUT BETWEEN ALL THE RANKS WE GOT 100%. The point of the test....it is show that ALL the ranks work together and that EVERY rank knows something the other rank does not know. The Colonel is acutely aware of this. If the Colonel's vehicle breaks down, does the Colonel know how to fix it? (Nope, call the mechanic). If the Colonel's microphone is not working at the Field Trans.... (call the signalman/ radioman). Etc, etc.



**07/ Brigadier General** When I joined the Army in 1990 I learned the acronym for the "General" ranks "Be my little General".

	<p>08/ Major General (standing for Brigadier General, Major General.....). The General is the CEO of the battlefield.</p>
 	<p>09/ Lieutenant General/ 010 4-Star General As a "little guy" (Enlisted guy) I had little or no contact with these ranks but when I did it was VERY memorable. I have the highest admiration for the highest rank- God, Generals and "Bruce Almighty" truly "walk on water". One two-star General and Post Commander wrote me a letter stating he liked my travel book- I still have that letter to this day. But as I found, with layer upon layer of leadership between the General and the troops can lead to interesting circumstances. Interesting circumstances meaning "the Emperor's New Clothes". I was on a detail for the Hospital that I was working at an artillery post- Fort Sill, Oklahoma driving shut-ins to their appointments at the hospital wards and clinics. Everyone k/new that I was both a Pharmacy Technician and a writer since I was the Editor of the 249-page Hospital Guide and monthly newsletter. I was asked to write a speech for a Retired Two-Star General while on that detail! Yes, Sir! What an honor! Not only did I ghostwrite his speech (it was for an artillery fundraiser), I attended his speech and "his speech" was printed in the local paper. Well, two months later, I was filling prescriptions at the Pharmacy and I heard a familiar name called to get his prescription: "Retired General Stricklin". Excited, I rush to the prescription window, "Sir, nice to finally meet you. I am the soldier who wrote your speech last month at the fundraiser". (He turned a little red. He had NO IDEA who I was. The speech went from me, to a civilian and then probably to an aide-de-camp, to the General's secretary- as he still has an office somewhere locally..).</p>
	<p>The 5 Star Generals-George C. Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Henry "Hap" Arnold and Omar N. Bradley. When the world called on this small, exclusive fraternity of men.... they literally saved the world.</p>

Joining the military is not like your normal everyday job in either the white-collar

sector or the blue-collar sector. There are many reasons why the military is dissimilar to today's 9-5 jobs:

- *1) The recruit is uprooted from his or her hometown or the town that they are currently living in.* The new serviceman or servicewoman may go to Boot Camp in one place, military job training for many weeks (known as A.I.T) in a second place and end up stationed in a third place for 2 to 4 years (Henderson 2000). Does this constant movement lead to a jarring, uprooted “man without a country” feeling among veterans? Then, during both war and peace” a soldier or Marine could end up deployed to a combat zone.
- *2) The serviceperson can potentially end up in life-or-death situations.* Some soldiers will make the ultimate sacrifice while they are serving their country. Others may end up as disabled vets (Sims 2015).
- *3) When a soldier puts on his or her uniform, they are in essence, a “walking resume”.* A soldier's rank is worn on their collar everyday- announcing to the world where they are on the food chain. Military schools that were attended and completed may also be shown on the uniform. Some examples might be: Airborne School, Air Assault. A dress green uniform will have ribbons like the “Good Conduct Medal” and badges that display marksmanship with an M16 or Pistol
- *4) The soldier is literally learning a new language of Army acronyms, military jargon and the military alphabet.*

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Figure 2d-2e: Morse Code was used during WWII between Navy warships. Morse Code was used because radio frequencies can be picked up by the enemy. Only a few U.S. Navy personnel in 2023 have been trained in Morse Code as a safeguard if all other communication systems breakdown. Then there is military alphabet that is learned by soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines which has also been adopted by NATO forces. The military alphabet is essential for communication during a field problem or deployment. Military jobs are often known by a number and a military phonetic letter. Some examples include 68 Whiskey (Medical Specialist) and 31 Charlie (Single Channel Radio Operator). During WWII, average GIs and even celebrities in the making Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson were called to duty, served in the U.S. Army and used the Military Alphabet.

<b>NATO Phonetic Alphabet</b>				<b>International Morse Code</b>					
A	Alpha	N	November	A	•-•-	N	-••-	1	•-•-•-
B	Bravo	O	Oscar	B	-•••	O	-•-•-	2	•-•-•-
C	Charlie	P	Papa	C	-••••	P	•-•••	3	•-•-•-
D	Delta	Q	Quebec	D	-•••	Q	-•-••-	4	•-•-•-
E	Echo	R	Romeo	E	•	R	•-••	5	•-•-•-
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra	F	•-•••	S	•-••	6	•-•-•-
G	Golf	T	Tango	G	-•••	T	-	7	-•-••-
H	Hotel	U	Uniform	H	••••	U	•-•-	8	-•-••-
I	India	V	Victor	I	••	V	•-•••	9	-•-••-
J	Juliet	W	Whiskey	J	•-•-•-	W	•-•-•-	0	-•-••-
K	Kilo	X	X-ray	K	-•••	X	-••••	.	•-•-•-
L	Lima	Y	Yankee	L	•-•••	Y	•-•-•-	,	-•-••-
M	Mike	Z	Zulu	M	-•-	Z	-••••	?	•-•-•-

The military instills a sense of pride, order and discipline with Marines, sailors and soldiers. Barracks rooms may feature clothes on hangers “three fingers” apart, beds with blankets made with “hospital corners”. Airmen and all branches of the service may be required to have highly shined combat boots and creased and starched uniforms. Soldiers may be put on “detail”- meaning being assigned to a chore. Cleaning details might involve buffing the floor until it looks like mirror and cleaning the grounds outside the barracks. Discipline is reinforced by the rank structure. And there is no “putting in your two-week notice!”

**Military Occupational Specialties (MOS)**

One’s military job is called an MOS or Military Occupational Specialty. The new enlistee

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\*just out of boot camp will learn a new military-specific job, Training could last a few weeks or a few months. Here are a couple examples of military-specific jobs: 1) An Army ammunition specialist. These are the soldiers who handle and store ammo and explosives and 2) there is a specific MOS to become a Green Beret. Enlisted personnel have potentially

2f.-2g A first enlistment can last 2 to 6 years. A tanker could potentially stay in the military one of two ways: 1- reenlist and stay in the same job or 2) reclass or get a different job. A tanker could “reclass” and potentially go to a military school to become a radiology tech and work in Army hospital.



190 jobs to choose from. The ASVAB is the soldier’s ACT or SAT. If the soldier gets a high score, theoretically they can choose a “better job”. The soldier does receive “on-the-job” training (Barnett 2007). That can vary greatly as there are over 190 Military Occupational Specialties (MOS). A few examples include Aviation Officer (16A) Avionic Mechanic (15N) Army Military Working Dog Handler (31K) Intelligence Analyst (35F) Biomedical Equipment Specialist (68A) Cryptologic Linguist (35P) Signal Support Systems Specialist (25U) Air Traffic Control Operator (15Q), Combat Medic (68W) and Combat Engineer (12B). After basic training, the 19K Abrams Tank soldier spends 22 weeks learning how to become a tanker then maybe the next 4 years “in the field” as a tanker. After those 4 years, the soldier is given 3 days to get ready get out of the Army for the next 20 years of life.



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become a tanker then maybe the next 4 years “in the field” as a tanker. After those 4 years, the soldier is given 3 days to get ready get out of the Army for the next 20 years of life.

2h: Military pay does not always match the cost of living. The last time a soldier, sailor, airman, Marine or Coast Guard personnel was during the Carter and Reagan administrations.

YEAR	MILITARY PAY RAISE%
2020	3.1%
2019	2.6%
2018	2.4%
2017	2.10%
2016	1.30%
2015	1%
2014	1%
2013	1.70%
2012	1.60%
2011	1.40%
2010	1.30%

(Hogan 2016). There is no equivalent to tankers in the civilian world and subsequently no job waiting for the tanker.

Depiction of the Military by Mass Media, Movies and Television

The American Film Institute (AFI) comes out “Top 100 Films of All Time” every year. Many of those films feature military-themed script. “Casablanca”, often considered the best movie of all time feature an American Expat during WWII. “The Best Years of Our Lives” features soldiers coming back from the war trying to return to normal lives in their hometowns. One sailor had his hand amputated and used a hook instead. The toll taken on

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the sailor, his friends, his family and his romantic interest is both poignant and heart-wrenching at the same time. In the 1970s, just after Vietnam, 1 out of 5 Americans were veterans. Now in 2023, only 6 out of 100 Americans have served in the Armed Forces. Military knowledge is not passed along from family member to other family members anymore like the days of yesteryear where father and son might both enlist. It's not a common experience anymore in America. After 9/11, there was a patriotic surge of enlistments and American farmers were painting red, white and blue flags on the side of their barns. The twenty-year conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have reversed that enlistment trend.

2i-2j. M\*A\*S\*H stands for Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. The successful sitcom was not only successful in its depiction of the Korean War but realistic as many of the cast members were not just actors but also former servicemen. The program was also ahead of its time with its depiction of "Klinger" (far right -left photo) who had a fondness for women's dresses. As recently as the Clinton Administration- the policy on soldiers with different sexual preferences was the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" program. Entertainer Bob Hope was in Vietnam for 9 years with his unique brand of entertainment. Movie tough guy Clint Eastwood wasn't a tough guy during his Army enlistment- he was a swimming instructor.



Americans today are getting their knowledge of the military from movies, sitcoms, the news and history books. And video games. Military movies run the whole spectrum from reality-based to fun and fantasy. Goldie Hawn's "Private Benjamin" is a fun take on a

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female enlistee who wants to be treated like a princess. “Top Gun 1 and 2” displayed the cool side of a jock fighter pilot so well that generations off young males wished they were fighter pilots. M\*A\*S\*H was said to be a very realistic portrayal of life in Korea and the Korean War in the 1950s. That realism was enhanced by the fact that many of the cast members in this long-running sitcom of eleven years. Army recruiters and the military have made drastic adjustments over the years. In 2023, today’s soldiers will play video games and has constant access to a smartphone and the internet- even in remote location.

### Social Media and the Military

Before Sailors, Airmen and Marines had smartphones, Wi-Fi and internet, they had compasses, 550 cord and a Leatherman. Then there’s social media. Is social media all bad? Not really. Let’s take the much-maligned TikTok. Tik Tok, the ever-popular social media platform from China, features a heartfelt plea from U.S. Marine veteran who lost his wife and daughter and must foreclose his home. The Good Samaritans of this world set up a “Go Fund Me” page and saved this man’s life. The good people of this world raised \$100,000 for this disabled vet. (TikTok @98444944k3u).

2k-2m.. It used to be Army recruiters just visited the local high school. Military recruiters are said to use all forms of media to try to get recruits including video gaming sites. Not surprisingly, there are many types of Army podcasts. There is a podcast series on Veteran Homelessness (photo on the right)



“How about if I just follow you on Twitter instead?”



Transitioning Out of the Military- Transitional Assistance Program (TAP)

This author has been involved with the TAP program three times. The first time was in 1993 just before leaving an active-duty assignment at Fort Benning, Georgia. The second time this author went through the three-day TAP program was just before the second time this author left the service again in 2005 in Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The third time was as an AmeriCorps VISTA working to help military veterans at a transitional military home in Great Falls, Montana. The author attended the TAP program in 2020 at Malmstrom Air Force base in Great Falls. All three programs were three days long. The Air Force TAP program had an emphasis on entrepreneurship featuring the owner and founder of a local watering hole called the “Celtic Cowboy”.

There are at least 12 agencies, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Defense, Department of Education, Department of Energy, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Coast Guard, Department of Labor, Department of State, Department of Veteran Affairs, Office of Personnel Management, Small Business Administration and the Department of Treasury with education and employment programs for active-duty personnel, veterans and their dependents. These programs offered by these 12 government agencies aren't covered in detail during the 3-day Transitional Assistance Program. Another reason TAP should be an annual mandatory program for soldiers, sailors, airman and Marines.

. Or every six months. Separating servicemen and servicewomen need a Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) program every six months – not just the end of

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their enlistment. One veteran on military.com described the veteran experience in this way and his solution to the transition to civilian life: “The military turns you into a tank. When you leave the service, the tank is painted yellow and then you are supposed to be a school bus. There is a boot camp to get you ready for the military. There should be a boot camp to get the departing serviceperson ready for the so-called “real world” (military.com). The good news is, unlike the 1993 and 2005 TAP pre-internet programs that the author attended – there are TAP Facebook chat groups with regular postings of upcoming job fairs and transitions. Retention and recruitment are at an all-time low (Jackson 2023).

Figure 2n-2o. The transition from airman, seaman, soldier or Marine can be a daunting one: Where am I going to live? Where am I going to work? Should I attend university?



Trained military personnel are the backbone of any unit. A unit commander will have a .  
tough time letting trained soldiers depart. Skillbridge expert, Dave Schantz states

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Skillbridge that “Four Block” is an extension, a follow-up to the TAP program. Yes, that may be true but there are requirements. First, you must be accepted to the Four Block program. Sponsored by ivy league school Columbia University, the aim of four block is veteran networking with executive training to place veterans at companies and corporations across the United States (four block). Bottom line- TAP seminars need to happen more than once and should be followed up at the 6 month and 12-month mark of when the soldier leaves the service. Here is a sample TAP program itinerary from Fort Riley, Kansas, an Army post.

Figure 2p-2q.: These two figures are from the Transitional Assistance Program Facebook site for Fort Sill. Fort Sill is an Army base in Oklahoma. The first figure states that TAP would be best utilized 18 months prior to leaving the military. Early TAP attendance would generally be up to the discretion of the soldier’s commander. Since recruitment is down across all the branches, the command unit will hope the soldier will stay and reenlist instead. The good news about the TAP program is that in the digital era is that the lessons learned during those 3 days can be amplified online. Below is an advertisement for a job fair sponsored by the DAV and Recruit Military.

**FOUR REASONS TO GO EARLY AND OFTEN**

- 1 When Soldiers begin TAP 18 months or 24 months before retirement, they can determine the career they wish to pursue and network with civilian employers.
- 2 Soldiers are two times more likely to obtain a job or career before leaving active duty if they start their search at least six months or more before transitioning.
- 3 Early preparation allows Soldiers to take advantage of the Army's Career Skills Program (CSP), which is available for Soldiers.
- 4 Transitioning Soldiers are 36% more likely to be financially successful if they begin their transition process early.

**TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Fort Sill Transition Assistance Program  
April 6 at 3:26 PM · 🌐

military Community Virtual Hiring Event. Many great employers looking for all of your great skills and experience.... April 25, 2023  
11am- 3pm CST

**DAV | RECRUIT MILITARY**

**MILITARY COMMUNITY VIRTUAL HIRING EVENT**  
Local, statewide, national, and remote opportunities will be available.

**CENTRAL REGION**  
**APRIL 25, 2023**  
**11AM - 3PM CST**

Skillbridge

This is an overview of the Skillbridge program. The author’s research question and hypotheses involve the Department of Defense Army Skillbridge program and will be discussed in a more in-depth analysis later in the paper. Skillbridge has been around for about 10 years. It started as a pilot program in 2011 to address concerns about U.S. military personnel returning to the so-called “real world” following the 2008 financial crisis. Legislators wanted to ensure service members leaving the military at that time would be able to find meaningful employment (Batka, 2016).

Figure 2r: The Skillbridge internship. There is something for everyone.



One article "Lean Mean Transition Machine" by Michael Quinn addresses the Skillbridge program and the transition from being a soldier to the “real world”. Mr. Quinn is one of many advocates of the DoD Skillbridge program. Skillbridge also was mentioned recently at a military symposium at the University of Chicago. Activist, comedian and military advocate Jon Stewart was featured as a guest at the War Horse symposium

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segment “The Human Impact of Military Service: A Conversation with Jon Stewart and Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defense Kathleen Hicks”. One of the audience questions to Hicks was about the underutilization of the Skillbridge program. Hicks says she would like to see the program utilized more. A full gamut of military issues were discussed during the Stewart-Hicks interview at the symposium: pay issues, food insecurity, the Department of Defense’s annual budget, food stamps, food insecurity, budget audits and accountability of the government to name a few. (War Horse, 2023) .

The Skillbridge program is highlighted in Quinn’s piece. Should each branch of the military consider having Skillbridge as a mandatory program to replace or the Transition Assistance Program (TAP)? The TAP program, which will also be discussed more in depth later in the paper, is only a three-day transition program (Kamarck, 2018). Skillbridge, The Department of Defense sponsored Skillbridge programs lets soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines participate a 180-day internship, training or apprenticeship off base at a business, training center or another Army instillation.

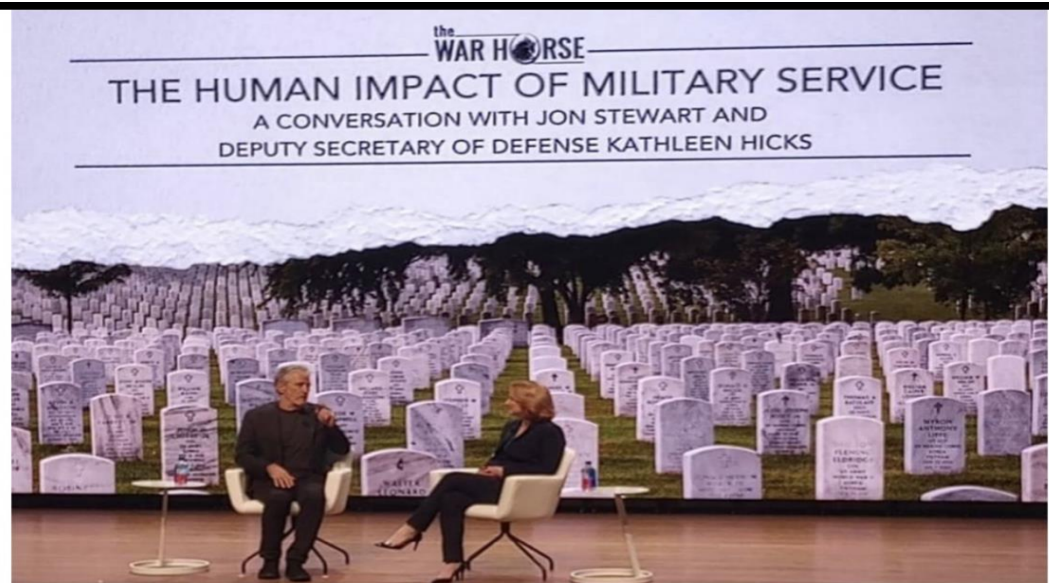
For one, the Skillbridge program is much more comprehensive than the TAP program. As mentioned above, the TAP program is only 3 days. The author attended three TAP programs over the years. The first was in 1993 at the end of the author’s first enlistment when the author got out of the Army the first time. The second time was when the author was at the end of his final enlistment in 2005. In both instances, the three days of meetings, talks and seminars were more of a “check the box”. perfunctory activity for a



soldier to get out of the way. If a soldier, sailor, Airman or Marine is about to get out, his or her mind may be focused elsewhere. In Army speak, he or she is considered a “short-timer” and has “21 days and a wake-up”. The TAP program should be an annual three-day ritual that can be built on every year- TAP 1, TAP 2, TAP 3, TAP 4 and TAP 5. Each 3-day TAP seminar each year can be a review and a reinforcement from the year before.

*Consider these statistics from the Quinn piece, “75% of soldiers leave the service without a job lined up and 50% within a year of taking that first job.”* (Summey, 2021). The Quinn article does not give dates, or the number of soldiers surveyed about their post-military employment, yet it can’t be escaped how truly alarming a statistic this is. I can see potential pitfalls to the Skillbridge program. The Quinn article does not give dates, or the number of soldiers surveyed about their post-military employment, yet it can’t be escaped how truly alarming a statistic this is. I can see potential pitfalls to the Skillbridge program. My first two questions would be as follows “What is the soldier’s MOS? How “mission-essential” is this soldier to the senior leadership and the unit?”. As desperately as a soldier needs the Skillbridge training for survival in the outside world, will the soldier’s senior leadership be willing and able to part with their troops for a full six months. The soldier would essentially be lost to the unit for good and once the six-month training program is complete – the soldier will start “out processing”.

Figure 2s: Just like the PACT ACT and the 9-11 first responders, Jon Stewart worries about our men and women in uniform and those who left the military.



Liked by **danie.la3194** and **1 other**

**jeffreywilliamwalsh** Jon Stewart- the perfect catalyst. If anyone can bridge the military/ civilian divide it's Mr. Stewart! Veterans only make up 6.4% of the population and active duty military are less than 1% of the population. Jon Stewart is not afraid to ask the tough questions, to say what needs to be said...often in a humorous manner. Kudos also to DoD Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks for her up-to-date info and analysis. An interesting discussion about the Pact Act, the military budget, active duty pay and many other topics. I was honored to be in audience.

Figures 2t-2u: Nursing and Major League Baseball. The possibilities are endless in the Department of Defense Skillbridge program.

The image contains two promotional posters. The left poster is for a "Nursing Internship" by TalentGro Military and DoD Skillbridge. It features three circular photos: a soldier in uniform, a woman in a nurse's uniform, and a man in a military uniform. The text includes "2023 Cohort Schedule:" with dates from March to December, contact information for TalentGro Military, and a QR code. The right poster is for "Skillbridge Opportunity with the Texas Rangers". It features photos of baseball players in Rangers uniforms. The text lists job roles: IT Project Manager, Infrastructure Engineer, Network Engineer, Electrician, and Marketing Analyst. It also includes contact information for Brandon@7Eagle.com and the 7 Eagle Group logo.

**TalentGro MILITARY**  
DoD SKILLBRIDGE  
**Nursing INTERNSHIP**  
FOR TRANSITIONING SERVICE MEMBERS WITH HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE

An amazing opportunity with Guaranteed Placement!

Scan the QR Code for more Info on our current Skillbridge opportunities.

**CONTACT:**  
(208) 991-9003  
(346) 646-4859  
talentgromilitary@hamilton-ryker.com

**2023 Cohort Schedule:**  
20 March – 28 April  
15 May – 23 June  
11 July – 18 August  
4 September – 13 October  
30 October – 7 December

**SKILLBRIDGE OPPORTUNITY WITH THE TEXAS RANGERS**

- IT Project Manager
- Infrastructure Engineer
- Network Engineer
- Electrician
- Marketing Analyst

QUESTIONS?  
Brandon@7Eagle.com

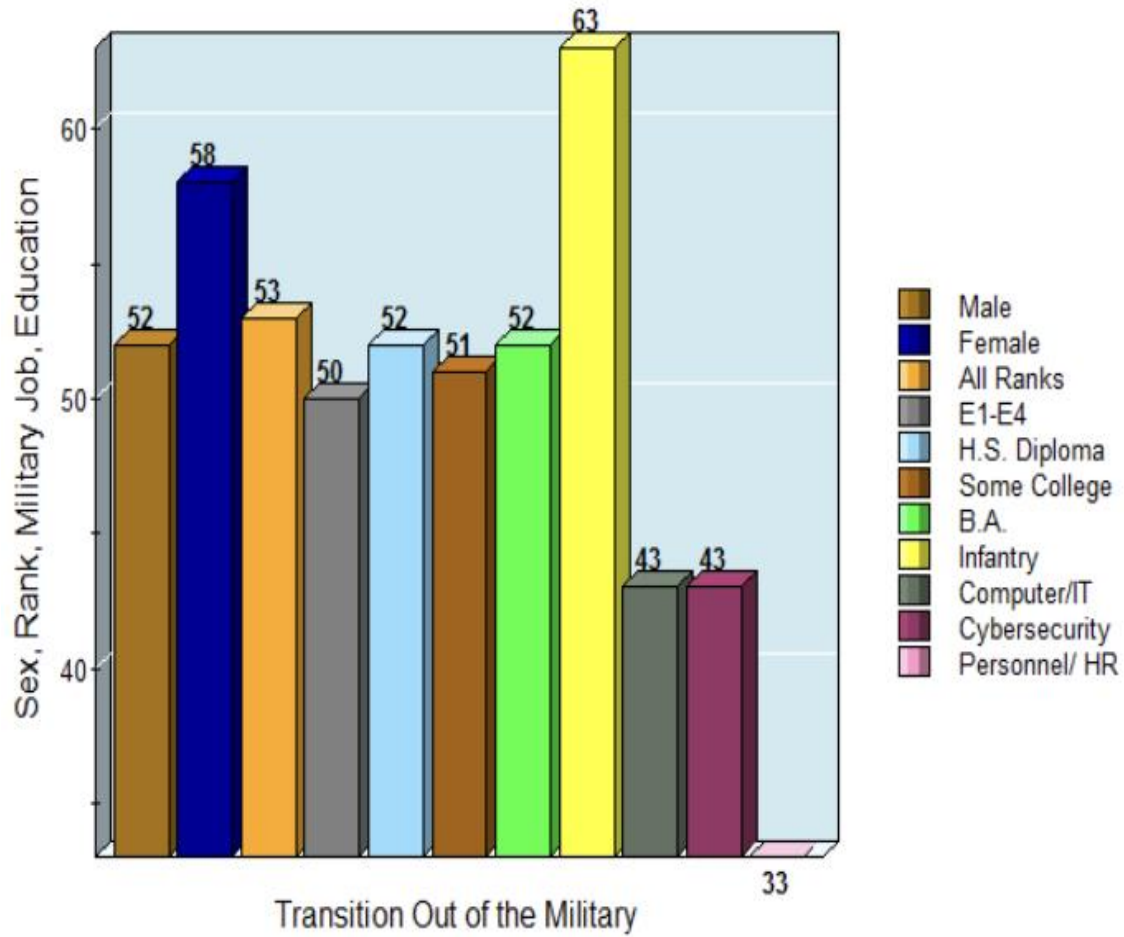
7 EAGLE GROUP

is military lingo for doing all the necessary preparation for leaving a post for good- whether it is to go to another post or to get out of the military altogether. The good news is that many of Skillbridge training programs 1) lead to a technical and specialized skillset and 2) lead to permanent employment. Consider the program at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. They started a 9-week, full-time Aviation Maintenance Skillbridge program designed to train and place transitioning service members, veterans and military spouses into aviation maintenance and technician careers with reputable aerospace industry partners, such as AAR Corp. The program is delivered virtually and on six U.S. military installations. This presentation will outline the collective efforts needed to build a

successful military transition program to support the aviation maintenance industry.

(Albritton, Witcher 2023)

Figure 2v. Predictably, transitions are harder on the combat-arms soldiers who get out because their job does not translate to a civilian job.



Hire Military is the group that implements the DOD Skillbridge initiative. Quinn also includes \*military spouses when configuring options for Skillbridge and draws on his own personal experiences as a married soldier. Quinn was hoping to stay in the service for

30 years but that was not to be. After moving post to post for 7 out of his last 9 years in the service his wife said “Enough”. Quinn’s wife had a good job and told him she was not moving so he got out for good. Recognizing the Army family concept- he decided to do something about it. The DOD Skillbridge program helps the Army spouse obtain career-oriented meaningful employment...just like the soldier, sailor, Airman, Marine or Coastie. It is quite possible a spouse with a good job and a good salary might be more engaged in the local Army community than not. (Selko,2018) The bill for spouses known as Executive Order 13473 is indeed a good one leading potentially less housing insecurity for the soldier. If the spouse is a local hire, the soldier getting out would have a buffer while he or she is looking for meaningful employment. For the reluctant commander that does not want to lose his soldier to the civilian world and/ or considers his soldier or Marine “mission-essential”, not all programs are the full 180 days. For example, the CVS Skillbridge Pharmacy Tech Program in North Carolina is only 12 weeks (McNichols 2014).

I read Quinn’s LinkedIn posts quite a bit. Daily. The posts on LinkedIn match what was said in his “Lean Mean” article. Quinn practices what he preaches and harps on the same themes over and over based on his personal experience. Firstly, soldiers, sailors, Coast Guard personnel and Marines need to plan for their transition out of the service a full year before they leave the military. Quinn sites many reasons and among them is the fact that a former serviceman’s first job out of the military usually lasts only one year. In other words, many veterans are taking that first job out of the Army for survival and

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socioeconomic reasons – not as an ideal career move. His admission about military spouses is quite insightful. What's that corny adage? "Happy wife, happy life". As the "other", the military spouse shouldn't have to settle for table scraps at every post that the military man goes to (and vice versa for female soldiers). Quinn's concept of the "portable \*career" is indeed a sound one. A spouse working at a commissary or a PX is a gross misuse of talent and skills. What Quinn considers a portable career is just like it sounds- a career that can be utilized at any post, during a deployment or after the service. The investment in the military spouse as an Army team member is going to reduce housing insecurity, job insecurity and financial insecurity for both the spouse and the former soldier. The non-competitive eligibility is a great idea. When a serviceman applies for civil service job he or she is given a leg up because they are given "points" giving the individual a higher rating or score and therefore on a better track for meaningful employment (Lewis 2012)

After all, can 1 million followers be wrong? I don't think so. Spousal unemployment is at 25%. HireMilitary is also for spouses. Quinn continues to be very pro-LinkedIn. His program A LinkedIn Certification Program- "Digital Networking Professional Program" offers three Routes to digital proficiency and excellence. Gone are all the long paper trails of yesteryear. When the author got out of the service the first time in 1993, it was still customary to match a resume with a cover letter with a corresponding envelope. It was also customary at the author's grad (DePaul) to send out off-white/ ivory matching envelopes, cover letters and resumes by U.S. Mail and then wait (with bated breath) for a

response. Jobhunters of yesteryear could wait three weeks or a month and then have to call the company. If a job hunter felt audacious, the job hunter could go to the business and leave a business card at the front desk.

Quinn also favors “digital networking” Quinn’s Digital Networking Professional Program tracks are as follows. Here is summary directly from LinkedIn: “Digital networking has become an essential skill for members of the professional workplace. The network, personal brand, reputation, and trust that individuals build from an online presence impacts the ability to find meaningful employment, build a reputation within a company, increase pipelines for sales, source and recruit talent, and communicate both internally, externally, across professional organizations and industries. Key examples include: ▪ Sales leaders use LinkedIn to build relationships, identify leads and grow business ▪ Talent acquisition Professionals rely on LinkedIn to source talent ▪

Figure 2x. WARTAC is a Skillbridge program that trains transitioning soldiers to work at the VA when they become veterans.



**WARTAC ELIGIBILITY**

WARTAC is open to Wounded Warriors and transitioning active-duty Service members in the transition process with 180-days or less.

**Value Proposition**

- Long-term career opportunity with endless advancement opportunities.
- Quality career opportunity with a mission of service to country and fellow Veterans.
- Allows potential employee to “test drive” VA as an employer to ensure suitability.
- Answers the “what’s next” question by providing a career opportunity with the federal government, thereby reducing Veteran homelessness and unemployment rates.

**WARTAC**

Please contact your local Career Skills Program Office for additional information.

\* Belen Salazar  
belen.g.salazar.ctr@army.mil  
BLDG 503 RM 304  
o: 915-568-4840 c: 805-620-7242

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cindy.kinglesmith.ctr@army.mil  
BLDG 503 RM 305  
o: 915-569-6293 c: 469-730-6547

**WARRIOR TRAINING ADVANCEMENT COURSE (WARTAC)**

Veteran Service Representative

Marketing professionals use LinkedIn to create content and reach decision-makers ▪  
Executives use LinkedIn to grow the reputation or brand of their company ▪ HR  
professionals use LinkedIn.”

Finally, there’s Skillbridge. There’s TAP. There’s WARTAC. What is WARTAC?  
WARTAC or Warrior Training Advancement Course is different than most of other DoD  
Skillbridge internships. The WARTAC internship is directly connected with the VA. The  
serviceman or servicewoman gets out and then reports for work at the VA. This DoD  
Skillbridge internship puts the separating soldier on career path with the U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs (VA). The intern learns how to work at one of two jobs in the VA’s  
Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) department. The WARTAC training program is  
also open to Wounded Warriors on active duty and prepares the soldier, sailor, airman or  
Marine for a career in the VA Claims department.

### Deployments and Unit Support

#### First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and Michelle Obama are “Joining Forces”

First Lady Michelle Obama and current First Lady Dr. Jill Biden have their own ongoing  
collaborative to end veteran homelessness called “Joining Forces”. Ms. Obama and Ms.  
Biden both contended that their “housing first” approach is ongoing and will not  
immediately end when their husbands leave office. (Thevenin 2018). Journalist Leo Shane  
contended in 2016 that Joining Forces help both veterans, active-duty personnel and their

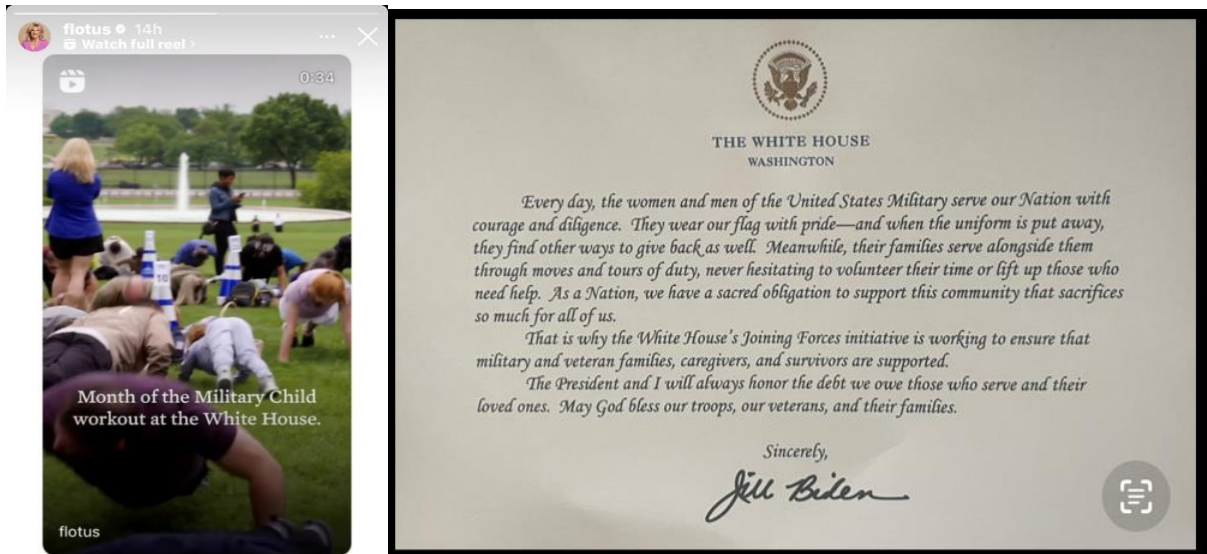


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spouses. Their spouses are helped by being helped by being able to take a spouse's job credentials and certification convert them into military credentials for when soldiers come down on orders and are transferred to a new post. After conducting many interviews with veterans in Fresno, California, one researcher linked veteran homelessness to childhood trauma. (Pallares 2020).

The "homeless veteran" is by no means a new phenomenon. \*Dr. Biden's father and son were both in the military and her husband is the current commander-in-chief. The Joining Forces mission ties in nicely with the Department of Veteran Affairs' new mission statement: "To fulfill President Lincoln's promise to care for those who have served in our nation's military and for their families, caregivers and survivors."

Figure 2y-z. Dr. Jill Biden was the keynote speaker for the Student Veterans of America NATCON conference in 2021. Dr. Biden's father and her son were both in the military. Dr. Biden has been working with former First Lady Michelle Obama since 2014 on the Joining Forces project- an initiative to help the families of veterans.



Uncle Sam and Recruitment

The military symposium at University of Chicago featured several military experts and one famous civilian, former talk show host and military advocate Jon Stewart. The journalism society War Horse hosted the daylong conference. There were multiple attempts throughout the day address the issues hindering military readiness and morale throughout the day: recruitment shortfalls, mental health issues and the military-civilian divide were just a few of them. Legendary journalist Bob Woodward reminisced on his life at sea on a nuclear sub and how it led to his life in the Pentagon and reporting about the Nixon Watergate cover-up. It wasn't until the nighttime keynote speaker Jon Stewart took the stage that the tough questions were asked. Stewart shared the stage with Dr. Kathleen Hicks, the #2 at the Department of Defense. Stewart addressed every 800-pound elephant in the room, one-by-one, pulling no punches. Dr. Hicks addressed the recruiting shortfall. Hicks had many interesting points: It's not just the military that is having trouble with recruitment.

*Dr. Hicks: "What I'm going to tell you is that great leaders at all levels build teams, and that's what we're about at the Defense Department. The all-volunteer force has been vital. But what we do need is to connect young Americans to the concept of service. It's not just in the military. We're having challenges: nurses, doctors, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps. Everywhere you look, there's disconnectedness, and that's very, very challenging, I think, for the country overall. We have a major civics problem, and we, in the Defense Department, feel that in the recruiting challenges that we have."*

*Dr. Hicks: Veteran families have a humanistic story to tell and that could lead to recruitment. Veterans also have a humanistic story to tell and that could lead to recruitment.*

*Dr Hicks: I think what I would say is, yes, and first of all, veterans who are journalists, a fantastic resource. We have to get beyond that just by virtue of the expanse of the challenges to be covered, the experiences to be covered, and the fewer the veterans, the more important it*

Part 2- Life in the Military

is for non-veterans to be also reporting on and learning this space. That's back to my disconnectedness piece. But the rounded pieces, and then also, are there not parts of that military experience if fairly and fully reported for service members and their families that have positive aspects as well. And that those stories deserve to be told. I do not think those stories are told as much anymore" (War Horse, 2023)

Figure 2aa-2ee. Military recruitment posters have changed over the years as have the slogans. The slogans have been etched into the American lexicon: "Be All You Can Be" and "Looking for a Few Good Men" are still quotes today. (\*In 2023- the Marine slogan "Looking for a few good men" might have to be updated to reflect the times with "Looking for a few good men and women"



Recruitment includes everyone under age 35 (\*except during the Iraq war when a E1

## Part 2- Life in the Military

private could join the Army at age 41. The Armed Forces have been a great melting pot as men, women and all, races, colors and creeds have been welcomed equally. That is not to say that Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard, Army and Marines have not had challenges with the LBGTQ community and racism. President Clinton instituted “don’t ask, don’t tell policy” to effectively keep all servicemen and servicewomen “in the closet” until they left the service. The DADT policy started in 1994 during the Clinton Administration and would not be repealed until 2011.

Service during World War II was seen as one’s patriotic duty. While the sailor was overseas, women back home morphed into “Rosie the Riveter” working in factories helping produce products for America’s national defense. Celebrities made propaganda films, and many served in both WWII and the Korean war. Actor Jimmy Stewart and baseball players Ted Williams and Jackie Robinson served during WWII.

Figure 2ff-2hh. Young men of America were drafted in 1940 for WWII and in 1973 for the Vietnam War. The common man wasn’t the only one drafted during WWII as movie stars and famous athletes joined the ranks. Jackie Robinson lettered in four sports at UCLA before getting called up to the Major Leagues (football, basketball, track and field and baseball) and breaking the color barrier on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1947. Every year in the MLB, April 15<sup>th</sup> is Jackie Robinson Day and the whole league wears the #42, Jackie Robinson’s number. Robinson endures a great deal of prejudice during his Hall of Fame baseball career and in the Army. As a member of 761<sup>st</sup> Tank Battalion, a unit that distinguished itself during the Battle of the Bulge, Lieutenant Robinson was asked to sit in the back of bus, just like future civil rights hero Rosa Parks. One time at fellow athlete and Army soldier, Joe Louis, heavyweight champion came to the aid of Robinson at Fort Riley, Kansas.



Women Veterans, Friends and Heroes

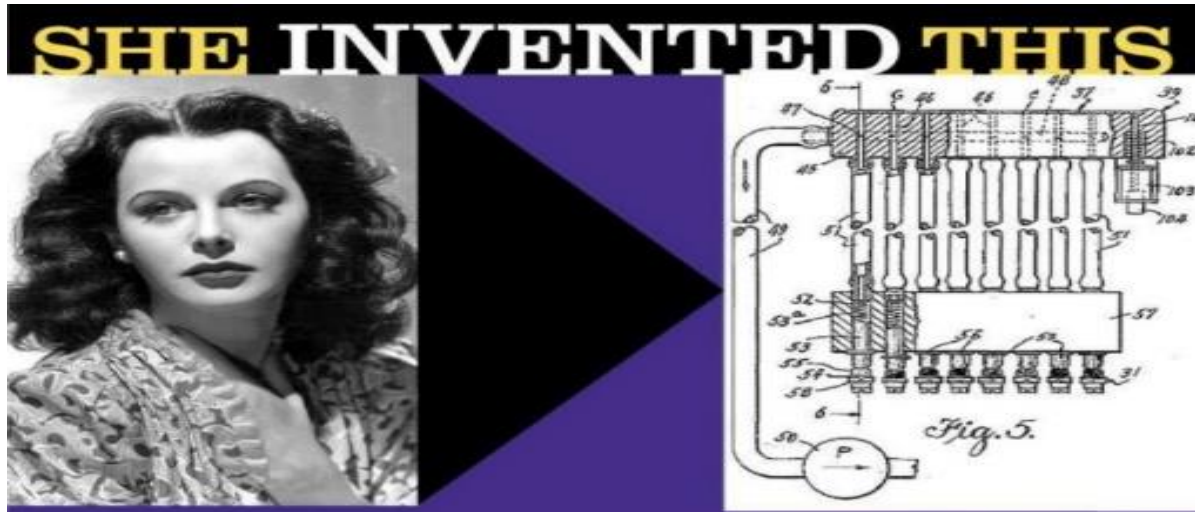
Today women in the military are in combat roles. The first two women to become Army Rangers were 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Shaye Haver and Capt. Kristen Griest in 2015. (Nueman 2015) – the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII. Women were in service support roles during WWII: the Women's Army Corps (WAC), Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES), and Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Women were forbidden from combat zones; however, many became nurses to help the men injured in combat.

Women played a key role during WWI and WWII. Marie Curie was never in the service. Marie Curie is not from the United States. Yet between winning two Nobel Prizes for Chemistry and Physics, she found time to create an invention to help the Allied troops in Europe. Her mobile X-Ray units during WWI are said to have saved over 1 million lives. (Ghosh, 2016) One tonic for the troops was drop-dead gorgeous ingenue Hedy Lamarr. As a Hollywood star she starred with two of the biggest leading men at the time Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy. Yet, there was another side to Hedy Lamarr away from the glamour and glitz of Tinseltown. She was an inventor. And her invention called “frequency channel hopping” is used today for Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, during WWII and during the Cuban Blockade of 1962. Women make up a small but every increasing part of the military. The Air Force has the largest percentage of women with nearly 20%. Female Marines hover around 5%. The Army and Navy have about 15% women in each branch. Servicewomen are now finally being selected for combat jobs in the military.

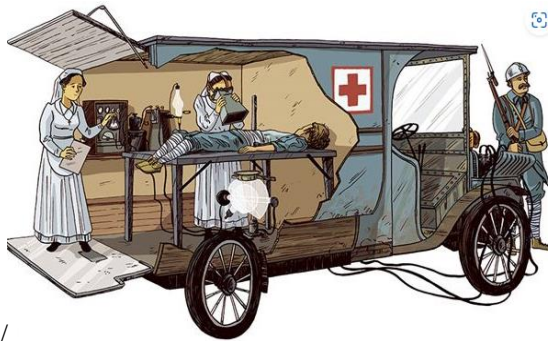
Part 2- Life in the Military

Figures 2ii-2kk.: Curie, Lamarr and Kwolek. Three ladies of liberty championed inventions that literally changed the world- on and off the battlefield. Kwolek is the inventor of Kevlar. Kevlar- saves lives in the theatre of war and the for the police force with lightweight vests. Kevlar is 10 times stronger than steel (not pictured). Nobel Prize winner Marie Curie also pioneered a mobile x-ray machine that saved over 1 million lives during WWI. Hollywood leading lady and temptress Hedy Lamarr was so much more than glamour and glitz. Lamarr patented “frequency hopping” used to top torpedoes during WWII and during the Cuban blockade during the early 60s. Today Lamarr’s inventions can be seen in Wi-Fi and Bluetooth. The article on the lower right is about a mother and daughter who joined the service together.

**SHE INVENTED THIS**



**Hedy Lamarr**, a celebrated actress in MGM's "Golden Age" and a mathematician, invented an early version of frequency hopping in 1942 with composer George Antheil. It was intended to make torpedoes more difficult to detect and was used in 1962 by military ships during a blockade of Cuba.



Women today still make up a small part of the military. And just like during WWII, when then can't join the service, they are able to contribute to the military effort in other

ways. Stephanie Kwolek invented Kevlar in a DuPont lab in 1965. The military application of Kevlar didn't occur until many years later as Kevlar is lightweight and 10 times stronger than steel. The opportunities for women are going with the addition of a new branch of service by the Trump administration- the Space Force. The percentage of women in all branches of the military is growing. The Air Force has the largest percentage of women with nearly 20%. Female Marines hover around 5%. The Army and Navy have about 15% women in each branch. Servicewomen are now being selected for combat jobs in the military.

Figure 2II-2cc. As combat roles have become more common for women in the military, many former servicewomen are sharing their story with the general public. The first two female Army Rangers passed the Ranger course in 2015.



Churches and Chaplains and the Homeless

For the first time in history, a Gallup poll has shown that less than half of adults (47%) are members of a church or congregation (Jones 2021). In 1999, 70% of Americans belonged to a church, synagogue or mosque. So... does that translate into housing for the homeless? As I understand in Christians are in the “love thy neighbor” business. Homeless aren’t technically someone’s neighbor.... but they could be if given half a chance. Christians are also told that “we are our brother’s keeper”. With these Christian bedrock ideals in mind, can America’s churches do more to help their embattled brothers and sisters? A Housing on Urban Development report states there are 680,000 homeless Americans every night in 2020 (HUD 2020). The National Congregations Study (NCS) states there were 414,000 congregations in America in 2006 and has leveled off somewhat to 384,000 parishioners. (Christianity Today 2021) In a utopia and a so-called perfect world, each shepherd would welcome two homeless to their flock. In a perfect world, two homeless would be able to stay at the church six days a week and join the congregation for a meal or two and a church service on Sunday.

Utopia is sunshine and rainbows. Reality is a whole another thing altogether. At a conference in Bloomington, Illinois co-hosted by the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) and the Supportive Housing Providers Association (SHPA) caseworkers from HAC and SHPA lauded the well-intended efforts of rural church congregations with one caveat- the caseworkers stated that the church help were not versed in patient care, social work and



*Part 2- Life in the Military*

the continuum of care so sorely needed to help veterans get back on their feet. There's no shortage of articles about the topic. One of the more interesting and sad articles is "Churches Helping Homeless Fight Restrictions with Religious Freedom Cases" in Religion

Figure 2mm: Some churches are actually housing the homeless. In other cases, there are city ordinances forbidding housing the homeless in a place of worship. St. Boniface church in San Francisco is one of those churches helping out.



Churches answer the call to shelter the homeless - U.S. Catholic

[Visit](#)

Unplugged magazine. The article goes on to talk about the City Walk Urban Mission in Tallahassee, Florida that could not expand its shelter and fined the ministry \$250 a day for violating city codes. Renee Miller, Executive Director, sued the city and the county. A NIMBY love for the homeless. - love the homeless, but not in our backyard.

## Part 3: Life After the United States Military

- What are some possible causes of veteran homelessness that are not always considered?
- Why are there a disproportionate amount of military veterans homeless?
- Why are there any veteran homeless with over 100 agencies willing to help?

Figure 3a. There are no shortages of agencies to help the homeless

**Figure 1: Federal Programs and Tax Expenditures Whose Primary Purpose is to Provide Education, Employment, or Self-Employment Assistance to Servicemembers, Veterans, or Their Families**

Programs that provide funding and benefits	
<p><b>Department of Agriculture (USDA)</b></p> <p>1. Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program</p>	<p><b>Department of State</b></p> <p>23. Veterans Innovation Partnership</p>
<p><b>Department of Defense (DOD)</b></p> <p>2. DOD Discretionary Certification &amp; Licensure (or the Military Services' COOL programs)</p> <p>3. DOD Education and Employment Initiative</p> <p>4. DOD Operation Warfighter Program</p> <p>5. DOD Tuition Assistance</p> <p>6. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve</p> <p>7. Job Training, Employment Skills Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships (or SkillBridge)</p> <p>8. Military OneSource Spouse Career Center</p> <p>9. Spouse Education and Career Opportunities</p> <p>10. Transition Assistance Advisors</p> <p>11. Troops to Teachers Grant Program</p> <p>12. United Services Military Apprenticeship Program</p>	<p><b>Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)</b></p> <p>24. All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance (or Montgomery GI Bill)</p> <p>25. Compensated Work Therapy</p> <p>26. Dependents Educational Assistance Program (or Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance)</p> <p>27. Educational and Vocational Counseling (or Chapter 36)</p> <p>28. Post-9/11 GI Bill</p> <p>29. Reserve Educational Assistance Program</p> <p>30. VA Work-study Program</p> <p>31. Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership</p> <p>32. VetSuccess on Campus</p> <p>33. Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment</p> <p>34. Warrior Training Advancement Course</p> <p>35. Warriors to Workforce</p>
<p><b>Department of Education (Education)</b></p> <p>13. Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success</p> <p>14. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant</p> <p>15. Veterans Upward Bound</p>	<p><b>Office of Personnel Management (OPM)</b></p> <p>36. Vets to Feds Career Development Program</p>
<p><b>Department of Energy (DOE)</b></p> <p>16. DOE Scholars Program for Veterans, the Federal Energy Management Program</p>	<p><b>Small Business Administration (SBA)</b></p> <p>37. Boots to Business Reboot</p> <p>38. Service-Disabled Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Program</p> <p>39. Veteran Federal Procurement Entrepreneurship Training Program</p> <p>40. Veterans Business Outreach Center</p> <p>41. Women Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Program</p>
<p><b>Department of Health and Human Services</b></p> <p>17. Veterans' Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing Program</p>	<p><b>Jointly Administered</b></p> <p>42. All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance (or Montgomery GI Bill) – Selected Reserve<sup>a</sup></p> <p>43. Coast Guard Transition Assistance Program (Coast Guard TAP)<sup>b,c</sup></p> <p>44. DOD Transition Assistance Program (DOD TAP)<sup>c,d</sup></p> <p>45. Tuition Assistance Top Up<sup>e</sup></p>
<p><b>Department of Homeland Security (DHS): Coast Guard</b></p> <p>18. Coast Guard Retiree Services Program</p> <p>19. Coast Guard Spouse Employment Assistance Program</p> <p>20. Coast Guard Tuition Assistance/Voluntary Education</p>	<p><b>Tax Expenditure</b></p> <p><b>Department of the Treasury (Treasury)</b></p> <p>1. Tax exclusion for GI Bill Benefits</p>
<p><b>Department of Labor (DOL)</b></p> <p>21. Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program</p> <p>22. Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program</p>	

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-19-97R

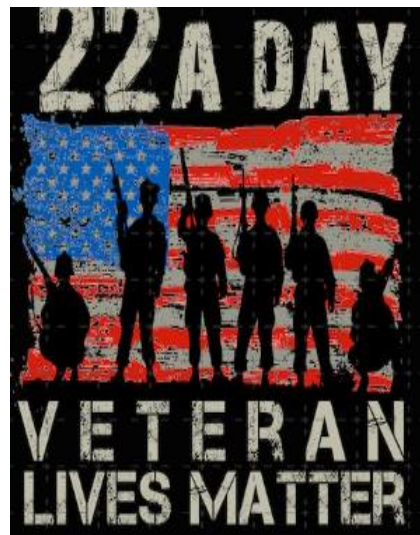
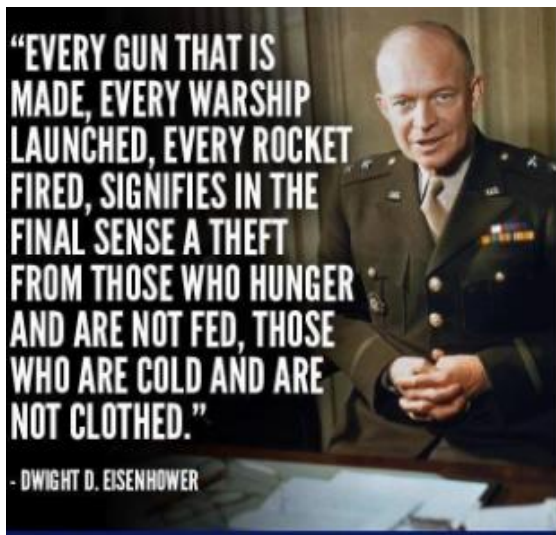
**Accessible Data for Figure 1: Federal Programs and Tax Expenditures Whose Primary Purpose is to Provide Education, Employment, or Self-Employment Assistance to Servicemembers, Veterans, or Their Families**

PTSD, TBI and 22 a Day

What are some other possible causes of veteran homelessness that are not always considered?

- **Institutionalization:** Maybe a soldier from a low socio-economic status who served for years at a job only suitable for the military.... not the civilian world should have never got out. And if the military was their very first job.... that is all he or she knows. So maybe that soldier, sailor, airman or Marine should consider going back in. As the old saying goes “Everyone complains about marriage but look at who stays on to reenlist”. The 2015 Academy Award winning film “The Hurt Locker” the soldiers in the movie were “EOD” i.e., the bomb squad. Jeremy Renner plays one of the bomb squad members. When he was on leave/ R and R/ furlough, he didn’t seem to know his wife and looked painfully confused at all the choices of cereals at the grocery store. The movie opens with an apt quote “War is a Drug” (Ebert, 2009).

Figure 3b-3c. The 5 Star General from Abilene, Kansas never lost his common touch. Eisenhower knew what was in store for soldiers returning from the war.



*Part 3- Life After the Military*

- **Too many deployments:** A deployment is on-the-job military experience. An old grizzled old sergeant major and the company commander probably prefer someone who has been in-country, in a combat zone and in the theater of war than a greenhorn, a newbie, etc. And there are Marines and soldiers who want to go on another deployment without prompting.

Figure 3d: There are as many reasons soldiers and sailors leave the military as there are reasons to leave the military. Soldiers and Marines can end up disabled or with PTSD. Soldiers aren't the only ones who can get PTSD. Nurses, athletes and military veterans are all at risk for PTSD.



- **Soldiers like war? War likes soldiers? Americans like war?** What is America's favorite sport to watch? Football. Concussions and Joe Theisman-like broken legs don't scare Americans away. Butkus. Urlacher. Singletary. Mack. Chicago Bear heroes are those who hit the hardest. Video games? Tour of Duty. World of Warcraft. The military's relationship with video games and Army recruitment goes way back. (Scripps News, 2020). Movies? Apocalypse Now. Rambo. Platoon. America has been at war 93% of the time since the beginning of our grand experiment in democracy since 1776.

### **America's Wars**

Here is a list of America's involvement in war over the last 250 years:

1776 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Second Cherokee War, Pennamite-Yankee War. 1777 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Second Cherokee War, Pennamite-Yankee War 1778 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War 1779 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War. 1780 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War 1781 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War 1782 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War. 1783 – American Revolutionary War, Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War. 1784 – Chickamauga Wars, Pennamite-Yankee War, Oconee War. 1785 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1786 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1787 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1788 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1789 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1790 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1791 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1792 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1793 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1794 – Chickamauga Wars, Northwest Indian War. 1795 – Northwest Indian War

1796 – No major war

1797 – No major war

1798 – Quasi-War. 1799 – Quasi-War. 1800 – Quasi-War. 1801 – First Barbary War. 1802 – First Barbary War. 1803 – First Barbary War. 1804 – First Barbary War. 1805 – First Barbary War. 1806 – Sabine Expedition

1810 – U.S. occupies Spanish-held West Florida. 1811 – Tecumseh’s War. 1812 – War of 1812, Tecumseh’s War, Seminole Wars, U.S. occupies Spanish-held Amelia Island and other parts of East Florida. 1813 – War of 1812, Tecumseh’s War, Peoria War, Creek War, U.S. expands its territory in West Florida 1814 – War of 1812, Creek War, U.S. expands its territory in Florida, Anti-piracy war. 1815 – War of 1812, Second Barbary War, Anti-piracy war. 1816 – First Seminole War, Anti-piracy war. 1817 – First Seminole War, Anti-piracy war. 1818 – First Seminole War, Anti-piracy war. 1819 – Yellowstone Expedition, Anti-piracy war. 1820 – Yellowstone Expedition, Anti-piracy war. 1821 – Anti-piracy war (see note above). 1822 – Anti-piracy war (see note above). 1823 – Anti-piracy war, Arikara War. 1824 – Anti-piracy war. 1825 – Yellowstone Expedition, Anti-piracy war

1826 – No major war

1827 – Winnebago War

1828 – No major war

1829 – No major war

1830 – No major war

1831 – Sac and Fox Indian War. 1832 – Black Hawk War. 1833 – Cherokee Indian War. 1834 – Cherokee Indian War, Pawnee Indian Territory Campaign. 1835 – Cherokee Indian War, Seminole Wars, Second Creek War. 1836 – Cherokee Indian War, Seminole Wars, Second Creek War, Missouri-Iowa Border War. 1837 – Cherokee Indian War, Seminole Wars, Second Creek War, Osage Indian War, Buckshot War. 1838 – Cherokee Indian War, Seminole Wars, Buckshot War, Heatherly Indian War. 1839 – Cherokee Indian War, Seminole Wars. 1840 – Seminole Wars, U.S. naval forces invade Fiji Islands. 1841 – Seminole Wars, U.S. naval forces invade McKean Island, Gilbert Islands, and Samoa. 1842 – Seminole Wars. 1843 – U.S. forces clash with Chinese, U.S. troops invade African coast. 1844 – Texas-Indian Wars. 1845 – Texas-Indian Wars.. 1846 – Mexican-American War, Texas-Indian Wars. 1847 – Mexican-American War, Texas-Indian Wars. 1848 – Mexican-American War, Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War. 1849 – Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians. 1850 – Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Yuma War, California Indian Wars, Pitt River Expedition 1851 – Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, Yuma War, Utah Indian Wars, California Indian Wars. 1852 – Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Yuma War, Utah Indian Wars, California Indian Wars. 1853 – Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Yuma War, Utah Indian Wars, Walker War, California Indian Wars. 1854 – Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians 1855 – Seminole Wars, Texas-Indian Wars, Cayuse War, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Yakima War, Winnas Expedition, Klickitat War, Puget Sound War,

Rogue River Wars, U.S. forces invade Fiji Islands and Uruguay. 1856 – Seminole Wars, Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, California Indian Wars, Puget Sound War, Rogue River Wars, Tintic War. 1857 – Seminole Wars, Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, California Indian Wars, Utah War, Conflict in Nicaragua. 1858 – Seminole Wars, Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Mohave War, California Indian Wars, Spokane-Coeur d’Alene-Palooos War, Utah War, U.S. forces invade Fiji Islands and Uruguay. 1859 Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, California Indian Wars, Pecos Expedition, Antelope Hills Expedition, Bear River Expedition, John Brown’s raid, U.S. forces launch attack against Paraguay, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1860 – Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Paiute War, Kiowa-Comanche War 1861 – American Civil War, Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Cheyenne Campaign. 1862 – American Civil War, Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Cheyenne Campaign, Dakota War of 1862, 1863 – American Civil War, Texas-Indian Wars, Southwest Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Cheyenne Campaign, Colorado War, Goshute War. 1864 – American Civil War, Texas-Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Cheyenne Campaign, Colorado War, Snake War. 1865 – American Civil War, Texas-Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Colorado War, Snake War, Utah’s Black Hawk War. 1866 – Texas-Indian Wars, Navajo Wars, Apache Wars, California Indian Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Snake War, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Red Cloud’s War, Franklin County War, U.S. invades Mexico, Conflict with China. 1867 – Texas-Indian Wars, Long Walk of the Navajo, Apache Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Snake War, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Red Cloud’s War, Comanche Wars, Franklin County War, U.S. troops occupy Nicaragua and attack Taiwan. 1868 – Texas-Indian Wars, Long Walk of the Navajo, Apache Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Snake War, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Red Cloud’s War, Comanche Wars, Battle of Washita River, Franklin County War 1869 – Texas-Indian Wars, Apache Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Comanche Wars, Franklin County War. 1870 – Texas-Indian Wars, Apache Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Comanche Wars, Franklin County War 1871 – Texas-Indian Wars, Apache Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Comanche Wars, Franklin County War, Kingsley Cave Massacre, U.S. forces invade Korea. 1872 – Texas-Indian Wars, Apache Wars, Utah’s Black Hawk War, Comanche Wars, Modoc War, Franklin County War. 1873 – Texas-Indian Wars, Comanche Wars, Modoc War, Apache Wars, Cypress Hills Massacre, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1874 – Texas-Indian Wars, Comanche Wars, Red River War, Mason County War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1875 – Conflict in Mexico, Texas-Indian Wars, Comanche Wars, Eastern Nevada, Mason County War, Colfax County War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1876 – Texas-Indian Wars, Black Hills War, Mason County War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1877 – Texas-Indian Wars, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Black Hills War, Nez Perce War, Mason County War, Lincoln County War, San Elizario Salt War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1878 – Paiute Indian conflict, Bannock War, Cheyenne War, Lincoln County War, U.S. forces invade Mexico 1879 – Cheyenne War, Sheepeater Indian War, White River War, U.S. forces

invade Mexico. 1880 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1881 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1882 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1883 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1884 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1885 – Apache Wars, Eastern Nevada Expedition, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1886 – Apache Wars, Pleasant Valley War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1887 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1888 – U.S. show of force against Haiti, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1889 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1890 – Sioux Indian War, Skirmish between 1st Cavalry and Indians, Ghost Dance War, Wounded Knee, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1891 – Sioux Indian War, Ghost Dance War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1892 – Johnson County War, U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1893 – U.S. forces invade Mexico and Hawaii. 1894 – U.S. forces invade Mexico. 1895 – U.S. forces invade Mexico, Bannock Indian Disturbances. 1896 – U.S. forces invade Mexico

1897 – No major war.

1898 – Spanish-American War, Battle of Leech Lake, Chippewa Indian Disturbances. 1899 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1900 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1901 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1902 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1903 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1904 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1905 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1906 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1907 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1908 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1909 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1910 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1911 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1912 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars. 1913 – Philippine-American War, Banana Wars, New Mexico Navajo War. 1914 – Banana Wars, U.S. invades Mexico. 1915 – Banana Wars, U.S. invades Mexico, Colorado Paiute War. 1916 – Banana Wars, U.S. invades Mexico. 1917 – Banana Wars, World War I, U.S. invades Mexico. 1918 – Banana Wars, World War I, U.S. invades Mexico. 1919 – Banana Wars, U.S. invades Mexico. 1920 – Banana Wars. 1921 – Banana Wars. 1922 – Banana Wars. 1923 – Banana Wars, Posey War. 1924 – Banana Wars. 1925 – Banana Wars. 1926 – Banana Wars. 1927 – Banana Wars. 1928 – Banana Wars. 1930 – Banana Wars. 1931 – Banana Wars. 1932 – Banana Wars. 1933 – Banana Wars. 1934 – Banana Wars.

1935 – No major war

1936 – No major war

1937 – No major war

1938 – No major war

1939 – No major war

1940 – No major war

1941 – World War II. 1942 – World War II. 1943 – World War II. 1944 – World War II. 1945 – World War II. 1946 – Cold War (U.S. occupies the Philippines and South Korea). 1947 – Cold War (U.S. occupies South Korea, U.S. forces land in Greece to fight Communists). 1948 – Cold War (U.S. forces aid Chinese Nationalist Party against Communists). 1949 – Cold War (U.S. forces aid Chinese Nationalist Party against Communists). 1950 – Korean War, Jayuga Uprising. 1951 – Korean War. 1952 – Korean



War. 1953 – Korean War. 1954 – Covert War in Guatemala. 1955 – Vietnam War. 1956 – Vietnam War. 1957 – Vietnam War. 1958 – Vietnam War. 1959 – Vietnam War, Conflict in Haiti. 1960 – Vietnam War. 1961 – Vietnam War. 1962 – Vietnam War, Cold War (Cuban Missile Crisis; U.S. marines fight Communists in Thailand). 1963 – Vietnam War. 1964 – Vietnam War. 1965 – Vietnam War, U.S. occupation of Dominican Republic. 1966 – Vietnam War, U.S. occupation of Dominican Republic. 1967 – Vietnam War. 1968 – Vietnam War. 1969 – Vietnam War. 1970 – Vietnam War. 1971 – Vietnam War. 1972 – Vietnam War. 1973 – Vietnam War, U.S. aids Israel in Yom Kippur War. 1974 – Vietnam War. 1975 – Vietnam War.

1976 – No major war

1977 – No major war

1978 – No major war

1979 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan). 1980 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan). 1981 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan and Nicaragua), First Gulf of Sidra Incident. 1982 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan and Nicaragua), Conflict in Lebanon. 1983 – Cold War (Invasion of Grenada, CIA proxy war in Afghanistan and Nicaragua), Conflict in Lebanon. 1984 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan and Nicaragua), Conflict in Persian Gulf. 1985 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan and Nicaragua). 1986 – Cold War (CIA proxy war in Afghanistan and Nicaragua). 1987 – Conflict in Persian Gulf. 1988 – Conflict in Persian Gulf, U.S. occupation of Panama. 1989 – Second Gulf of Sidra Incident, U.S. occupation of Panama, Conflict in Philippines. 1990 – First Gulf War, U.S. occupation of Panama. 1991 – First Gulf War. 1992 – Conflict in Iraq. 1993 – Conflict in Iraq. 1994 – Conflict in Iraq, U.S. invades Haiti. 1995 – Conflict in Iraq, U.S. invades Haiti, NATO bombing of Bosnia and Herzegovina. 1996 – Conflict in Iraq.

1997 – No major war

1998 – Bombing of Iraq, Missile strikes against Afghanistan and Sudan. 1999 – Kosovo War

2000 – No major war

2001 – War on Terror in Afghanistan. 2002 – War on Terror in Afghanistan and Yemen. 2003 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, and Iraq. 2004 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. 2005 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. 2006 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. 2007 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen. 2008 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. 2009 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. 2010 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Yemen. 2011 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen; Conflict in Libya (Libyan Civil War). 2012 –

### *Part 3- Life After the Military*

War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. 2013 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. 2014 – War on Terror in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Yemen; Civil War in Ukraine 2015 – War on Terror in Somalia, Somalia, Syria and Yemen; Civil War in Ukraine

2023- WWII?

Discover magazine states that every citizen in America will experience traumatic event in their lifetime but only 9% will get PTSD. In the military, PTSD can be as high as 38% of veterans (Lucchesi, 2022). PTSD is the silent killer that torments generations of veterans returning from deployments and warzones. The former PTSD labels of “battle fatigue” and “shell shock” seemed to suggest that PTSD was a temporary condition that would go away with time. On the Department of Veteran Affairs website, [ptsd.va.gov](https://www.ptsd.va.gov), there is a mention that untreated PTSD can last several years. Traumatic Brain Injury can lead directly to PTSD. TBI symptoms can last for many years. Traumatic Brain Injury is from a sudden blow to the head and TBI is the same as a concussion. Athletes tend to have a higher rate of PTSD than the general public at 12%. Another vulnerable population are ICU nurses at 33%. Soldiers, sailors and Marines are often stereotyped unfairly as having PTSD when they don't have it all- the good news is that unit commanders and VA Centers are now focusing intently on the prevention and cure of PTSD and TBI whereas the athlete, nurse and the average citizen doesn't even know they have PTSD because it goes undiagnosed (Lynch 2021) Is it the chicken or the egg? Does mental illness cause homelessness? Does homelessness lead to poor mental health? One study reveals the chronically homeless are already assumed to have

*Part 3- Life After the Military*

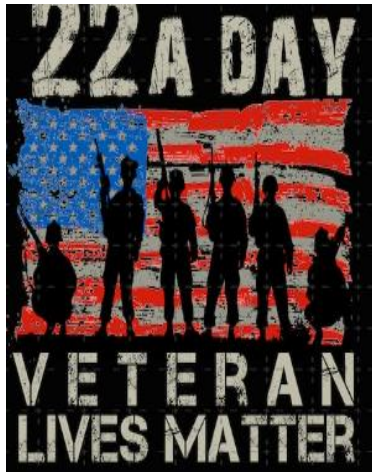
poor mental health. One study reveals the chronic homeless are assumed to have Does homelessness lead to poor mental health? One study reveals that the chronic homeless are assumed to have homelessness lead to poor mental health. \* One study reveals the chronic homeless have higher rates of mental health problems than recent homeless or periodic homeless (Lippert and Lee 2015) 22 a day. Why? Is it the back-to-deployments? Suicide is the 800-pound elephant in the room.

Figure 3e. This figure has the full attention of all in the military community. 22 a day is now a part of the military lexicon- as 22 current and former service people are committing suicide. The VA has stepped up in a big way by hiring another 3,000 VA nurses, social workers and healthcare technicians. On January 17<sup>th</sup>, the VA announced that all servicemembers including those who are not enrolled in the VA healthcare system are eligible for 90 days of mental health outpatient treatment and 30 days of inpatient treatment.



### Part 3- Life After the Military

3f-3h a day. Fact or fiction? Some military organizations report the number higher and others report the number lower. The high number of non-combat/ self-inflicted deaths in the military has led to a flurry of new policies and initiatives- among them the 90 day mental health outpatient/ 30 day inpatient policy put forth by the VA. "22 a Day" fundraisers and bracelets raise awareness to this mental health tragedy vis ruck marches, long distance runs and walks.



Is 22 a day an accurate number? Just one....is one too many. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin established an independent review commission for suicide prevention. The commission, the panel which includes clinicians, doctors and current and former service members, will submit a final briefing and report to Austin by the end of 2022.

This dovetails nicely with the Department of Defense, VA and Pentagon initiative to get emergency mental health information into the hands of soldiers when they are a year out of leaving Uncle Sam. As mental health problems threaten the foundations of America's military to its core, there are waves upon waves of new initiatives aimed at getting the heart of this very serious matter. The Defense Department is beginning a new effort this month to reinforce safer guns and medication storage tools to halt the avalanche of service member suicides.

VA Home Loans and the GI Bill

The GI Bill pays a housing allowance. VA Home Loans are available. Why are veterans homeless if they have access to VA Home Loans? Good question. Perhaps there are many reasons. Are veterans' programs such as the VA loans program underutilized because.... if veterans knew about it.... that would lead to government having to pay out giant sums of money. In general, VA benefits seem to be utilized. Only 13% of Veterans use VA home loans. Benefits aren't classified information- they are easily accessible on the internet, on the VA website and the VA has an 800 # veterans can call. A second school of thought: lower enlisted soldiers have been told what to do for 4 years. The soldier's command group or someone at the TAP program should have informed him or her about using VA home loans.

The average veteran seems to have a great advantage when applying for money for a house. It seems that the veteran accepts a lot less risk than the U.S. government:

- No money down
- Low credit scores accepted.
- Higher debt-to-income ratio

*As mentioned above only 13% of veterans have ever used their VA home loan benefit. Why is that? One school of thought- the onus falls on the veteran. The veteran is perfectly capable of looking up various military programs. Benefits aren't classified information- they are easily accessible on the internet, on the VA website and the VA has an 800 # veterans can*

### *Part 3- Life After the Military*

call. A second school of thought: lower enlisted soldiers have been told what to do for 4 years. The soldier's command group or someone at the TAP program should have informed him or her about using VA home loans.

There are many ways to further one's education after leaving the military. There is the ARMY COOL credentialing program that offers \$4,000 scholarships. There are vocational programs and trades programs. And of course, there is the GI Bill. One of the original GI Bill signed copies that FDR signed is on the wall at headquarters of the Student Veterans of America in Washington, DC. Student Veterans of America CEO Jared Lyons called the GI Bill the "gateway into the VA system" Lyons is correct. The GI Bill is often a veteran's first experience with the VA system. And for good reason. There's free education and free money for books and housing. Some GIs join for the so-called "college money" ...and they earned it. The GI Bill is money well spent on former servicemen and servicewomen who have put themselves in harm's way and possibly put their life on the line. The student veteran GPA is 3.35 as compared to the 3.11 GPA average of the student body. The title of an article on our [hiringourheroes.org](http://hiringourheroes.org) website- "Student Veterans: Talent Hiding in Plain Sight". According to Lyons, "'We know about 50% of all student veterans work full time while in college and about 25% work part time" (Lyons, 2023) President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Servicemen's Readjustment Act in the middle of the war June 22, 1944, this act, known as the G.I. Bill, provided vets returning from the war

### *Part 3- Life After the Military*

money for college, unemployment insurance, and housing. It is still in existence today. While World War II was still raging in Europe and the Pacific, the Department of Labor planned on over 15 million men and women who had been serving in the armed services would be job insecure and housing insecure. Enter the G.I Bill. By 1956, when the G.I. Bill expired, the education-and-training portion had disbursed \$14.5 billion to veterans—but the Veterans Administration estimated the bump in Federal income taxes alone would pay for the cost of the bill several times over. By 1955, 4.3 million home loans had been accessed to the tune of \$33 billion. In addition, veterans were responsible for buying 20 percent of all new homes.

Goodbye, war. Hello, cul-de-sac. The results seeped into the economy; there would be no new Black Fridays—just unbridled prosperity and the creation of the American suburbs. The G.I. Bill has been updated several times. Nearly 2.3 million veterans participated in the program during the Korean War era and more than eight million during the Vietnam era. The Gi Bill has been like a savings bond over the years- slowly yet steadily increasing in value. Some of the recent improvements over the years:

- In certain instances- dependents and other family members can use the veteran's the GI Bill
- Some GI Bills extended their expiration date from 10 years to 15 years.

- Some GI Bills are “forever”

The GI Bill does have some unforeseen drawbacks, however. PTSD was not diagnosed as a serious psychological problem and actual DSM-III psychological diagnosis until 1980.

Figure 3i. The author has written Sen. Duckworth in reference to the Harry Colmery G.I Bill (Senator Duckworth’s response is below.) The author also spoke to staffers at Senator Duckworth’s office on Capitol Hill.

Dear Neighbor,

Thank you for contacting me to share your thoughts on issues with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) implementation of certain sections of the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Education Assistance Act, known as the “Forever GI Bill.” I appreciate you taking the time to make me aware of your concerns on this important matter.

In August 2017, I was proud to join my colleagues in the House and Senate to pass a bipartisan update to the original GI Bill to expand eligibility for GI benefits to cover more Veterans, Purple Heart recipients, surviving spouses and their children. Congress also provided the VA more than \$4 billion a year to make information technology improvements necessary for effective implementation. Despite this infusion of funding and having more than a year to prepare for implementation of the Forever GI Bill, the VA failed to fully implement key sections of the law, resulting in significant hardship for thousands of Veteran students.

In Fall 2018 reports emerged illustrating a pattern of student Veterans who were underpaid or not paid at all for the Basic Allowance for Housing they were owed under the Forever GI Bill. Failing to provide Veterans with payments they earned is a disgrace and the problem was made worse by VA’s confusing and unacceptable response. For example, on November 29, 2018, VA Under Secretary for Benefits Paul Lawrence provided unclear, and at times contradictory, testimony before the House Veterans Affairs Committee about whether and how VA would work to make Veterans whole for underpaid and missing benefits owed to them.

It is shameful that the VA has failed our student Veterans in this way. That is why I [implored](#) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make affected student Veterans truly whole by paying back what VA owes them, with interest, and by covering any type of penalties, fees or losses that students incurred as a result of not getting the payments. I also [contacted](#) the three credit reporting agencies and urged them to work with VA to make sure that Veterans who experienced unfair credit downgrades have their credit reports and scores permanently fixed moving forward. Rest assured, I will keep working to make sure Veterans and their families receive the benefits they earned while serving our Nation in uniform.

Thank you again for contacting me on this important issue. If you would like more information on my work in the Senate, please visit my website at [www.duckworth.senate.gov](http://www.duckworth.senate.gov). You can access my voting record and see what I am doing to address today’s most important issues. I hope that you will continue to share your views and opinions with me and let me know whenever I may be of assistance to you.

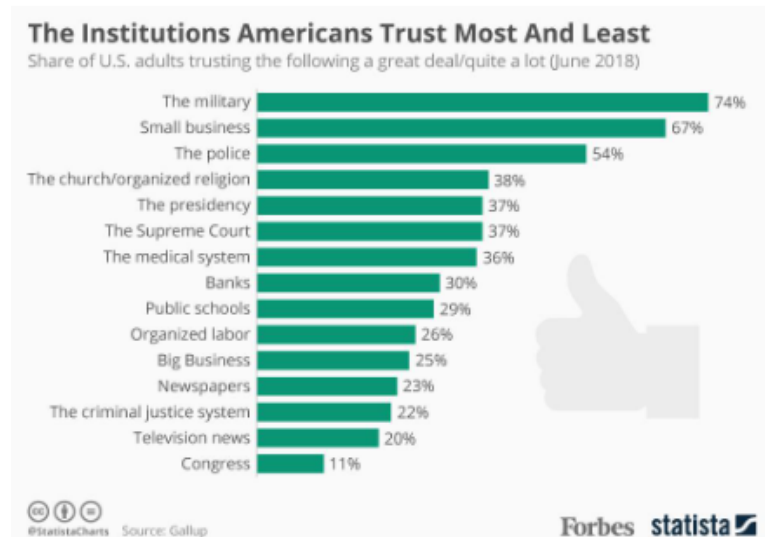
Sincerely,





That was just 5 years after the Vietnam war. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, Coast Guard and National Guard activated for full-time duty in a warzone may not be ready to use their GI Bill after they come back stateside. Meanwhile, the clock is ticking on the availability of said veterans' GI Bill and it could conceivably run out before the veteran ever gets to use it. This author went to Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth's (D-IL) office and Congressman Mike Bost's office (R-IL) to advocate for the extension of the GI Bill and the eradication of veterans' homelessness. The latest version of GI Bill was passed during the Trump administration is called the Harry Colmery Forever GI Bill. The good news is that the GI Bill is "forever"- meaning that the new version considers that "life happens" and that the returning vet is not ready for a "bricks and mortar" classroom just yet. *The bad news is that there is no "grandfather clause" to allow Vietnam War Vets, Korean War Era Vets, Iraq and Afghanistan war vets to use their expired GI Bills.*

Figure 3j American have great faith in our nation's military. Do those who serve trust the government? Why aren't more benefits offered to veterans being utilized? Is it the lack of knowledge of benefits programs, a lack of trust or both?



## VA Healthcare

The military is one of America's most trusted institutions. Time after time year after year. Most years it beats all other institutions including congress, organized labor, big business, public schools, newspapers, television news, the criminal justice system, news on the internet, and HMOs. In 2019, according to a Gallup Poll in 2019, the military is the most trusted institution in America (USA Today, 2019). Sadly, these trusted servicemen and servicewomen don't feel the same way about one of their own institutions- the Department of Veterans Affairs. There have been great improvements over the years. The current head of the Department of Veteran Affairs is the Honorable Denis McDonough. As one of the keynote speakers at the War Horse military symposium at the University of Chicago in April of 2023, McDonough hoped to bring back the veterans who may have had bad experience with VA healthcare in the past (War Horse 2023). One recent improvement is that veterans can seek treatment at non-VA facilities if they have to wait more than 20 days or travel more than 30 minutes for a health-related issue to a VA clinic.

## Government Agencies Helping Vets

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) spokeswoman Ms. Katie Jennings stated there are 199 agencies that want to help with homeless. The Department of Labor is one of them. The Department of Labor Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program has an expressed mission for their program under Title 38 U.S.C

*"...the Secretary of Labor shall conduct, directly or through grant or contract, such programs as the Secretary determines appropriate to provide job training, counseling, and placement services (including job readiness and literacy and skills training) to expedite the reintegration of homeless veterans into the labor force.*

The DOL HVRP uses a 5-pronged approach:

- Positive Outreach engagement with veterans and e
- Assessment / Intake gauging job readiness
- Veteran-Centered Case Management to determine strengths
- Job driven targeted training and placement
- Collaboration with federal, state and local partners

### Help for Veterans Outside the Government

Looking at the chart below it could seem that there could be too many choices at government agencies. And there dozens of non-government agencies looking to help....The Travis Manion Foundation. VFW. The USO. AmVets. The Gary Sinese Foundation. The DAV. The USO. The Pritzker Military Museum? The Pritzker Military Museum in Chicago, Illinois is a true gem. The Pritzker Military Museum? I wouldn't have expected a military museum

Figure 3k. Are there too many agencies for the veteran to choose from? Or is there just too little explanation and too much red tape to navigate this labyrinth of government programs

**Figure 1: Federal Programs and Tax Expenditures Whose Primary Purpose is to Provide Education, Employment, or Self-Employment Assistance to Servicemembers, Veterans, or Their Families**

Programs that provide funding and benefits	
<p><b>Department of Agriculture (USDA)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program</li> </ol>	<p><b>Department of State</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterans Innovation Partnership</li> </ol>
<p><b>Department of Defense (DOD)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DOD Discretionary Certification &amp; Licensure (or the Military Services' COOL programs)</li> <li>DOD Education and Employment Initiative</li> <li>DOD Operation Warfighter Program</li> <li>DOD Tuition Assistance</li> <li>Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve</li> <li>Job Training, Employment Skills Training, Apprenticeships, and Internships (or SkillBridge)</li> <li>Military OneSource Spouse Career Center</li> <li>Spouse Education and Career Opportunities</li> <li>Transition Assistance Advisors</li> <li>Troops to Teachers Grant Program</li> <li>United Services Military Apprenticeship Program</li> </ol>	<p><b>Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance (or Montgomery GI Bill)</li> <li>Compensated Work Therapy</li> <li>Dependents Educational Assistance Program (or Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance)</li> <li>Educational and Vocational Counseling (or Chapter 36)</li> <li>Post-9/11 GI Bill</li> <li>Reserve Educational Assistance Program</li> <li>VA Work-study Program</li> <li>Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership</li> <li>VetSuccess on Campus</li> <li>Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment</li> <li>Warrior Training Advancement Course</li> <li>Warriors to Workforce</li> </ol>
<p><b>Department of Education (Education)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success</li> <li>Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant</li> <li>Veterans Upward Bound</li> </ol>	<p><b>Office of Personnel Management (OPM)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vets to Feds Career Development Program</li> </ol>
<p><b>Department of Energy (DOE)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DOE Scholars Program for Veterans, the Federal Energy Management Program</li> </ol>	<p><b>Small Business Administration (SBA)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boots to Business Reboot</li> <li>Service-Disabled Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Program</li> <li>Veteran Federal Procurement Entrepreneurship Training Program</li> <li>Veterans Business Outreach Center</li> <li>Women Veteran Entrepreneurship Training Program</li> </ol>
<p><b>Department of Health and Human Services</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterans' Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing Program</li> </ol>	<p><b>Jointly Administered</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance (or Montgomery GI Bill) – Selected Reserve<sup>a</sup></li> <li>Coast Guard Transition Assistance Program (Coast Guard TAP)<sup>b,c</sup></li> <li>DOD Transition Assistance Program (DOD TAP)<sup>c,d</sup></li> <li>Tuition Assistance Top Up<sup>e</sup></li> </ol>
<p><b>Department of Homeland Security (DHS): Coast Guard</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coast Guard Retiree Services Program</li> <li>Coast Guard Spouse Employment Assistance Program</li> <li>Coast Guard Tuition Assistance/Voluntary Education</li> </ol>	<p><b>Tax Expenditure</b></p> <p><b>Department of the Treasury (Treasury)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tax exclusion for GI Bill Benefits</li> </ol>
<p><b>Department of Labor (DOL)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program</li> <li>Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program</li> </ol>	

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-19-97R

**Accessible Data for Figure 1: Federal Programs and Tax Expenditures Whose Primary Purpose is to Provide Education, Employment, or Self-Employment Assistance to Servicemembers, Veterans, or Their Families**

to be so helpful to the military community. Their museum was just one part of the Pritzker Military Foundation. On the [pritzkermilitaryfoundation.org](http://pritzkermilitaryfoundation.org) website their Veterans Resources Section boasts eight Illinois or midwestern places to contact for mental health concerns, three legal aid website contacts, two venues for the entrepreneurial-minded veteran, seven places to help with family and children and five community service organizations and an employment network.

50 Strong. The Warrior-Scholar Project. Vet Centers. Team Rubicon. There are almost too many veteran-centric organizations willing to help- if only the Marine or soldier would ask for help. Flanders Field is very much an edgier, blue-collar version of the television show "Fixer Upper" and the program "Habitat for Humanity" combined. On LinkedIn, Mr. Owen proudly displays the "before and after" of broken-down crack homes transformed into sturdy houses for ailing vets. His posts are filled with aphorisms, biblical quotes and keen insights as he takes along for his triumphs and tragedies. Ben Owen is a man who speaks from experience as he was once a homeless veteran and a homeless addict and is truly the solution to the problem. Now, if the world can only clone 1000 more Ben Owens! What is 50 Strong? 50 Strong is the conduit between the transitioning service member and the civilian company or corporation he or she wants to join. As a middleman, 50 Strong streamlines the process. Warrior-Scholar Project. The Warrior-Scholar project aims to reshape the perception of enlisted troops and thus far is doing a great job at doing just

that. This is sort of a new twist on the GI Bill. For instance, average Joe Veteran or average Jane Veteran gets out of the military and plan on going back to their hometowns. Joe Veteran is from Iowa. Jane Veteran is from Alabama. Joe is from Des Moines, Iowa, he is going to use his GI Bill in Iowa- he hasn't made up his mind if he wants to go to University of Iowa, Iowa State or Drake University. Joe will choose one of those three universities and will major in Finance. Jane is from Birmingham, Alabama and can't decide between Auburn University and University of Alabama. Jane will choose one of those universities and major in Theatre. The Warrior-Scholar Project encourages veterans to explore other options out of their comfort zone. The project features a "scholar boot camp" to motivate new soldier scholars to aim for top tier colleges like Yale, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, William and Mary and the University of Illinois. These special enlisted students are trained to break out of the mindset that only officers have degrees and only officers have good degrees.

Dave Schantz, a Skillbridge Champion and Placement expert on LinkedIn, speaks highly of the Four Block program. Schantz sees Four Block as a logical transition from the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). Both Four Block and the Warrior-Scholar project are both affiliated with top-notch universities- in Four Block's case that would be Columbia University. Four Block is the military to random cold-calling and binge-sending of resumes. Four Block stresses cohorts and camaraderie and companies getting to know their

potential hires- similar to Skillbridge.

Figure 31. In March of 2023, this author went to the Disabled Veterans of America office (DAV), Student Veterans of America (SVA) office and the offices of Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Congressman Mike Bost (D-IL) This was a poster that traveled with me to congressional offices, conferences and symposiums.

**“One Homeless Hero is Too Many: Hopeless to Homeless to Hired to Housing. Eliminating housing insecurity and food insecurity by getting the right job and the right job training to the right veteran”**

Presented by Jeff Walsh - Illinois State University, Politics and Government  
Mentors: Dr. Carl Palmer, Mr. Chad Kahl, Ms. Grace Allbaugh and LTC Kevin Kline.



We are all dishonored when a veteran sleeps on the same streets that he or she has defended. We are all dishonored when a veteran's family has to live in a shelter while he or she is out fighting for us. WE NEED TO FIX THAT!

— Tammy Duckworth —

VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

364 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20003  
Office (202) 225-3527  
Fax (202) 225-5486



CHAIRMAN  
Mike Bost

SkillBridge Facts

200,000

Service members transition out of the military annually

Over 500

Companies in program

12

Months

Prior to separation service members are eligible to submit SkillBridge applications.

180

Days

is the maximum amount of time a service member can participate in the program

warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”

— Dwight D. Eisenhower

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- HR 5624
- 700 BILLION AND MILLION
- FOREVER OF BILL
- HOMELESS JOB FAIRS

Quantitative	Qualitative	Control Variables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey</li> <li>E1-E4</li> <li>Field</li> <li>Garrison</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth interview</li> <li>VA Official</li> <li>HUD Official</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Army Veterans</li> <li>Combat Arms Veterans</li> <li>Non-combat Arms Veterans</li> <li>Income, Education, Gender &amp; Age</li> </ul>
Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Alternate Research Method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant Job Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veteran Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus Group</li> </ul>

Does a lack of transferrable military employment skills lead to housing insecurity?

↓

Non-Combat Arms Army Veteran (Rank E1-E4)

↑

Combat Arms Army Veteran (Rank E1-E4)

THEORETICAL ARGUMENT



From Homeless to Hired

#tinychomes #community #salvationarmy #housingfirst #veteranshelpingveterans #americorps

Targeted Federal Homelessness Funding

How the President's FY 2024 Budget Compares to Past Budgets

President Biden's budget request nearly 50% higher in federal funding for homelessness assistance programs. The budget represents an overall 18% increase from FY 2023 and an increase of 80% to 200% in targeted funding for homelessness programs by the House of Representatives. 40% for HUD, 20% for the Department of Justice, and 20% for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Agency	Fiscal Program	FY 2023 (Actual)	FY 2024 (Request)	FY 2024 (House)	FY 2024 (Senate)
DAV	Department of Housing and Urban Development	44	50	50	50
DAV	Department of Justice	61	66	66	66
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	118	138	138	138
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Agriculture	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Transportation	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Energy	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of the Interior	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Defense	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Veterans Affairs	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of State	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Justice	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Agriculture	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Transportation	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Energy	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of the Interior	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Defense	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of State	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Justice	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Agriculture	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Transportation	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Energy	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of the Interior	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Defense	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of State	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Justice	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Agriculture	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Transportation	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Energy	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of the Interior	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Defense	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of State	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Justice	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Agriculture	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Transportation	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Energy	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of the Interior	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Defense	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of State	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Justice	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Agriculture	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Transportation	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Energy	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of the Interior	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Defense	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of State	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Justice	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Health and Human Services	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Education	100	100	100	100
DAV	Department of Labor	100	100	100	100
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**The War on Homelessness and Poverty and the Executive Branch**

- Why can't the government eradicate homelessness?
- What is the best way to help veterans?

President Johnson started the War on Poverty in 1964 and it is still a thorn in the side of every presidential administration past, present and future. Every administration since WWI has tried to find the best way to deal with poverty and homelessness. In 2005, George W. Bush made a major blunder by making the decision to observe those who lost their homes from Hurricane Katrina FEMA debacle from 10,000 feet up in an airplane. Bush's appointee had no experience with large-scale disaster management- and it showed. Before joining FEMA, Michael Brown was a Commissioner for the International Arabian Horse Association for 11 years. Maybe if Churchill Downs was underwater in the nearby state of Kentucky, Brown would have reacted with more of a sense of urgency. In horse racing parlance, it was simply a *trifecta of failures*- failure on state, local and national levels (Gheyntanchi,. 2007) President Bush would never recover from his fly-by while New Orleans citizens were literally under water.

In January of 1964, during his State of the Union address, President Lyndon Baines Johnson kicked off his so-called War on Poverty. As Johnson was an expert arm-twister, enforcer and policy maker- his civic-minded ideas got off to a fast start. In March 1964, Johnson created the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Economic Opportunity Act. He



*Part 4- Congress, the Executive Branch and the War on Poverty*

helped the disadvantaged break the poverty cycle by helping them develop job skillsets, further their educational ambitions and find employment. To do this, he created a Job Corps for 100,000 disadvantaged men. Half would work on conservation projects and the other half would receive education and skills training in special job training centers. Johnson created work training programs for up to 200,000 men and women and a national work study program so 140,000 Americans could go to college.

Other War on Poverty plans included:

- A kind of “local Peace Corps” with the government to recruit and train skilled American volunteers to serve poverty-stricken areas
- loans and guarantees for employers hired the unemployed
- autonomy for farmers to buy land and set up ag co-ops
- assistance for parents out-of-work to re-enter the workforce
- Community Action initiatives for neighbors to take on poverty within their own communities.

Sadly, Johnson’s hook, line and sinker entry into Vietnam would totally obscure his plans for a so-call Great Society, so much so that he would not seek re-lection in 1968. The man who brought us the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Medicare and Medicaid would tarnish his legacy permanently by trying an unwinnable war to fight 13,000 miles using General Westmoreland’s “war of attrition” plan that resulted in thousands of dead American

*Part 4- Congress, the Executive Branch and the War on Poverty*

soldiers. Probably the most successful effort to help American's avoid poverty and homelessness was done by President Franklin Roosevelt during WWII. Roosevelt planned ahead and guessed correctly that soldiers, airmen and Marines might struggle readjusting into polite society after coming back from war in Europe and the Pacific. The 1944 GI Bill is coming up on its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary and is still alive and kicking today helping millions of veterans obtain their college education or a certification for life in the trades. The "Serviceman's Readjustment Act", as it was known in 1944, also allowed for provisions for housing and unemployment insurance. President Carter's one term in office was weighed down by the chain reaction of problems that were passed on down to the everyday. Stagflation, a hostage crisis and high gas prices sent the man from Plains, Georgia packing. It was in his post-presidency that Carter was able to use his common touch for good. One of his favorite pet projects is Habitat For Humanity. The former president literally took a "hands-on approach" with his projects. Carter's love for helping build affordable coast housing for Habitat for Humanity dates all the way back to 1984. (O'Kane,2023)

Roosevelt's actions were a direct response to the failed efforts of his predecessor Herbert Hoover. Soldiers and sailors were promised bonuses upon their return stateside from their victory during WWI. Not only did these fighting men and women not get their bonuses, but they were also forcibly evacuated from a protest in Washington, D.C. Hoover ordered active-duty troops to be forcibly removed while these wartime heroes were merely exercising their first amendment rights. They never collected their bonuses. (Listo,

#### *Part 4- Congress, the Executive Branch and the War on Poverty*

merely exercising their first amendment rights. They never collected their bonuses. (Listo, 1967). In his article, “A Blunder Becomes a Catastrophe: Hoover, the Legion and the Bonus Army” Listo tells us the Bonus Army encampment was burned down in the process of removing these veterans who were owed promised monies from the government. This blunder during the Great Depression, was a blunder that Hoover would never recover. FDR would win a landslide. FDR would initiate programs to get America back on its feet. The so-called New Deal was a promise for new America. Yet, it wasn’t until WWII did America recover from the Great Depression. (Kennedy, 2009)

Enter Harry Truman. With the death of the beloved four-term President FDR, Truman had big shoes to fill. Truman was a commonsense president from the heart of the U.S.- the great state of Missouri. Missouri has always been proud of its nickname as the “show-me state” – and Truman was determined to show the world what he could do. Commonsense Harry knew that all Army troops were in the exact same uniform and fight in the same wars. Truman was the man who integrated the troops.

Every presidential administration has launched a program to rein in veteran homelessness with varying degrees of success. During President Truman’s time in office, veterans were flooding the homeless population by the thousands at least in part to a critical housing shortage in post WWII- 1945 (Bernstein 1967, Pallares 2020). President Obama planned to end veteran homelessness by 2015 (Brosius 2015). In 2015, the Obama administration initiated a “comprehensive, evidence-based, data and outcome driven

*Part 4- Congress, the Executive Branch and the War on Poverty*

strategy coupled with significant federal and local partnerships and a financial commitment with increased access to health care benefits, employment and permanent housing for homeless and at-risk veterans.” (O’Toole, Kane and Pape 2013.) Presidential

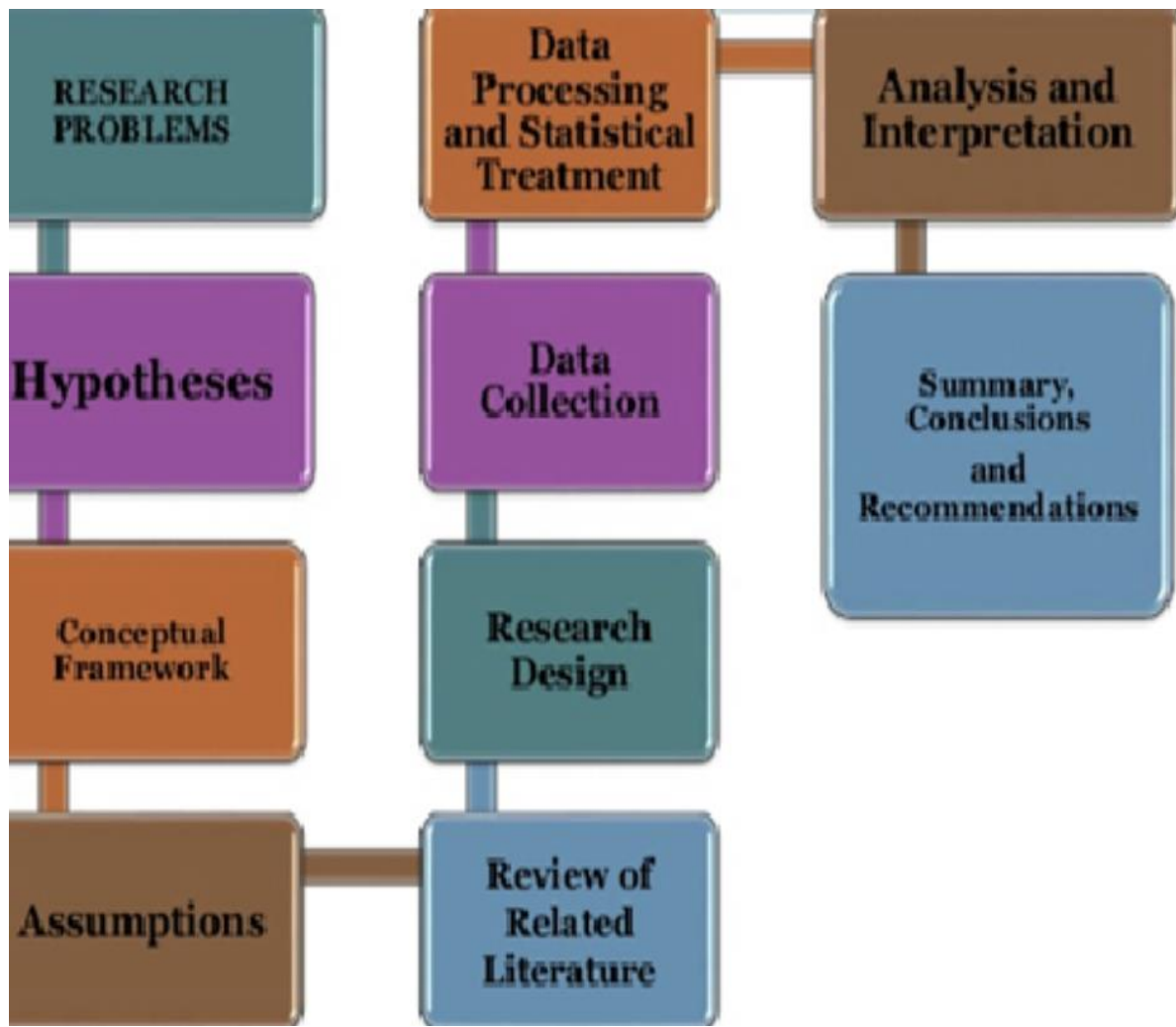
Figure 4a: Every year since 1984, former President Jimmy Carter has spent a week at Habitat for Humanity. As you can see in the figure below Mr. and Mrs. Carter prefer a “hands-on” approach to America’s housing inequity problems.



initiatives or not, veterans who get support can still end up on the streets (Zogas 2017). Addressing the homeless problem is to acknowledge neither the symptoms nor the cure. Today’s 21<sup>st</sup> Century VA launched “Opening Doors: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in 2010”. The Veteran Administration partners with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to curb homelessness by offering rental assistance vouchers. Yet despite these wonderful government initiatives veteran homelessness still remains above the national average in 2021. President George W. Bush’s “Opening Doors” initiative was a comprehensive 10-year plan to end veteran homelessness

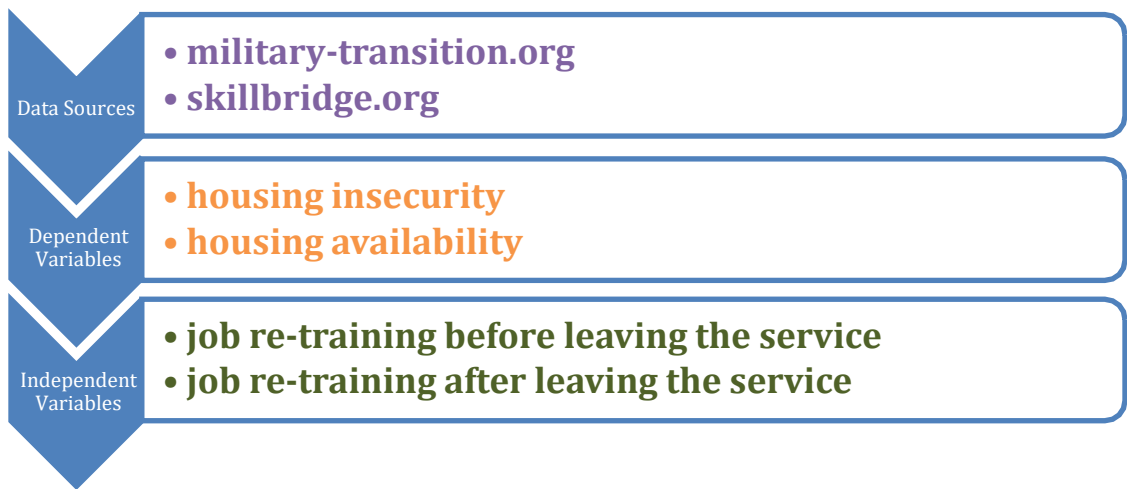
including ending chronic homelessness for all in 5 years (Donovan 2011). The “Opening Doors” policy was a 4-point plan: First, a “no wrong door” homeless veterans could go through channels or portals to access care and services needed to gain permanent housing.

### **Research Design and Methodology**



**Research Question 2021 : Does the lack of a transferable military job negatively affect a lower enlisted soldier's housing insecurity level? If so, how?**

**HYPOTHESIS: PROVIDING GOVERNMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR SOLDIERS WITH NON-TRANSFERABLE MILITARY JOB SKILLS WILL MAKE THE SOLDIER MORE EMPLOYABLE AND LESS HOUSING-INSECURE**



### Regression Analysis



## Research Question #1 and H1 Analysis:

This author's research topic in 2021 was presented at symposiums and capstones all over Illinois. "Hopeless to Homeless to Hired to Housing? Eliminating housing insecurity by getting the right job and the right job training to the right veteran." The original research question: *Does the lack of a transferable military job negatively affect a lower enlisted soldier's housing insecurity level? If so, how?*

The original goal was to establish an empirical link between job training and housing insecurity among Post 9-11 by looking at two different groups of veterans- the combat arms (field) veteran vs. the non-combat arms (garrison) veteran from the ranks E1 (private) to E4 (specialist) (Giano 2020). The original plan back in 2021 was to run empirical methodologies to ascertain labor outcomes between military veterans who successfully transition to gainful employment in the workplace and those veterans who have not received adequate job training while serving in America's Armed Forces.

The author served in the Armed Forces from 1990-2005. In December of 2021, the new information the author discovered would force him to reconsider and change his research question. A few years after the author left Uncle Sam for good, the Skillbridge program was born. Potentially, every Marine, tanker and mortarman could spend the last six months of their enlistment getting trained as mechanic, cybersecurity analyst, a cook or a radiology technician. High-tech or low-tech, white-collar or blue-collar, the new veteran

*Part 5- Research Design and Methodology*

would be well-versed in the latest information and technology of their field of choice and be ready to join the civilian workforce.

This author helped veterans in 2019 and 2020 as an AmeriCorps VISTA in Great Falls, Montana. During that time, Mr. Walsh received a letter of response from Senator Duckworth about a GI Bill inquiry. Considering the feedback and positive response from the Senator’s office, Fast forward to 2022, Mr. Walsh contacted Duckworth’s Springfield office – only an hour away from Bloomington-Normal. Sen. Duckworth was not available and the local Illinois staffers did not seem keen on setting up an appointment for a graduate student wanting to conduct some research. In 2023, the author was able to reach her office in person as an advocate in Washington, DC.

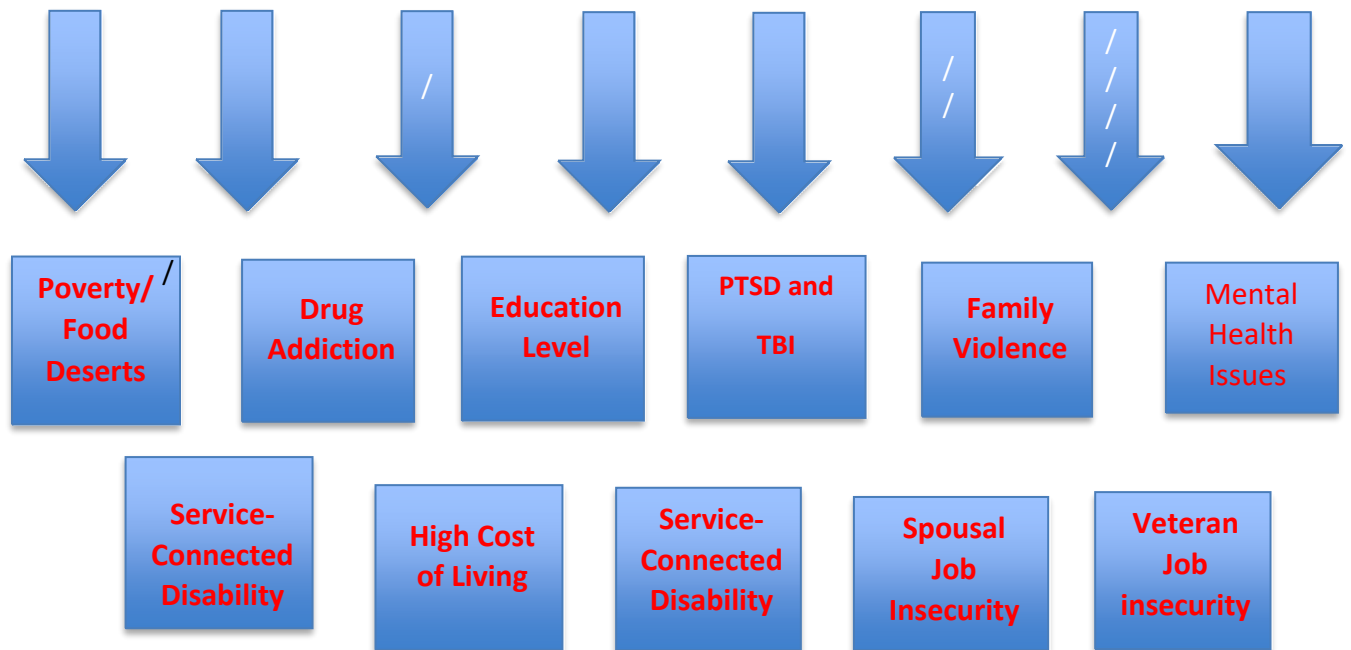
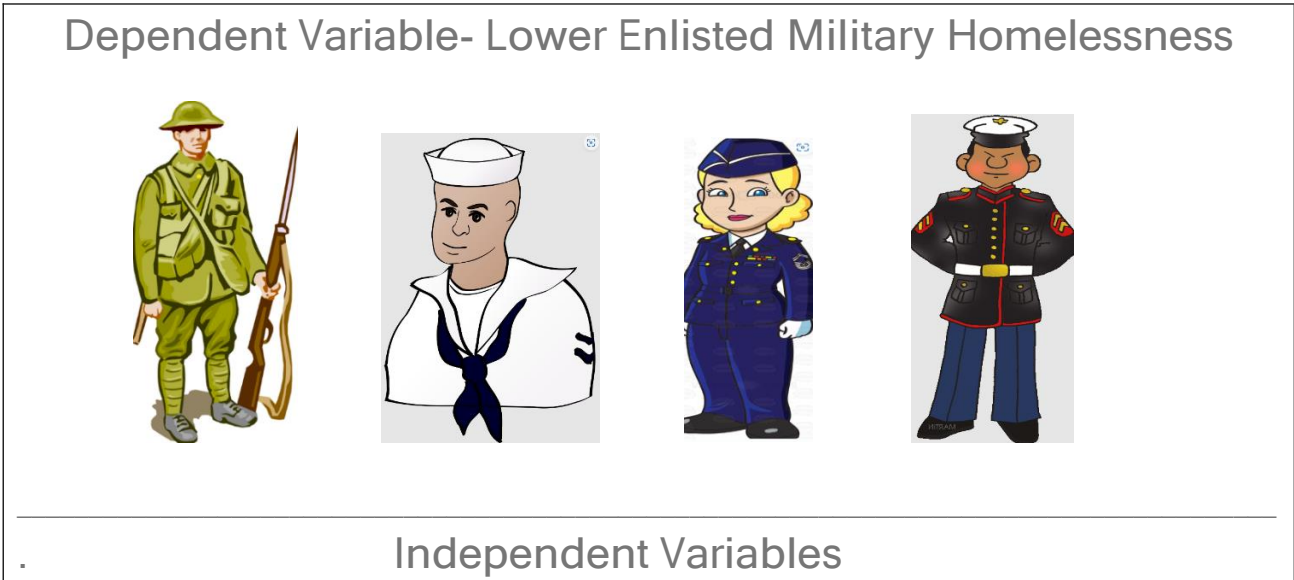
Figure 5a-5b: The author spent a year helping at a veteran’s home in Montana through the AmeriCorps program. The 10 page monthly newsletter “Bandsaw Brothers” was created by the author so veterans could contribute stories and photos. The photo on the right were pins worn during a visit to Sen. Duckworth’s Capitol Hill office and Congressman Mike Bost’s office.





**Research Question 2 in 2022 : How does the lack of a transferable military job, poverty , mental health issues negatively affect a lower enlisted soldier's housing insecurity level? If so, how?**

**HYPOTHESIS (H@): PROVIDING MORE ACCESSIBLE VA HEALTHCARE FOR SOLDIERS WITH JOB TRAINING WILL MAKE THE SOLDIER MORE EMPLOYABLE AND LESS HOUSING-INSECURE**



## Research Question #2 and H2 Analysis:

Before formulating a new question, the author would go on to find out about the Department of Defense Skillbridge program. There were Fortune 500 programs involved. The White House had a Skillbridge soldier as an intern. President Obama touted the Skillbridge solar companies hiring transitioning service members. The author contacted Dave Schantz on LinkedIn. Mr. Schantz is a Skillbridge champion. Schantz boasts a 2-month turnaround time to get Skillbridge companies onboard helping transitioning soldiers and airman get the skills and knowledge they need. So what's the problem? The problem is that only 20% of transitioning Armed Forces personnel are utilizing the DoD Skillbridge program. This poses a problem for at least two reasons: 1) 80% of Marines and soldiers are not using the program and 2) of the miniscule 20% that have used the program- it would be near impossible to verify the beneficiaries of the Skillbridge training once they left the service.

The author's new research question in 2023 is much broader in scope. I believe there are many other independent variables than a soldier or sailor's not transferrable military job. For instance, a married serviceperson may have to worry not only worry about their own employment issues when getting out of the military...but also employment issues of their spouse. Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Kline of the ISU ROTC department was recommended to this author by the ISU Institutional Research Board or IRB and Kline became one of the author's advisors. LTC Kline was the one who suggested research on the Skillbridge program. With only 20% of the active military, it seemed quite underutilized.

One article said "Skillbridge- best kept secret" (Military Times, 2019)

*Part 5- Research Design and Methodology*

Without knowing how job insecurity issues were solved or not solved, the author looked to a variety of other independent variables and determinants that could lead a sailor or Marine on a path to permanent housing insecurity including one's socio-economic status, PTSD, drug addiction, education level, etc. The author looked at several case studies and their corresponding regression analysis feedback of the correlation between poverty and homelessness, lack of education and homelessness and drug and alcohol addiction and homelessness (see Part 6- Case Studies).

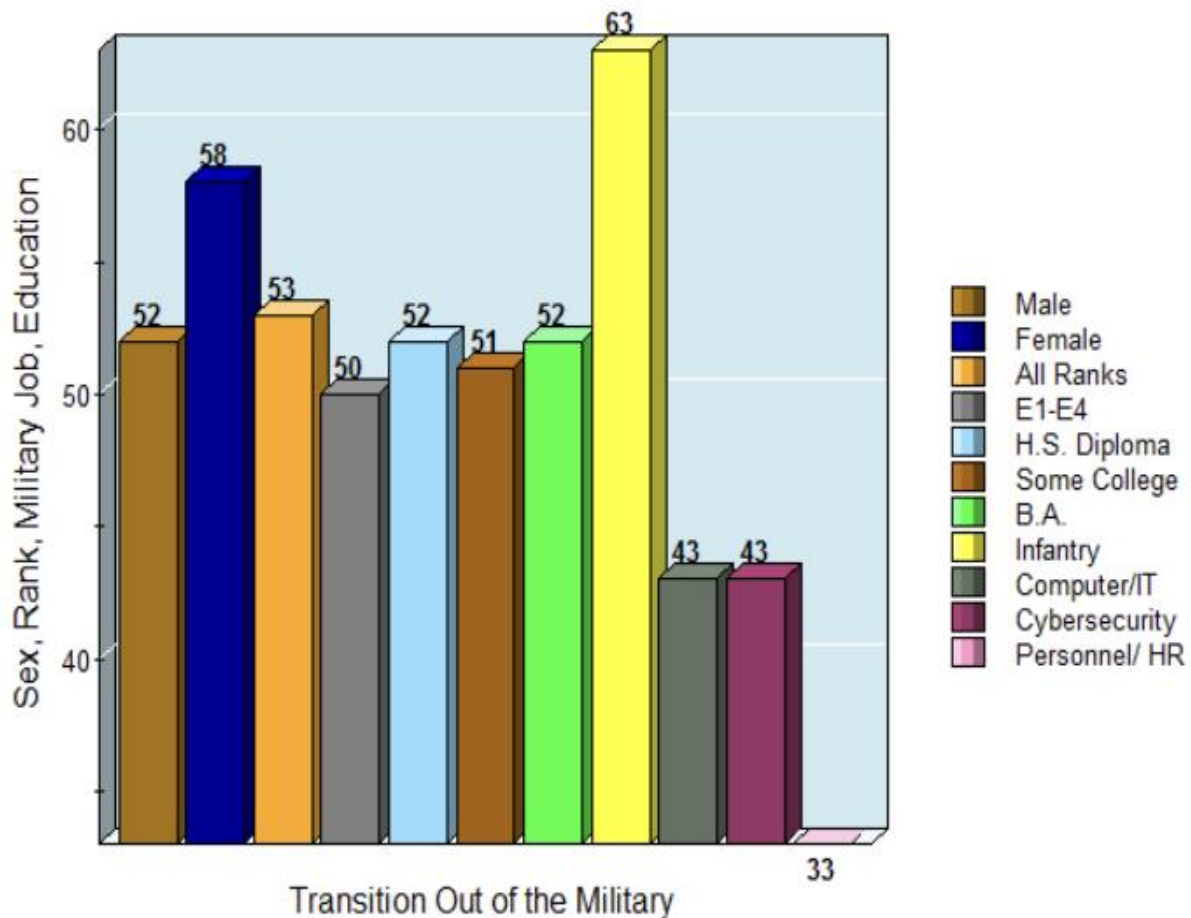
Homelessness and suicide happen when friends, family and neighbors don't read the warning signs. That led the author to yet a third research question and third hypothesis. The Data Collection chart below outlined the author's labyrinth of intentions. Talking to the homeless directly seemed completely out of the question as it would not only be a HIPPA violation- but it could also be quite dangerous. The unsheltered homeless are a nomadic tribe and would be hard to find and schedule interviews. The Illinois State University Institutional Research visited the Politics and Government section on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor at Schroeder Hall once a month. During one of those visits, they like the idea of visiting an official or two from the VA to ask them their views on veterans' homelessness. This idea proved impractical for the author as the VA representatives proved to be extremely busy. Denis McDonough, the Secretary of the VA, mentioned at a military symposium in Chicago (War Horse, 2023) the need to try regaining the trust of soldiers who have been through the VA Healthcare system in the past. That led this author to believe that neither the VA nor the veteran would want to talk about healthcare or homelessness.

Research Question 3 in 2023 : *Does an unsuccessful transition out of the military negatively affect a lower enlisted soldier's housing insecurity level?*

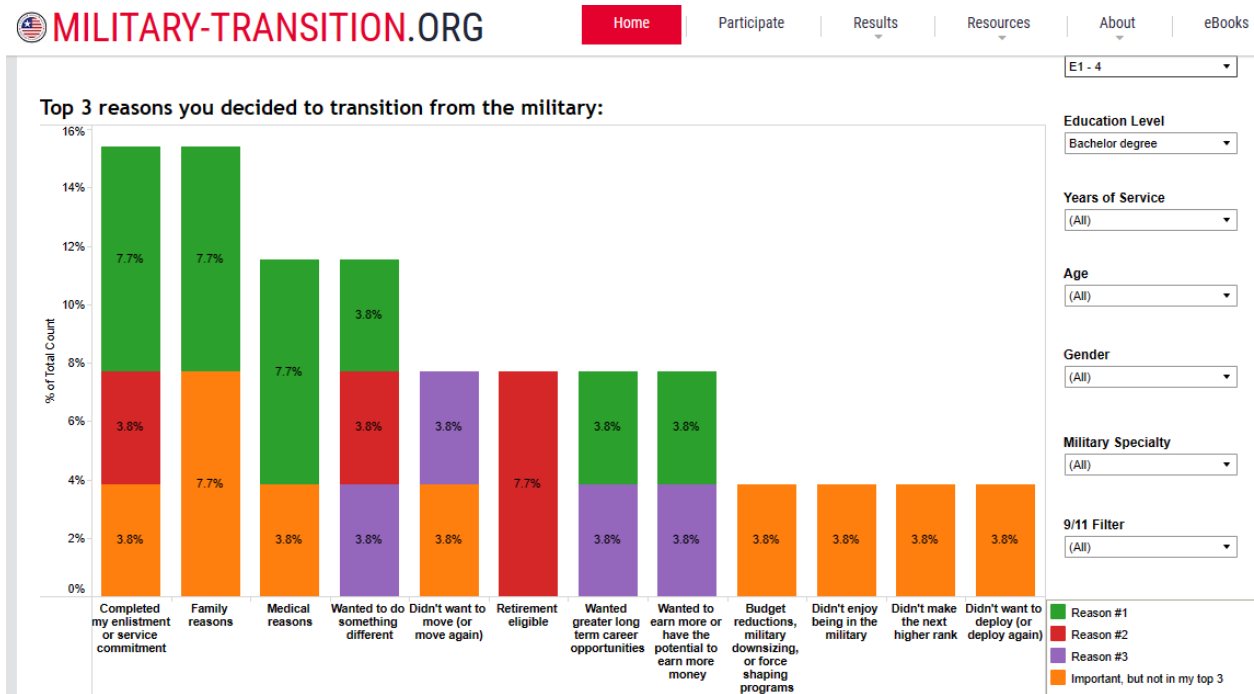
**HYPOTHESIS (H#): PROVIDING MORE A BETTER TRANSITION OUT OF THE MILITARY WITH THE TAP PROGRAM AND SKILLBRIDGE FOR ALL SERVICEMEN AND SERVICEWOMEN WITH JOB TRAINING WILL MAKE THE SOLDIER MORE EMPLOYABLE AND ELIMINATE HOUSING- INSECURITY**

Figure es. The transition out the military is easiest for those who have "civilian-like jobs"- i.e. a desk job like a soldier who works in HR will have (military-transition.org)

**How difficult was your transition out of the military?**  
 . (0- very easy, 100- very difficult military-transition.org)



## Research Question #3 and H3 Analysis:



It was the late great Dwight D. Eisenhower, a former 5-star General that said “Plans are useless, but planning is essential. The more times the author met with the Illinois State Institutional Research Board, the more he realized how difficult getting willing human subjects to participate in veteran homelessness research would become. The author made a list of quantitative and quantitative Skillbridge questions instead. The IRB and the the author’s capstone advisors seemed pleased: According to the Department of Defense and Skillbridge, 200,000 active-duty troops leave the service every year. Though Skillbridge is open to all transitioning officers and enlisted troops, only 20,000 troops utilize this service of just 10% of the force. It is a train-to-hire internship program, that has over 3200 companies.

*Part 5- Research Design and Methodology*

The chart on page 110 shows how difficult the transition to becoming a civilian again can become. 10 of the 12 independent variables are above 50% with transitioning from the Infantry being the most difficult transition at 63% of infantryman having a tough time being a civilian. Employers consider being a taxi driver or security guard as jobs for all military.... but that's simply not the case at all.

The author interviewed the intern supervisors of over 200 of these companies and found a lack negative reviews of the company and found only positive correlation between the company, the intern employee and the work-to-hire ratio. Reviews of the program are decidedly "half-empty" and "half full". Military Times touts the program as "The best military transition program that you never knew existed". In the 2021 Skillbridge Providers Handbook potential employers of interns are told "The DoD covers the Service Member's pay and benefits, and Industry partners gain early access to the extensive experience, I originally considered \*possible interview candidates include Mary Eltman, Director Veterans Affairs at Monroe County Government, 3) Terry Prince - Acting Director - Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and 5) Head of a local VA Clinic in Bloomington. I don't believe I will be using the National Archives as part of my research design to locate Post 9-11 records of Veteran Homelessness but if I did, I would contact Marvin Turner at the National Archives and use the National Center on Homelessness Among Veterans (NCHAV) and veteranscholars.com as a resource. (Olenick 2015) A focus group was a possible third option.

# Data Collection

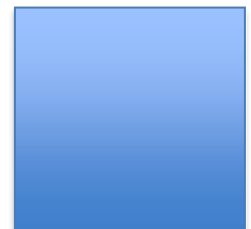
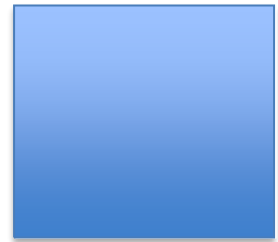


**Skillbridge helps soldier transition out of the military. Author discovers website [military-transition.org](http://military-transition.org) has survey results that don't release names of soldiers**

**IRB approves the use of surveys of employer and supervisors of Army Skillbridge intern program**

**Author designs survey with 13 qualitative and qualitative questions**

**Author finds 3 Skillbridge experts for interviews on LinkedIn**





## Interviews and Surveys

### Qualitative and Quantitative Questions for Skillbridge Supervisors

Survey sent to 200 Employers:

I am a Student Veteran at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois and interim President of the ISU chapter of Student Veterans of America (SVA). I served in the military for nearly 15 years (Army 90-93, ARNG 93-98, Army 98-05). Currently, I am a Graduate Student studying the cause and effects of housing insecurity, food insecurity and job insecurity of servicemen and servicewomen after they leave the military. The Skillbridge internship program was not available during my many years of service. I would really appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to tell me your experience thus far with the Skillbridge program.

**Follow this link to the Survey:**

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[https://illinoisstate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_daOb1am0UmMwrHM?Q\\_DL=Uvx7S79xa6TVjcT\\_daOb1am0UmMwrHM\\_CGC\\_X9wz7bt1EK8blwM&Q\\_CHL=email](https://illinoisstate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_daOb1am0UmMwrHM?Q_DL=Uvx7S79xa6TVjcT_daOb1am0UmMwrHM_CGC_X9wz7bt1EK8blwM&Q_CHL=email)

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

The questionnaire was done in coordination with a company called Qualtrics. The questions were an equal mix of open-ended qualitative questions and simple question and answer quantitative questions designed to elicit honest feedback. Here are the 13 questions:

- When did you start your Skillbridge program?
- How long is Skillbridge training program?
- How many servicemen and servicewomen have participated in your Skillbridge internship program so far?
- Where do military personnel serve their Skillbridge internship?

*Part 5- Research Design and Methodology*

- What military ranks can participate in your Skillbridge internship program?
- What is the completion rate of your Skillbridge internship program?
- How many former Skillbridge interns are now employed full-time at your agency?
- Does your program provide housing, a travel allowance or a relocation allowance for Skillbridge interns?
- Do you feel the Skillbridge program is effective?
- Do you find military personnel to be high-quality interns?
- What would you like to change about the Skillbridge program?
- What about the Skillbridge program has worked well for you and your Skillbridge team?
- Do you feel 180 days is enough time to spend with a military intern with the Skillbridge program.

The Skillbridge 13 question survey did not elicit the answers the author had hoped. Both the qualitative and the quantitative answers were very abbreviated. Were the questions too general? Were there not enough questions? Were they wrong questions? The best data coincided with the author's experiences in the military including:

- E1-E4 – the lower enlisted ranks will have difficulty with transitioning out of the military (50% - chart on page 110).
- A sailor, Marine or soldier with only a High School diploma will have difficulty with transitioning out of the military (52% - chart on page 110 ).
- Servicewomen will have difficulty with transitioning out of the military (58% - chart on page 110 ).

**QUESTION #1: WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT ADVICE OR LESSON THAT YOU WOULD SHARE WITH ANYONE CONSIDERING A TRANSITION?**



**ARMY**

**All**

**Enlisted**

**Officers**



**Enlisted**

**E1 - 4**

**E5 - 6**

**E7 - 9**

**86 ideas and advice from those who are got out recently**  
[military-transition.org](http://military-transition.org)

1	Know how to articulate your skills learned in the military and put them into civilian terms. Know what civilian jobs are most like your skill set DO NOT mistake finding a job like yours in the military...instead rely on your SKILL SET!
2	Use the skills you learned in the military to make a better workplace, not to measure those around you in the workplace. Civilians don't do things the way fellow veterans would. That doesn't make it wrong or even more inefficient, it just makes it different. Apply your skills to learn the best way in your work and then build from there to make it better.
3	Use the services offered at the Transition Center
4	Use your discipline, experience and skill to propel you into your next career. Be honest with yourself that it is demonstrated experience needed for the job unless it is a trainee position. If it is a trainee position, then apply yourself with vigor--working all hours, keeping the civilian rules and realizing that those with whom you work with do not necessarily share your values or traditions.
5	1. Ensure that soldiers understand their educational benefits to include Voc Rehab. 2. Start researching a career path while still serving - jumping into any degree program without a plan sets up failure with a short shelf life of benefits 3. Get civilian resume guidance before separating to translate the military terminology and jobs into what will be understood in the workforce 4. Military translators should not be relied on 100% - it is not always apples to apples - look at the skill sets comprehensively - 11B offer so much to any workplace - they are not destined only to be truck drivers or entry level positions
6	You should regard your military service almost as a college degree. Today a college degree really says that a person has commitment and follow through. The same is said for honorable military service. Odds are you have to deal with many people from different cultural and geographical background than yourself.

	Many people think enlisted personnel are given a task to do and governed down to the details. Explain that this isn't the case. That while missions or task come from the command, it is up to the enlisted leaders to figure out how to do those task properly.
7	Research how the skills you acquired and used during your active duty can transfer over to civilian positions and emphasize those skills to employers and how you succeeded with those skills.
8	Start early and highlight skills that are good for civilian employers.
9	Get with a vocational work advisor and really learn what you want to be when you get out. Dream big and go for that job. Don't settle for a job that just pays the bills.
10	Be ready to answer interview questions about your service. Make certain to "translate" the skills you learned in the military into something tangible for the interviewer to imagine. This will help the interviewer figure out, during the Q&A session, where you might fit in the company. Also, this will give him/her a better assessment of your skill set(s).
11	Networking is the most important thing you can concentrate on. The bigger you network the more options and info you will have.
12	That they consider all their options and know what their future career plans are.
13	Get as much education as you can before seperating which will open more job opportunities. Also make sure you have an excellent resume, the military has people who can help put one together.
14	Lean on family for help if possible. Otherwise utilize other Vets who have did this before you
15	Have a plan before leaving the military. If you are transitioning to university then get your application in to schools before exiting the military, if you are transitioning into a civilian job then update your resume and send it out approximately two months prior to your transition date. Also, save your vacation the last year so you can take your last month as paid leave and use it to go on job interviews, find housing, etc...
16	Have a plan and have someone help you translate your military skills into terms that civilians can understand.
17	Go to school. It is hard to translate military service into the civilian world. Start applying for jobs prior to complete separation.
18	Fake it till you make it. One would be surprised on what one is capable of doing when placed in the situation. You may not be the most qualified, but apply anyway.
19	Learn what resources are available to you before you separate (i.e. resume, job transition, healthcare).
20	Spend time with friends and have been in the military and understand what it was about. I found that most military clubs tend to put the emphasis on making money.by selling tips and taking a lot of veterans paychecks. Also excessive drinking which won't solve any of your problem.
21	NETWORK! I never would have landed the position I am in if I didn't already have my name established with the company before I even applied . Getting a job has much to do with your qualifications, but that doesn't mean anything if you cannot get your resume in front of the right set of eyes. Don't use job fairs as your only source to find a job. Search forums, use LinkedIn to find recruiters to connect with, and as always, make sure you aren't using a "gimme gimme gimme" approach. People are more inclined to offer you assistance if you can offer something of value to them either through other candidates, services, or just advice.
22	Find your passion and use your experience and skillset to start your own business. Research SBA, VBOC, VetBizOpps, just to get started.
23	Make sure to have a plan in place prior to separation and the civilian world really doesn't think that you are special. Also, look at the area that you are moving to and make sure that the VA programs are actually available in that area.
24	Don't become isolated.
25	Write a proper resume and learn how to do a good job interview and where to search for jobs.
26	1) Make sure that you get all of your documentation and medical paperwork. Make sure to create a resume before leaving service that translates your work into understandable civilian skills. 2) Get

	involved with a veteran community prior to existing service as to access life outside the military. 3) Establish all basic needs and resources to help with stabilization before you get out of service.
27	connect the VA as soon as possible, the help is there WHEN you need it.
28	You should be eligible for unemployment insurance upon separation.
29	I recommend identifying an area of interest before leaving the military so you are not completely overwhelmed when you leave the service. That is a time of extreme transition and it can be incredibly challenging.
30	Maintain the military attitude. Especially when job searching. Make your interviews like a board review. Look for fellow veterans in your advancement and look for fellow veterans to advance.
31	Network. Go to American Job Centers. Research career fields and companies. Stop believing that because you are a veteran the job will be handed to you.
32	1) Plan out your transition. 2) Arrange for a job or school before your ETS. 3) Get aquatinted with a Veteran Service Organization in the area you are moving to. 4) Keep in close contact with veteran friends. (support system) 5) Talk about your troubles with a loved one or counselor. (don't be ashamed)
33	There are no hand outs, being a vet dosent get you special treatment, I've noticed it's the opposite. Use your work ethic to your advantage.
34	Make a plan and stick to it.
35	Start doing your research a year out for your ETS date. Figure out what you want to do, and if you're going to take advantage of your GI Bill. Being prepared will make the transition a lot easier.
36	When u r leaving someone needs to tell u point blank that it is going to be extremely hard. The workforce is not as accommodating to Veterans as u may think.
37	Keep busy. I immediately started taking college classes at a community college, and worked a part-time job.
38	Maintaining friendships is difficult, and jobs now simply just don't amount to how awesome it was being in.
39	Job building skills. no help was given on resume building. how to prepare for civilian work sector. no info on what colleges were looking for veterans. i know now. but when i did ACAP, had no clue what i was doing when i got out.
40	If you don't have a job in the military that easily transitions into a civilian job, earn a degree or skill that will before you get out.
41	Get any job you can because employers don't care about veteran status.
42	That with all the bad press that the military has received on veterans that you are perceived to have a stigmatism. Veterans have PTSD or are Depending upon some type of drug.
43	Get all the benefits and resources you can from the military before getting out.
44	1. Relax. You don't have to be on point all the time everytime. Don't expect your coworkers to be either. 2. Failure is an option. No one's life is on the line. You don't have to be on time or else. Some failure is expected. We all go home at night regardless. 3. Take risks. Accept blame. Be humble.
45	If your dreams encompass being in uniform, do not ETS. If this is not possible, attempt to obtain a career conducive to teamwork, discipline, and honor such as first responder or law enforcement.
46	Learning how to write a resume and what HR process and how they screen out candidates and how to translate military skills into civilian skills.
47	Know your worth, as a veteran you offer many exceptional skill sets. But also know that, "old dogs can't learn new tricks", is complete nonsense. There are too many options and support systems for us veterans. We can make it, no one gets left behind
48	Figure out what kind of career you want to target, and prepare for it WHILE still in the military, preferably 2 to 3 years out. This means working on certifications, degrees, gaining knowledge about, etc... Also if you are lucky enough to have a job in the military related to this targeted career, get help putting together a description of what you did that can be easily read by a civilian.

49	Education - maximize whatever transferable college credit you can get while on active duty and then once your out, use the GI Bill money and be laser focused on getting a 4 yr degree. Advice for the for any enlisted soldier or NCO.
50	Given the harsh realities of the contemporary job market and how it's shifting, veterans should start planning their exit some years before their actual transition date. This includes many things, but chief are knowing where they're at, what skills they bring, to the table, what companies they want to work for, and where they should relocate to get themselves on a firm footing.
51	Employment expectations were too high after getting out.
52	Plan ahead! Know what you are going to do when you get out. Prepare for a let down--like civilian life feeling "too slow" with not enough to do. Best advise--go immediately into some kind of training or education program. Find a new PT routine that you don't hate.
53	Listen to the issues each individual is having whether it be good or otherwise then make a decision as to the path to help that person take
54	remember your discipline and be the best at whatever you do
55	Don't get discouraged from all the companies that say they hire vets and don't. keep trying eventually you'll find the right company / job.
56	Pursue an Associate's Degree at a local Community College. The interactions with civilians, both teachers and students, will help ease the transition in the workforce, and my experience shows that the degree holds more weight than the military experience
57	get better help with converting resumes from military to civilian speak.
58	Prepare yourself early. Like all military training, the TAP classes have information that is way out of date. Also, prepare yourself for a reduction in salary.
59	Transition into the civilian workforce is necessary but never forget that you are a veteran and take advantage of all benefits, services and agencies that provide them.
60	Civilians are, for the most part, (removed) that will make you want to yell at them. Don't yell at them. Thanks for your service.
61	Plan ahead as much as possible.
62	Have a plan at least a year out. Take the time to weigh your options on where to live, what it is you want to do for the rest of your life.
63	Don't expect to find a job that matches your experience level or leadership capability. To the rest of the world, veterans are high school graduates that forgot to get a job after high school or college.
64	Don't undervalue your experience. Be sure to ask for your true worth.
65	Make sure you have a plan. I had no plan when I separated and have had a rough go of it ever since.
66	Seek civilian recruiting firms at least 1 year prior to exiting service, they will be bale to place you with at least a contract position very quickly
67	First complete your 20 to retire and and education at least a bachelor if possible a masters. Seek transition assistance. There are groups and va support to assist with the transition into civilian life. 9/11 changed a lot for the support of veterans. Utilize those resources that are available.
68	Prepare, prepare. It depends on your MOS. if you were /are a grunt then you don't have much to work with except that you are loyal, dependable and a steady worker. So basically it starts with the MOS you choose in the beginning. Now a problem you might run into is that employers may fear you have PTSD and there will be issues later, missing work from DR. appts, mood swings. So showing that you didn't serve in combat can eleve some concerns but only tell them if you need to. If you do have PTSD then first take the time to heal before taking on a full time job, maybe start slow and work your way up.
69	If you don't have a degree, use your GI Bill. Education is one of the best investments you can make in yourself, and you've already paid for it so you might as well use it. Compare unemployment rates for HS graduates vs. college graduates, it's a world of difference.
70	Ensure you have a plan on employment before you leave, have a job lined up already.

71	The units don't support the soldiers properly and also the transition doesn't have very good classes to get you ready... Also lost of soldiers leave the service and start having much more Mental and physical issues from the service. This HAS to be fixed.
72	80% of available jobs are not advertised, they are obtained by word of mouth.
73	Don't separate. The work-a-day world is impossible, right now. Work up to a high NCO or an middle-to-high Officer rank, put up with the BS, because it's a LOT less difficult to deal with than the real-world at a lower rank. I wish every single day, now, that I had stayed in. I have a nice job as an instructor with some VERY good pay, except now I can't get any good hours. My mechanical aircraft repair skills are no longer in demand, and I have NOTHING, anymore, that I was able to pull with me from the Army. Stay in, don't separate. There is NO transition program that will truly help, especially since resume requirements change day-to-day employer-to-employer, ridiculous. Don't quit the military as long as you have a decent job and can stick with it.
74	Don't be too picky when looking for a job. You can always continue looking for the job you want once you have one to pay your bills with.
75	Make serious on your work in the military because you can use that knowledge when you get out from the service.
76	Make sure you have a plan before you seperate.
77	Have an idea of what you want to do and do it until its done.
78	Make sure youre dd214 is squared away and all medical records are validaded.
79	You have 10 years from your ETS date to use your GI Bill benefits.
80	Don't let your chain of command take advance of you or force you to cancel appointments
81	Become a government (DOD) Contractor! Make 3x \$\$\$ doing similar work, indirectly for military but still in support of overall mission.
82	Do not stay in the same city where you were posted. Go home.
83	Before transitioning, consider pros and cons in the transition. Also focus on education after the military and while serving.
84	gi bill information and workforce
85	YOU SHOULD BE GLAD AND THANKFUL THAT YOUR SERVICE IS COMPLETED. I ALSO THINK YOU SHOULD PURSUE ALL OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO YOU, CONGRATULATION.
86	Learn how to interview and create a resume that translate military skills into a civilian career.



## **An Interview with Dave Schantz, Skillbridge /Champion:**

**JW:** Tell me more about the Skillbridge Program:

**DS:** The DoD Skillbridge program allows transitioning servicemembers and Coast Guard the ability to take part in an unpaid internship or apprenticeship for up to 180 days, with a company of their choosing and with the high likelihood of being hired at the end. Basically it's a train to hire program.

**JW:** How many companies are involved with Skillbridge?

**DS:** There are 3000 approved organizations both large and small.

**JW:** What do you know about FourBlock?

**DS:** FourBlock is a transition course that's free and supplements DoD TAP courses. TAP is congressionally mandated and funded but it's not long enough to properly review what service members need to know or be good at. FourBlock does a deep dive into all the topics service members need in order to transition successfully.

**JW:** What are the top industries transitioning servicemembers are looking into?

**DS:** I don't have the metrics pursued by service members, but if I had to guess I'd say project management, IT and cyber are in the top 10.

**JW:** What ranks use Skillbridge the most?

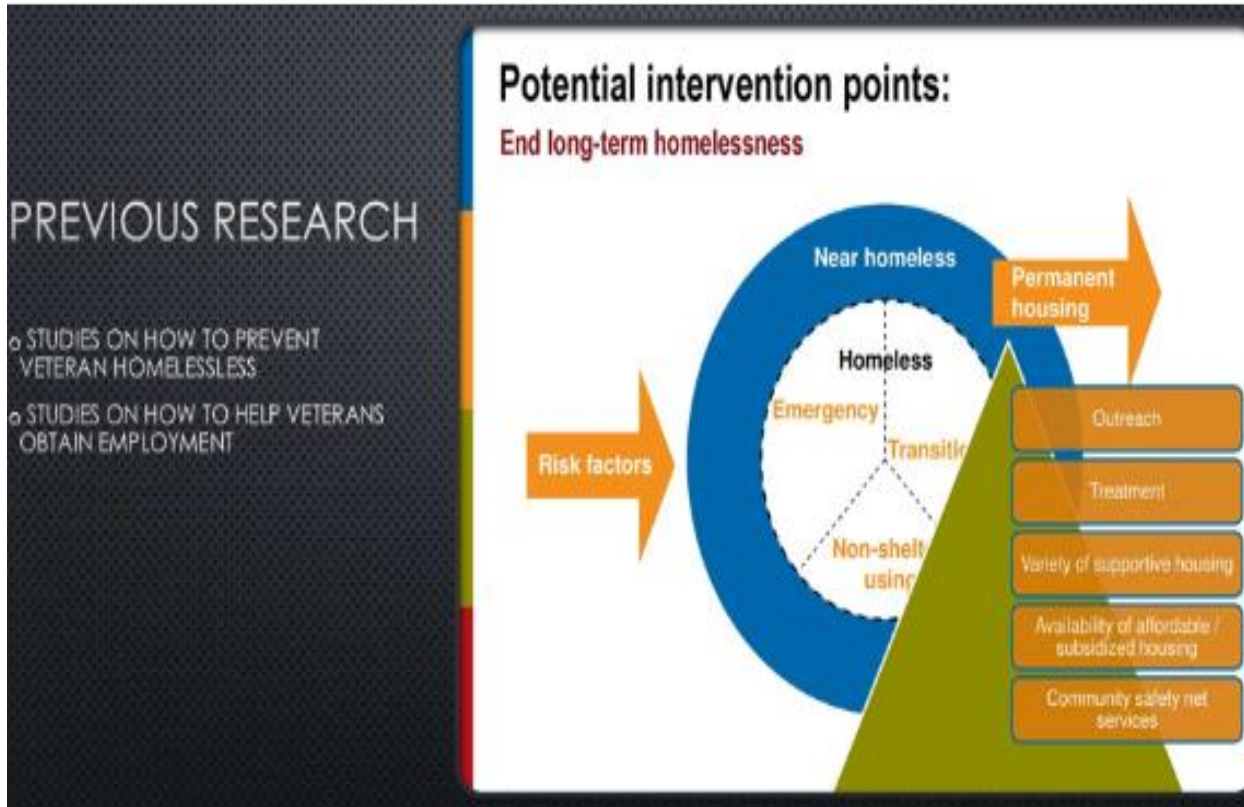
**DS:** I don't have the official data for this but believe E4-E7 utilizes Skillbridge the most.

**JW:** If a Skillbridge intern must go out of town to take a position, will they receive housing?

**DS:** The DoD does not provide housing to service members participating in Skillbridge opportunities other than the service members who receive barracks rooms for their internship. Service members continue to collect all of their pay, benefits and allowances during their Skillbridge time. They're able to rent or buy in town or couch-surf with friends and family.



## Literature Review



My literature of previous research ranges from studies of various government interventions of veteran homelessness and housing insecurity fall short. Some aspects of housing insecurity are discussed while others are ignored altogether. The literature is all over the place from HUD-VASH housing solutions (Montgomery and Cusack 2017) , to Post 9-11 generation veterans adjusting to civilian life (Zogas 2017), to ten year plans to end homelessness (Berg 2015) to innovative efforts to address the homeless (O'Toole and Pape 2015) and even 'we have ended veteran homelessness, now what?'"(O'Toole, Pape and Kane

2013).. The literature suggests many efforts by past administrations to end veteran homelessness with none of the efforts linked to past employment. Is it veterans simply do not know how to cut through all the red tape to use all the services the VA has to offer? The VA provides a wide range of services for all veterans, yet not all veterans receive the invaluable medical and psychological aid that the VA has to offer.

(Gordon, Haas, Luther, Hilton, and Goldstein 2010)

The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program, which now doles out over 69,000 vouchers, reflects this approach (Montgomery and Cusack 2017). Third, Housing First policies were implemented. Previously, much of the program and housing support for homeless persons was contingent on their achieving sobriety or getting a job. Finally, the VA emphasized the importance of community partnerships. These partnerships have included several initiatives such as working with local community Continuums of Care, partnering in First Lady Michelle Obama's Mayor's Challenge, (Suchar 2014, Berg 2015, Toole and Pape 2015). Former First Lady Michelle Obama and current First Lady Dr. Jill Biden have their own ongoing collaborative to end veteran homelessness called "Joining Forces". Ms. Obama and Ms. Biden both contended that their "housing first" approach is ongoing and will not immediately end when their husbands leave office. (Thevenin 2018). After conducting many interviews with veterans in Fresno, California, one researcher linked veteran homeless to childhood trauma. (Pallares 2020). As mentioned before, the "homeless veteran" is by no means a new phenomenon.

The past literature also suggests many governmental initiatives to end veteran homelessness have ended with mixed results with none of the efforts linked to past employment even with specific end target dates and unlimited resources from government agencies. In November of 2009, Secretary of Veterans Affairs (VA) Eric Shinseki set out the audacious goal of ending homelessness among veterans in just half a decade. Shinseki did not succeed. Did Shinseki not succeed due to ineptitude or is the VA a broken system? (Van Wert 2015) At the time, 1 in 3 homeless people were veterans despite only 12% of the population having served in the armed forces. “In many communities, homelessness and specifically veteran homelessness—had become an institutionalized fixture in the urban landscape (O’Toole and Pape 2015). The program for a veteran and his family called the Supportive Services Veterans (SSVF) program is designed to help veterans and their loved ones in their time of need. Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program is a nationwide homelessness prevention program. Even with SSVF’s support- “16% and 26% of single adult veterans experienced an episode of homelessness at 1 and 2 years post-SSVF exit ; the comparable figures at those follow-up times for veterans in families were 9.4% and 15.5%, respectively. Age, gender, prior history of housing insecurity and recent engagement with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care, were generally more accurate predictors of homelessness following SSVF exit than community-level housing market conditions.” (Byrne, Treglia, Culhane, Kuhn and Kane 2016). . How can state governments, local governments, nonprofits, corporate giants and community

partners help? The GI Bill was and still is a noble first step toward getting veterans transitioned back to the real world. Yet, some soldiers leave the service unequipped and unprepared for the next phase of their lives.

Past literature gives many explanations of why various veteran homelessness initiatives from government agencies like HUD and the VA did not work out, yet very few are linked to employment. Difficulty scoring gainful employment is seen as the leading reason for veteran's inability to adapt to civilian life and "limited availability of transition programs, discharge type, negative experiences of support services, and perceived discrimination; and personal barriers, such as lack of initiative to plan and difficulty adjusting to working with civilians" (Keeling, Kinstle and Castro 2018). There are many nuanced differences in personal, medical, and health care usage characteristics of homeless veterans living in metropolitan versus nonmetropolitan environments yet "employed homeless individuals are in better health than unemployed homeless, and/or they access their health care services elsewhere" (Gordon, Haas, Luther, Hilton and Goldstein 2010). Large federal bureaucratic organizations face special challenges due to their size, bloated size and the federal rules and legislation guidelines. While VA clinics and military health care facilities service the needs of many veterans and active-duty service members, many of these individuals are also treated in the local community. Adequately meeting the needs of veterans and service members requires more than knowledge about current conditions and special programs designed for veterans. Specific policy initiatives designed to address this situation have included "systematic screening for homelessness, the creation of multiple portals

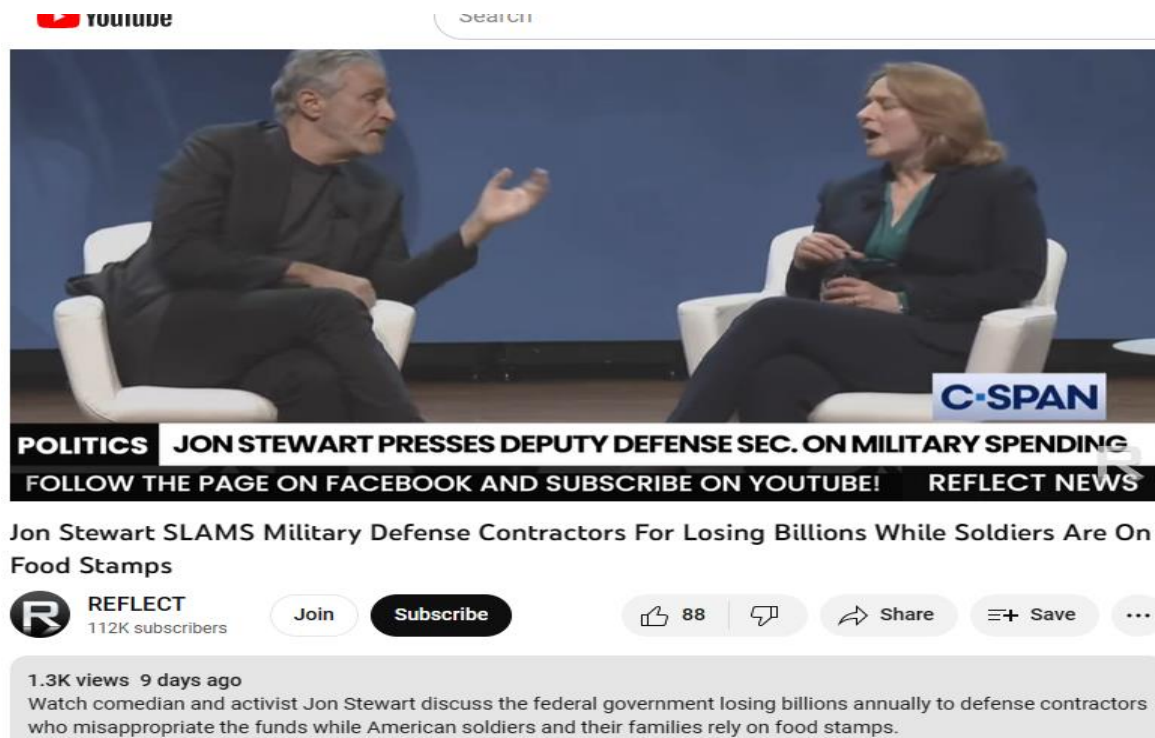
through which veterans can access services, housing first policies, and community partnerships.” (Williams and Jackson 2015). The socioeconomic success of today’s veterans could very well influence future enlistment decisions, so it is in the interest of the military services to avoid a widespread perception that volunteering to serve in the military has long-term negative consequences for health and wealth. Despite the programs available to them, transitioning veterans report that a chief concern is determining how to translate their military skills to civilian employment.” (Schulker 2017) There is a significant gap in military literature military job training and how it can lead to housing insecurity and veteran homelessness.

In my second category of previous research, there have been extensive studies on how veterans can obtain employment (Collins and Dilger 2015), if a former soldier’s job in the military prepares him or her for civilian employment (Segal 1986), the effects of 21<sup>st</sup> Century military service on the labor market (Routon 2014) and how to translate a veteran’s job skills to the civilian labor force (Hernandez 2020).

The literature on veteran homelessness and veteran does not directly link veteran housing insecurity to military job training. The U.S. military armed forces launched the development of several job and occupational analysis tests and the application of said technologies. These job analysis tools evolved to meet a myriad of human resource planning and management needs, particularly reviewing job classification implementation and testing specialty initial skills training programs: “A task inventory approach was

## Part 5- Research Design and Methodology

Figure 5b- The lower enlisted are the workers. The lower enlisted take orders. The lower enlisted are paid less. The lower enlisted aren't part of a network and aren't invited to the Officer's Club or the NCO club. And there are growing number of independent variables that can lead to veteran homelessness. As this is just one study in the area of veteran homelessness, it is impossible to go in depth on every possible reason why a former serviceman would and could be homeless. One independent variable not listed below is a lack of available housing. During a Zoom call with Ms. Katie Jennings who works at United States Independent Council of Homelessness (USICH), I learned of a two new reasons that veterans may become housing insecure-1) a landlord may not want to accept HUD-VASH vouchers and 2) the said HUD-VASH vouchers may not cover all the rent. Activist and Comedian Jon Stewart takes on #2 at the Pentagon Kathleen Hicks at the War Horse Symposium in Chicago last April. The biggest verbal punch he landed was when Stewart asked why the Department of Defense had a 860 billion dollar budget while soldiers were on food stamps. Jon Stewart, activist and comedian is good at standing up for the little guy whether it's a first responder, 9-11 victim or soldiers. Here is at a military symposium in Chicago:



was useful for most military needs, and this approach was developed into a comprehensive occupational data analysis system.” (Mitchell and Driskill 2009). Veterans tend to work in as well as how veteran salaries stack up to similar nonveterans in each area. Results show that former military personnel tend to be drawn to civilian occupations where military experience is likely to be utilized, to the point of overrepresentation echo technical military functions. “.

The literature on veteran homelessness is divided into three categories: presidential

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initiatives that didn't work out, government initiatives that didn't work out and subsequent explanations of why various veteran homelessness initiatives did not work out. While on active duty, every man and woman in uniform receives some sort of job training. After completing boot camp or basic training, uniformed personnel go off to specialized job training called "AIT" or Advanced Individual Training. Some AIT training lasts a few weeks and other AIT training can last a full year (Teves 1985). Is there too much focus on the "career soldier" who stays in 20 years and receives a full pension and full retirement benefits instead of the average GI? Is there too much focus on the military officer who is part of the Officer Corps, a powerful network that grooms current and former officers for lifelong success instead of the average GI? On the surface, the job strife and job struggle that some veterans experience does not make sense. Some jobs are open to virtually all personnel who served on active duty and have an honorable discharge. America's defense budget is always a large part of the GDP. The defense budget needs to worry less about the next generation F-15 fighter jet and more on the health and welfare of those leaving the service (Roth 1992) Three distinct employment opportunities for almost every new veteran include security guard, government contractor and civilian employee for the Department of Defense. Government contractors and civilian employees are often stratospheric salaries often in the six-figure category, yet only a small percentage of veterans are able to take advantage of these opportunities. The literature doesn't adequately address the need for retraining soldiers for civilian jobs while on active duty nor retraining soldiers for civilian jobs because the GI Bill does not meet that need.

Many newly minted aren't ready for college nor do they want to go to college. (Steele, Salcedo and Coley 2010.) Adequate and sufficient military job training provides the tools necessary for lower enlisted soldiers in the Army Medical Corps, the field of cyberwarfare and the Army Legal Corps and to be productive and maintain a job when they leave the military for a civilian workplace. Lower enlisted soldiers in the Combat Arms Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) such as the (MOS 11C), Indirect Fire Infantryman do not have adequate and sufficient military job training or the tools to thrive and survive in the real world. An Indirect Fire Infantryman (is a member of a mortar squad, section or platoon (Loebel 2017). The mortar is an infantry unit's most powerful weapon. And despite the name, the job of infantryman has been open to women soldiers since 2016. There is no civilian equivalent job or occupation to match the mortarman's skills potentially leading to job insecurity, food insecurity and housing insecurity after leaving the service (Bouc 1995). As mentioned above, in many instances the occupation or specialty that uniformed personnel perform on active duty does not have an equivalent in the civilian world. Many veterans having served in combat zones and been away from the civilian world so long as they possess a very low "Emotional Quotient" or EQ that is so essential to work with today's employees in today's workplace. To have a high Emotional Quotient or EQ is to have the ability to put oneself in another person's shoes. A simple one-word definition of EQ would be "empathy". Couple inadequate job skills with a low EQ, and the jobless veteran can fall victim to homelessness. Veteran job struggles and veteran homelessness are hardly isolated incidents. The veteran homeless population is significantly higher than the general



population of the United States. Low EQ and lack of job skills are just two factors of many that can lead to chronic unemployment and chronic homelessness among today's veterans. (Elbogen, Connor, Sullivan, Wolfe, Wagner and Beckham 2013)

Adequate and sufficient military job training provides the tools necessary for "indoor/garrison" soldiers in the Army Medical Corps to be productive and maintain a job in the civilian workplace but not the "field" combat-arms soldiers. The Department of Defense is the largest vocational training establishment in the world (Baker 1985). The Army's medical workers get thorough training to utilize their job skills in either a civilian or military hospital. The Army Mental Health Specialist (MOS 68X) works directly under the auspices of an Army psychiatrist, social worker, psychiatric nurse, or psychologist. Enlisted service members who finish technical training to serve as care extenders (i.e., members of the care team who provide supportive clinical services alongside licensed independent providers) to licensed mental health providers (Holliday, Hepner, Tanielian, Meyer and Pincus 2019). The Medical Corps soldier will gather and record patient data; counsel and treat patients with personal, behavioral, mental health, or substance abuse problems; and provide bedside care in hospitals or clinics. Sometimes, an Army Mental Health Specialist will also receive training in a civilian hospital in the psychiatric emergency service (PES) of a safety-net hospital. (Simpson, Goodwin, Thurstone 2019) Relevant, high-quality training and clinical rotations in civilian settings give the ability to keep the Army MHS relevant and current in his field. With the post 9-11 spate of Traumatic

Brain Injuries (TBI), Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) and an uptick in Army suicides, the Army Mental Health Specialist (MOS 68X) is an integral part of the Army team and fully qualified to work at a civilian psych ward once his tour of duty is finished. (Harris and Berry 2013)

In my estimation, both categories of the previous research fall short. Of the dozens of initiatives and articles on veteran housing insecurity and veteran's employment options that I looked at- none of them directly address the root causes of homelessness – the inability to provide the right job training for the right veteran to get the right job to earn the right salary and therefore keep and maintain a sustainable standard of living to successfully eliminate veteran homelessness for once and for all (DePremio 2006)

The building blocks of my theoretical argument and causal logic is as follows- lower enlisted Army soldiers fall into two categories: combat-arms veterans and non-combat arms veterans. My hypothesis is that increased job training is likely to lead to a decrease in veteran homelessness. The enlisted ranks run from private to sergeant major. The enlisted veteran often has little or no formal education outside of high school in contrast to those servicemen and servicewomen in the Officer Corps who have a bachelor's degree or possess a Master's degree. (Kleykamp 2006) Promotions in the enlisted ranks rely on military leadership courses not college education. (Moore 2002) I hypothesize that the combat-arms veterans, your tanker and your infantryman, are more likely to go to a combat zone and less likely to receive military job training that translates to a civilian job

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when he or she gets out. This lack of transferrable job skills leads to housing insecurity and veteran homelessness. And conversely, the non-combat vet is armed with relevant and transferable job skills. For example, a 42 Echo Army Human Resources specialist can get a comparable position at a company or corporation as an HR specialist.

I originally planned to limit my study to the job status and job training of only post 9-11 veterans. I wanted my case study analysis to focus on how possible additional job training could lead to less housing insecurity. The military as an institution is seen by Americans as the most trusted institution in the land ahead of the presidency, Congress and business. Servicemen and servicewomen are seen as more ethical (Schaubroeck 2012) When a veteran applies for a government job, he or she is applying with a preferred status. Veterans who apply for a civil service examination can receive 5 or 10 Veteran Preference Points. On the surface, it would seem that Americans with a military background and military training would be among the top tier of America's employees in almost every industry, every boardroom and every factory. Former servicemen are instilled with many character attributes and lifelong habits that lead to success in the workplace including attention to detail, hard work, discipline, teamwork and the ability to see through a project or task from start to finish (Ford, Foreman and Harris 2016). Unfortunately, service in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard or Marines and those stellar attributes do not always guarantee career success for veterans in the civilian world.

Theoretically, I believe adequate and sufficient military job training provides the tools

necessary for soldiers in Army Cyber Technology to be productive and maintain a job in the civilian workplace. Department of Defense is the largest vocational training establishment in the world (Baker 1985). The 2010 US Army Training and Doctrine Commands Concept Capability Plan for Cyberspace Operations directed the Army to begin development of a Cyber Mission Force. The direction to build a Cyber Mission Force followed a number of cyberspace attacks conducted to support military operations. (Romano 2015). US Army cybersecurity services include capabilities to implement DoD Component activities addressing vulnerability assessment and analysis; vulnerability management; malware protection; continuous monitoring; incident handling (Caton 2019). Army Cyber Operations Specialist (MOS 17C). are assigned with safeguarding Army intelligence and information. They safeguard information by protecting digital data, maintaining security measures like firewalls, and introducing new cyber security. Cyber Operations Specialist, defend the Army's crucial and complex weapons systems, which include satellites, navigation, and aviation systems against both foreign and domestic cyber threats (Romano 2015). As one of the most technologically advanced nations in the world, our adversaries are attacking and attempting to exploit our networks around the clock, searching for vulnerabilities. An Army Cyber Operations Specialist will respond to these attacks, while enabling commanders to gain an advantage in cyberspace across all domains by targeting enemy activities and capabilities. Soldiers who do not reenlist may pursue civilian

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careers as information security analysts, but despite higher wages than many other occupations, information security analysts similar to enlisted soldiers have projected earnings comparable with military pay. (Wenger, O'Connell and Lytell 2017)

In theory, adequate and sufficient military job training provides the tools necessary for soldiers in the Army Legal Corps to be productive and maintain a job in the civilian workplace. Department of Defense is the largest vocational training establishment in the world (Baker 1985). Army Paralegal Specialists (MOS 27D) are required to assist judges, Judge Advocates, and unit commanders in a wide variety of legal areas and expertise. These specialists provide legal and administrative support and are required to be knowledgeable about a wide range of topics. This position requires accuracy and clerical proficiency. The literature suggests there is quite a bit of job satisfaction in being a paralegal (Chouinard 2012, Rausch 2020, Strong 1971). There is even an award for excellence in this legal specialty – “The Sergeant Eric L. Coggins Junior Paralegal / Non-Commissioned Officer Award” (Borch 2018) During training, recruits will learn the skills necessary to provide legal support to the many judicial members they will be working with. Other helpful skills in a Paralegal Specialist position include the ability to monitor and review actions for accuracy, supervision duties for those in command and maintain law/administrative library.

I further hypothesize that those soldiers and veterans who have pre-law, paralegal and cybersecurity training, combat arms soldiers such as Infantryman, Tankers, Artillerymen and Indirect Fire Infantryman do not have adequate and sufficient military

job training or the tools to thrive and survive in the real world. An Indirect Fire Infantryman (is a member of a mortar squad, section or platoon (Loebel 2017). The mortar is an infantry unit's most powerful weapon. And despite the name, the job of infantryman has been open to women soldiers since 2016. There is no civilian equivalent job or occupation to match the mortarman's skills potentially leading to job insecurity, food insecurity and housing insecurity after leaving the service (Bouc 1995). Combat Arms Soldiers need adequate and sufficient military job training in a brand-new field to have a fighting chance of survival in the real world. Combat Arms Soldiers could retrain as Mental Health Specialist (68X MOS) in the Army Medical Corps, as an Army Cyber Operations Specialist (17C MOS) in the field of cyberwarfare or an Army Paralegal Specialists (MOS 27D) in the Army Legal Corps to be productive citizen and maintain a job when they leave the military. A fully trained soldier with technical competence is less likely to experience food insecurity, job insecurity and housing insecurity in both the short term and the long term (Cooper and Caddick 2018).

### Delimitations of this Study

There are several limitations and delimitations to this study. For one, the very definition of homelessness is not agreed upon by the eleven government agencies that fall under the umbrella of the USICH (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness). As a veteran and a student researcher the idea of approaching random homeless veterans for information on my capstone would not only be a HIPPA\* violation (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) but would definitely not be accepted as an idea for this student researcher to accumulate data by the IRB (Institutional Review Board).

. The unsheltered homeless are not only hard to count they often don't even have State IDs or proper identification. Unsheltered homeless veterans and otherwise if they are in tent cities are in tents that are 1) temporary, 2) unnumbered and 3) without a name i.e. almost impossible to adequately track due to the nomadic nature of the homeless experience. The Department of Veterans Affairs cannot/will not release information of a confidential nature for better or for worse that could compromise their patients.

Some servicemen and women are leaving the service disabled, others with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury and many have decided to end their own lives. These sensitive topics are not discussed in full by the Department of Veterans Affairs due to patient confidentiality agreements and the unfortunate fact that the VA is shorthanded medical clinicians and mental health staff members. Extended wait times for veterans coupled with VA personnel shortages have led to bad reviews. In 2023, Secretary Denis McDonough is trying valiantly to turn around the ship- this will take time, money and patience. This researcher found members of the VA not willing or not able to discuss the above matters in any great length or detail for this study.

## Part 6- Case Studies

### Study 1- Poverty and Veteran Homelessness- *Regression Analysis*



The regression studies that this author looked at revealed that there are dozens more independent variables in America that can trigger housing-insecurity and ultimately homelessness. In the study by Tsai and Hooshyar “Prevalence of eviction, home foreclosure, and homelessness among low-income US veterans: the National Veteran Homeless and Other Poverty Experiences study” (Tsai, Hooshyar 2022) there was found to be a positive correlation between low-income veterans and high-foreclosure rates. In their study using hierarchical logistic regression also revealed that sociodemographic factors such as diagnosis and treatment of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, past history of suicide attempts, and low physical health checkups were positively correlated with higher risk of homelessness. Another study on poverty and homelessness revealed the breakdown of age, sex and race of the most vulnerable to housing insecurities. 130, 554 homeless people were sampled using multivariate regression models. Veteran status and being African-American were statistically significant risk for homelessness for both men and women. Men in the 45- to 54-year-old age group and women in the 18- to 29-year-old age group had the highest risk of being on the streets compared with other age brackets (Fargo, 2012)



Study 2: Drug Addiction and Veteran Homelessness



One study used negative binomial regression models compared groups on health care clinic visits and usage. Housing Support Groups (HSG) participants experienced a greater decrease in emergency department visits than VA-sponsored Addiction/Housing Case Management (AHCM) ( $p = .037$ ), whereas AHCM participants remained in substance use treatment 52.7 days longer (Malte, 2017)

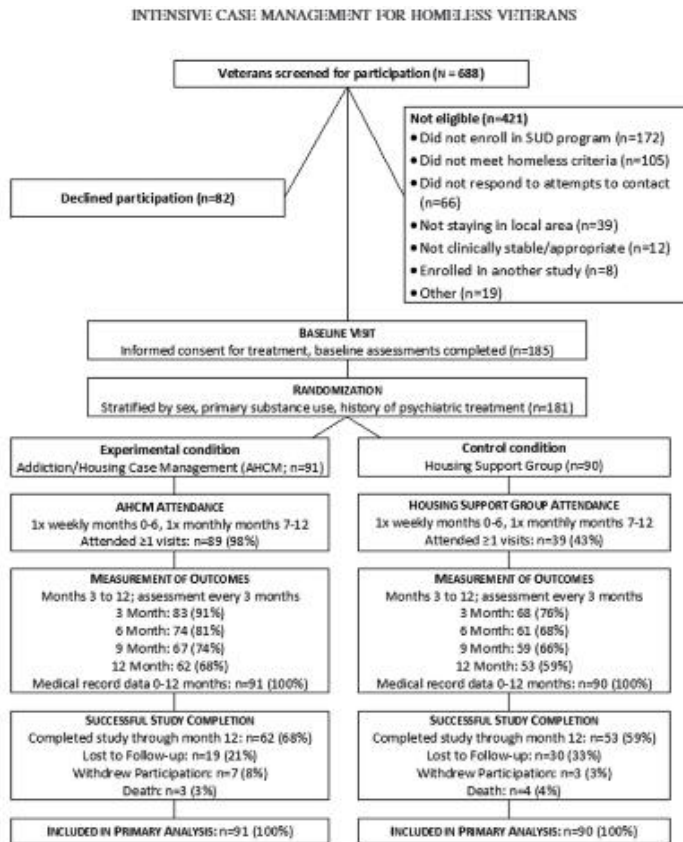


Figure 7. Consort diagram. Retention at 12 months: Pearson  $\chi^2(1) = 1.67$ ,  $Pr = 0.196$ . SUD = substance use disorders; AHCM = addiction/housing case management.

### Study 3: Lack of Education and Veteran Homelessness



The website [military-transitions.org](http://military-transitions.org) reveals those veterans with less education have trouble transitioning to the real world (military-transitions, 2023). The same holds true where a lower education level can be a factor and independent variable in the predictability of homelessness. Low education level, poverty and addiction can lead to housing insecurity as brought forward in Patricia Wetzel’s study “Homeless Veterans’ Utilization of Medical, Psychiatric, and Substance Abuse Services” (Wetzel, 1995). As mentioned earlier in this capstone- student homelessness- regardless of education level is on the rise ...and often unreported. Public schools discovered 183,312 students as homeless during the 2020-21 school year by the annual Census Day, which is the first Wednesday in October. In 2015 the National Center for Education Statistics found 2.5% of students or 1,260,721 homeless.

**Table 204.75d. Number and percentage of homeless students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, by primary nighttime residence, selected student characteristics, and state or jurisdiction: 2014-15**

State or jurisdiction	All homeless students						Number of homeless students with selected characteristics			
	Total number of homeless students <sup>2</sup>	As a percent of total public school enrollment	Number, by primary nighttime residence <sup>1</sup>				Unaccompanied homeless youth <sup>5</sup>	English language learners <sup>6</sup>	Migrant students <sup>7</sup>	Students with disabilities <sup>8</sup>
			Doubled-up or shared housing <sup>3</sup>	Hotels or motels	Shelters, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care placement	Unsheltered <sup>4</sup>				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>United States</b>	<b>1,260,721</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>957,053</b>	<b>82,187</b>	<b>180,302</b>	<b>39,327</b>	<b>94,800</b>	<b>181,764</b>	<b>17,748</b>	<b>215,630</b>

## **Success Stories**

### **San Antonio, Texas**

Texas has 15 military bases with 4 of them in San Antonio. You might say that San Antonio, with its large military presence of active-duty personnel and retirees has vested interest in helping struggling veterans in the area. You might say that San Antonio, with the nickname “Military City, USA” has a vested interest in helping its local veteran population. USAA (United States Automobile Association) enjoys its huge popularity among the veteran community and as a way of saying “thank you” USAA decided to give back- in a big way. USAA gave 2.1 million dollars to help their veteran brothers and sisters. One of the biggest immediate improvements is the city of San Antonio mad it personal- the list of the names of homeless was always kept current. Another interesting and unique aspect to the San Antonio effort- *the homeless were triaged like patients in a hospital.*

In March of 2015, things started to come together in San Antonio. For Mayor Taylor and the San Antonio City Council. The political bipartisan cooperation from public officials and the public sector push to end Veteran homelessness provided a way forward to permanent housing for 1,335 Veterans, including 123 Veterans chronically homeless vets, most of whom had been outdoors for years. This once-in-a lifetime collaboration among local, federal, and private agencies demonstrated the effectiveness of pooling resources and resource management. The name of the San Antonio task force was called the *Homeless Veteran Community Collaborative*. Streets and Sanitation wasn't trying to move the

homeless like herded cattle. Instead, the San Antonio police force created their own *Community Homeless Plan*. In 2016, San Antonio's homeless reached "functional zero"

Figure 6a-6b. San Antonio is home to 4 of the 15 military bases in Texas.

**Homeless Veteran Community Collaborative (HVCC)**

- ★ South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) Continuum of Care (CoC)
- ★ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - South Texas Veterans Health Care System (VA-STVHCS)
- ★ San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA)
- ★ Housing Authority of Bexar County (HABC)
- ★ American GI Forum National Veterans Outreach Program (AGIF)
- ★ Family Endeavors
- ★ Haven for Hope of Bexar County (Haven)
- ★ The Center for Health Care Services (CHCS)
- ★ SAMMinistries (SAMM)
- ★ United Services Automobile Association (USAA)



### **Grace Transitional Veterans Home and Vet Court**

The author was an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer for the Grace Transitional Veterans Home in Great Falls, Montana. During his year living and volunteering at the Grace Home, Walsh saw several amazing success stories including:

- 5 residents transitioned from the Grace Home to HUD-VASH housing
- Love from the community including daily donations from the community and 3 automobiles.
- 3 graduations from Veterans' Treatment Court including many former residents of the Grace Home.

Veterans' Treatment Court is a 14-month program featuring a medical continuum of care team that helps with job placement, mental health treatment, drug or alcohol addiction and other issues. Selected participants report to the Vet Court judge once a week for guidance, wisdom, clarity...and further instruction. The Vet Court in Bloomington, Illinois is more than just a Vet Court. Mr. Del Saam, former Army major and the man in charge of running the Vet Court, is an active participant in the Department of Defense Skillbridge program.

Meet one member of the continuum of care team at Montana's Vet Court. Ms. Jennifer Lehman is a one-woman social service agency and Montana superhero. Our heroine Jen is voice for the voiceless, a champion for the poor and a shelter in any storm. My first encounter with Jennifer was during a cold and snowy Great Falls blizzard. The sun was about to set. Temperatures were 10 below zero and plummeting fast. We were in her pickup truck on a mission from God. As we cruised the streets, I was told to be on the lookout for a homeless man walking around 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, a native American man in his early 40s, slender build wearing a camouflage jacket. We continued cruising around for 10 minutes. No luck. Another 10 minutes passes and somehow with zero visibility we find our needle in a haystack...a tired, disheveled and cold man stumbling around aimlessly in the blinding snow. He told us his story. His name is Ernie. Ernie lost a finger to frostbite a week ago and went to ER for further treatment. They gave him some pain medications and sent Ernie back in the brutal cold. Ernie told Jennifer that he needs to see his wife. Ernie's wife also has frostbite related injuries that have landed her in the Inpatient Ward. The hospital won't let Ernie see his own wife. Super Jen's quick and decisive actions literally opened all doors previously shut to a kind man. A kind man who was dismissed and judged

unfairly for his sad, down and out appearance brought on by his newly found status as a “domicile-y challenged” man. Our superheroine ushers Ernie past the security, the front desk, the 5<sup>th</sup> floor hospital ward desk and finally the nurse in Room 502. Husband and wife are reunited. Just another day at the office for hometown hero Jen Lehman.

This was no isolated incident for Ms. Lehman. Helping the homeless is instinctual for Jen as she has a marked tendency to put others’ needs before her own. In two separate articles in the Great Falls Tribune in 2019, Jennifer was profiled for her acts of courage and selflessness for the homeless community. One article mentioned how Ms. Lehman found a permanent home for a homeless man with no toes. The second article talks about how Jen memorialized a homeless woman living under an underpass.

Though Ms. Jennifer Lehman is a superhero, she doesn’t do it alone. Ms. Lehman follows the old adage *it takes a village to raise a child* and with Lehman’s expert help “it takes compassionate care of a whole community to help save a homeless person in need.” I don’t think there is a Social Services Agency in Great Falls that Jennifer isn’t involved with. There are far too many agencies to name including the Great Falls Food Bank, St. Vincent DePaul Food Bank, Volunteers of America, St. Vincent DePaul’s Homeless Outreach, the “Continuum of Care” committee in the Great Falls Civic Center, Alliance4Youth, Neighbor Works, Neighbors in Need and the “Suicide Prevention Committee”, to name a few.

Ms. Lehman’s tireless efforts also extend to the Grace Home Veteran’s Transitional Home. She has been involved at the Grace Home since its inception nearly 3 years ago and helps provide both housing and counseling for veterans in the home. Jen helped one veteran who was unable to stay at the home by getting him immediately into a HUD/VASH




home near the Grace Home and the IGA Grocery store. Jennifer let a local man with a camper park his camper behind the Grace Home and come in daily for food, showers and companionship. Ms. Lehman also attends the local Veteran's Treatment Court weekly planning counsel in Judge Pinski's 8<sup>th</sup> Montana District courtroom. A number of Grace Home residents are an active part of the Vet Court as they seek Mental Health counseling, drug rehab awareness counseling, redemption from past misdeeds and a shot at a brand-new life.

Jen spends a bulk of her time helping with "warming center services" within the Angel Building at St. Vincent DePaul on Central Avenue in Great Falls. During the record-low temperatures this past February, the Angel Building remained open for 21 consecutive days. The Center offered seasonal shelter to anyone in need- families with children, single adults, couples and pets were welcomed. Trained staff and volunteers were always available during operating hours. Services introduced through the Angel Center included personal laundry and shower, housing case management, day storage, pet boarding, health advocacy and job search assistance. The total number of clients that Jen and her staff served were approximately 50- 12 have sought and gained employment and 9 have transitioned into stable housing. Jen also works closely with Volunteers of America agency personnel in both Great Falls and Helena to ensure "no veteran nor homeless person is left behind". Jen may have a couple of fancy titles one being "*Managing Director for Veteran Services and Homeless Outreach at Society of Saint Vincent de Paul*" in Great Falls, yet Jen is just a regular Great Falls gal who wants to help her fellow man and woman, on a personal level- one person at a time.


## Success Story #3- Jaime Hentig: TBI Survivor


Hi All-


I wanted to introduce myself. I'm Dr. Jayme Hentig

  I joined the Army at 17 because I was more afraid of a college classroom than I was of a war zone. I served with the 173rd Airborne as a Company Senior Combat Medic 

 I suffered a traumatic brain and spinal injury in Afghanistan in 2010 and was medically retired in 2012.

 I completed a BS in biology and chemistry, and then a PhD at the University of Notre Dame in neuroscience and regenerative medicine focused on traumatic brain injuries. My postdoc focused on developing biomarkers for diagnostic and prognostic aspects of TBI in veterans and active duty.

 My first job as a scientist was with 10th Group Special Forces as a blast-injury expert.

 I currently work as a Clinical Evaluation Scientist at a major medical device company while working on completing my MBA.

I look forward to learning from you and helping out however I can!

AATW

[#phd](#) [#medicine](#) [#neuroscience](#) [#veterans](#)  
[#mba](#)

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## Conclusions and Final Thoughts

If homelessness is the problem, loneliness is one of its by-products. In May of 2023, the Surgeon General of the United States Dr. Vivek Murthy, declared that America is in the middle of a loneliness crises. Mass shootings. 22 a day. Homelessness. PTSD. Loneliness and isolation are the mere tip of the iceberg. ChatGPT. Chatbots. Self-scanning at grocery stores. President Harry Truman's idea for average Americans, churches and synagogues to take in the homeless was flatly rejected. In 2023, Truman's anti-loneliness plan- is an idea whose time has come. Work at home. Hybrid. Homeschooling. Online classes. Everyday normal social interactions are no longer normal in 2023.

This American loneliness manifests itself in many ways and that includes active-duty military and veterans. The Warhorse Symposium at the University of Chicago in April placed a focus on trying civilian/ military divide. This is no small task with just 1% of America's population are on active duty in the military and 6.5% of America's population are veterans. The symposium bemoaned a lack of positive human-interest stories in the American press. To fill that shortfall- the War Horse press has done over 300 stories (War Horse, 2023) . The Pritzker Military Museum in Illinois has over 250 archival collections that focus on the personal tales of citizen soldiers. There is also a recording room at the museum for every veteran to tell his or her story (Pritzker Museum, 2023). The VA has not only recognized this loneliness epidemic- but this government agency also has the problem tackled head on. The honorable Denis McDonough has ordered the hiring of 3,000 more healthcare workers and 90-day outpatient mental health treatment. The number of homeless veterans has been cut in half since 2010. All these above actions are positive steps in the right direction.

## **Appendix A: Resources: Blogs, Podcasts and Websites**

Invisible People (Blog)

Mentors for Military (Podcast)

ruralhome.org

garysinesefoundation.org

woundedwarrior.org

k9forwarriors.org

vetfriends.org

picturethehomeless.org

Concerned Veterans of America (Blog)

Army Wife 101 (Blog)

Upzoned: Homeless in Rural America (Podcast)

shpa-il.org

dav.org

legion.org

thewarhorse.org

studentveterans.org

[Podcasts – National Coalition for Homeless Veterans \(nchv.org\)](http://nchv.org)

hopeforthewarriors.org

teamrubiconusa.org

50strong.us

fourblock.org

Wounded Times (Blog)

On-Call Empath Life After Trauma (Podcast)

Therapy Chef (Podcast)

happierlivesinstitute.org

militaryonesource.mil

flandersfields.org

Military Mom Talk Radio (Podcast)

uso.org

chicagohomeless.org

skillbridge.osd.mil

travismanion.org

amvets.org

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