EVENT BRIEFING MEMO: Military Engagement

USS Independence (LCS-2) ★ Naval Base San Diego ★ San Diego, California

EVENT DATE AND TIME: Friday, September 21, 2018 | 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Staff Lead:
Pre-Trip: ☐
On-Trip: ☐

HOST: CDR Emily Cathey, Commanding Officer of USS Independence (LCS-2)

Commissioner Lead: Support Commissioner:

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE: While the Commission has spoken with enlisted and officers from each of the branches of the military on several general themes (e.g., motivation for joining the service), this roundtable discussion will focus the issue of diversity in the ranks.

Female Recruitment: The overall trends across the military services for female recruitment are positive. According to the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA), since the advent of the all volunteer force, the percentage of female active duty enlisted accessions has increased from 10 percent in FY74 to 18.3 percent in FY16. Female representation among active duty officer gains has steadily increased from 10.5 percent in FY74 to 22.9 percent in FY16. While no combat roles remain closed to women since the DoD decision to open up all communities in December 2015, integration of female servicemembers into combat arms roles remains a work in progress. An April 2018 report by the Center for a New American Security reports that while “female service members have gained a small but important share of the combat arms population in the military....the military services face an uphill battle to recruit women who are interested and capable of serving in combat roles, while still maintaining physical standards.”

Racial and Ethnic Minority Recruitment: The story of racial and ethnic minority recruitment and representation is mixed. In the active duty enlisted force, CNA reports that racial minorities are overrepresented, with the civilian labor market benchmark at 23 percent and DoD representation at 31 percent. This is primarily due to African-American overrepresentation as Asians are underrepresented. Hispanics also are underrepresented in the enlisted force, at fewer than 17 percent, while the civilian benchmark is over 18 percent. For the active duty officer ranks, both racial minorities and Hispanics are underrepresented. Although African-American officers are underrepresented (8.8 percent versus 9.5 percent), underrepresentation is more severe for Asians, who make up 5 percent of commissioned officers but 12.6 percent of the civilian benchmark population. Hispanics are underrepresented as well—7.7 percent versus 9.5 percent for 21-to-49-year-old college graduates in the civilian labor force.

The research purpose of this meeting is: To explore current efforts to increase diversity, the challenges of recruiting from minority communities, and the importance of role models and mentors in the chain of command

The engagement purpose of this meeting is: Build on outreach to the military services.

PARTICIPANTS: Participants will include female and minority senior enlisted and officers from multiple Navy warfare communities as well as the U.S. Coast Guard.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Areas of Interest to the Commission

- Is a military draft or draft contingency still a necessary component of U.S. national security?
- Are modifications to the selective service system needed?
- How can the United States increase participation in military, national, and public service by individuals with skills critical to address the national security and other public service needs of the nation?
- What are the barriers to participation in military, national, or public service?
- Does service have inherent value, and, if so, what is it?
- Is a mandatory service requirement for all Americans necessary, valuable, and feasible?
- How does the United States increase the propensity for Americans, particularly young Americans, to serve?