



National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service

Friday, February 23, 2018
HACC's Harrisburg Campus
Midtown Trade and Technology Center
Midtown 2, Room 206

11:00-11:30 Opening Remarks

Introduction: *Mr. Tom Kilgannon*, Commissioner

Welcome: *Dr. John J. "Ski" Sygielski*, President, HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College

Remarks: *BG David E. Wood*, Director of the Joint Staff, Headquarters for the Pennsylvania National Guard

Presentation: *Dr. Joseph Heck*, Chairman of the National Commission

11:30-12:00 "Benefits and Barriers of Serving in Pennsylvania"

Moderator: *Ms. Avril Haines*, Commissioner

Panelists: *W. Gerard "Jerry" Oleksiak*, Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

Abigail Weitkamp, HACC nursing student and Navy veteran

Tiffany Franck, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader

12:00-13:00 Public Comments

The Commission's work includes understanding why people serve, why people may choose not to serve, and recommending ways to increase the number of Americans in military, national, and public service. The Commission is actively seeking input from the public and invites you to join the conversation. Share your thoughts at:

www.inspire2serve.gov



SPEAKER AND PANLIST BIOGRAPHIES

John J. “Ski” Sygielski, Ed. D, *President, HACC, Central Pennsylvania’s Community College*

Dr. Sygielski became the seventh president of HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College, in July 2011. His previous appointments include president of Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon, and president of Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, Virginia. He began his professional career as a teacher in a Chicago inner-city school followed by a stint as a corporate trainer for two Fortune 500 companies. He transitioned to a community college career at College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, where he began his community college administration and college teaching career. He is currently a member of Harrisburg Rotary and serves on the boards of the Harrisburg Chamber of Commerce and Pennsylvania's Workforce Investment Board. He earned his bachelor's degree in philosophy, two master's degrees in business and a doctorate in education, as well as an honorary associate degree.



Brigadier General David E. Wood, *Director of the Joint Force, Headquarters for the Pennsylvania National Guard*

BG Wood has served his country proudly for over 30 years. He was commissioned in 1987 through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps at the University of Notre Dame. He served on active duty for over 11 years as an Army aviator with duty tours in Europe, Persian Gulf, Korea, and the United States. General Wood has since served in the Pennsylvania National Guard in key command and staff assignments within the 28th Infantry Division, the 213th Regional Support Command, and the Pennsylvania Joint Forces Headquarters. He had operational assignments as both a Platoon Leader in Operation Desert Storm, and later as a Commander of Company G in the 104th Aviation in Afghanistan. In addition to his bachelor's degree, he has earned a masters from the University of Southern California and one from the U.S. Army War College.

W. Gerard “Jerry” Oleksiak, *Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry*

Before joining the Department of Labor & Industry, Mr. Oleksiak served as president of the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) – the largest professional association in the commonwealth. Prior to becoming president in 2015, he served as PSEA vice president, treasurer, and as a member of the board of directors. Mr. Oleksiak is especially proud of the more than three decades he spent as a classroom teacher, most of that time as a special education teacher at the Upper Merion Area School District in King of Prussia. He also served as president of the Upper Merion Area Education Association (UMAEA). Born and raised in Philadelphia, Mr. Oleksiak graduated from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in International Relations and a teaching certificate in social studies in 1974. Several years later, he earned a Master's degree in Education from Saint Joseph's, and worked to earn his special education certification through LaSalle University.



Abigail Weitkamp, *HACC nursing student*

Ms. Weitkamp graduated from high school in 2009 and joined the U.S. Navy. She was stationed at Pearl Harbor, and earned her Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist pin within six months of getting to the ship. After serving one and a half deployments, she returned to Pennsylvania and started the nursing program at the Harrisburg Area Community College. She chose nursing because she had previously worked as a nurse's aid at a local hospital and discovered her passion for helping others. After graduating, she plans to transfer to Penn State Harrisburg to obtain a Bachelor of Science in nursing.

Tiffany Franck, *AmeriCorps VISTA Leader*

Ms. Franck, a native of Ephrata, PA, is serving in her second year as an AmeriCorps VISTA member. She currently works with the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania (CAAP), a statewide nonprofit representing 41 community action agencies. As a VISTA Leader, Ms. Franck supports the training and supervision of other CAAP VISTA members and works to increase the impact of the program. Last year, she served as an AmeriCorps VISTA member with St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity in Western Wisconsin. She received a bachelor's degree in sociology from Waynesburg University and a masters in international development from Eastern University.





COMMISSIONER BIOGRAPHIES

Joseph Heck, Chairman, served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, representing the 3rd District of Nevada from 2011 to 2017. During that time, he was a member of the Armed Services Committee, where he chaired the subcommittee on Military Personnel; the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and the Committee on Education and the Workforce. From 2004 to 2008, Dr. Heck served in the Nevada State Senate. A graduate of The Pennsylvania State University with a degree in health education, he received his medical degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, and completed his Emergency Medicine Residency at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia. He is a fellow of both the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians and the American College of Emergency Physicians. An active member of the United States Army Reserve, Dr. Heck holds the rank of Brigadier General and is currently assigned as the Deputy Joint Staff Surgeon, Office of the Chairman – The Joint Chiefs of Staff. Dr. Heck also currently serves as President of RedRock Government Relations, where he oversees a team that provides insightful and innovative strategic guidance to help clients achieve their public policy goals.



Mark Gearan, Vice Chair for National and Public Service, is the Director of the Institute of Politics at the Harvard Kennedy School and Special Advisor for Public Service Initiatives at Harvard College. From 1999 to 2017, he served as President of Hobart and William Smith Colleges. In 1995, Mr. Gearan was appointed by the President to serve as the Director of the Peace Corps. Previously, he served in the White House as Assistant to the President, Director of Communications, and Deputy Chief of Staff. Mr. Gearan was an appointee of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Commission on Political Reform, which focused on developing policy recommendations to encourage greater public service, amongst other things. He was also a former member of the White House Council for Community Solutions, a group of cross-sector leaders appointed to recommend collaborative solutions to increase civic engagement, and has served on numerous boards. He is the co-chair of the National Advisory Board on Public Service at Harvard College. He earned his bachelor's degree in government *cum laude* from Harvard University and his law degree from Georgetown University. He is the recipient of 13 honorary degrees.

Debra Wada, Vice Chair for Military Service, was appointed in 2014 to the position of Assistant Secretary of Manpower and Reserve Affairs for the U.S. Army. In that position, she was responsible for all personnel, training, and readiness of the Army. Prior to her appointment, she worked on the U.S. House Armed Services Committee with responsibility for military personnel policy. She also worked for Senator Daniel K. Akaka. Originally from Hawaii, Ms. Wada graduated from Drake University in Iowa with a degree in economics and political science, and also attended the Naval War College.



Edward Allard III served most recently as the Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer of the Selective Service System from April 2010 to January 2017, where he chaired improvement projects to ensure effective and efficient Agency operations. He had previously served in the Clinton Administration, as the Director of the Performance Excellence Office in the Energy Department and as an adviser to the Secretary of Defense. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps for more than 10 years, resigning as a Captain in 1973. For over 25 years, Mr. Allard was the President and CEO of Allard & Associates, a management consulting firm, which provided management and performance improvement consultations nationally and internationally. He also worked with several nonprofit organizations, including as the President of the Roybal Foundation, which provides scholarships to health care students for work in low-income communities; as Vice President of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce; and various positions with the United Way of America. Mr. Allard received a Master of Business Administration from the University of Miami.

Steven Barney served as the General Counsel to the Committee on Armed Services in the U.S. Senate, supporting 26 elected U.S. Senators comprising the full committee and six subcommittees to plan, develop, draft, and assure Congressional passage of the annual National Defense Authorization Act. He was the lead professional staff member responsible for defense personnel programs, including support for the active force of over 1.3 million servicemembers. Mr. Barney also served for over 22 years in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the U.S. Navy, leading military and civilian legal professionals and staff at sea and ashore. During that service, he worked as the Inspector General of the Naval Legal Service Command, was the Fleet Judge Advocate for the U.S. Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk and the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Japan. He retired in the grade of Captain in 2013. He received his law degree from Suffolk University Law School and his bachelor's degree from Saint Michael's College.



Janine Davidson currently serves as the President of Metropolitan State University of Denver. From 2016 to 2017, Ms. Davidson served as the 32nd Under Secretary of the United States Navy, where she managed all Department of the Navy affairs including Navy and Marine Corps integration, acquisition, finance, personnel, legislative affairs, research and development. In that role, she was responsible for the health and well-being of nearly 900,000 sailors, marines, civilians, and their families. Prior to the Navy, Ms. Davidson served as a senior fellow for defense policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, where she is a lifetime member. She has taught national security policy and political science at Georgetown University, George Mason University, and Davidson College. She holds a master's degree and doctorate from the University of South Carolina and a bachelor's of science degree in architectural engineering from the University of Colorado Boulder. She was a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Squadron Officer School and was the first woman to fly the Air Force's tactical C-130.



Avril Haines is currently a Senior Research Scholar working on Columbia World Projects, which attempts to bring extraordinary scholarship to bear on the most basic fundamental challenges that we are facing today. She is also a fellow at the Human Rights Institute and National Security Law Program at Columbia Law School. Ms. Haines served as Principal Deputy National Security Advisor from 2014 to 2017. Just prior, she was the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and before that she served as the Legal Adviser to the National Security Council. Before joining the NSC, she led the Treaty Office at the Department of State, was the Deputy Chief Counsel for the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, worked for The Hague Conference on Private International Law, and served as a law clerk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Prior to obtaining her law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, Ms. Haines founded and ran a successful bookstore café in Baltimore and was active with local community organizations. Ms. Haines received a bachelor's in physics from the University of Chicago.

Jeanette James is retired from the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services where she served as a Professional Staff Member and Lead Staff on the Military Personnel Subcommittee. During her time on the Committee, she focused on the Defense Health Program and the Military Health System, the integration of women into previously closed military occupational specialties, family programs, sexual assault and sexual harassment, Arlington National Cemetery, and Wounded Warrior programs. Prior to joining the Committee, Ms. James served 31 years in the Army as a Nurse Corps officer, with assignments ranging from clinical nursing to executive leadership. Ms. James is a graduate of several military and health care leadership development programs including the Army Management Staff College, the Interagency Institute for Federal Health Care Executives, and the Army War College, where she earned a Master of Strategic Studies. She received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Syracuse University and a Master in Nursing Administration from New York University.



Alan Khazei is a social entrepreneur who has pioneered ways to empower citizens to make a difference. He is the Founder and CEO of Be The Change, Inc., which has three campaigns: Opportunity Nation, to promote social mobility and expand opportunity; Got Your 6, to empower post 9/11 Veterans to lead a resurgence of community; and Service Year Alliance, to promote a year of national service as a civic rite of passage. Mr. Khazei is the Co-Founder and former CEO of City Year, which unites young adults, ages 17 to 24, from all backgrounds for an intensive year of full-time community service mentoring, tutoring, and educating children. City Year served as the model for the AmeriCorps national service program. Mr. Khazei is also the author of *Big Citizenship: How pragmatic idealism can bring out the best in America*.

Tom Kilgannon is the President of Freedom Alliance, a charitable organization which honors and supports America's military personnel and their families and advocates for a strong national defense. Under his leadership, Freedom Alliance grants millions of dollars to hospitalized heroes to help them and their families with unexpected costs during their recovery. Mr. Kilgannon also created the *Service to America Award*, which pays tribute to individuals "whose efforts reflect a love of country that makes America and her communities a more perfect Union." He began his career as a Deputy Press Secretary for Pat Buchanan's 1992 presidential campaign and later worked in the U.S. House of Representatives as a top aide to Congressman Mark Neumann of Wisconsin, a member of the historic freshman class of 1995. Mr. Kilgannon is a graduate of New York University and has appeared on numerous television and radio programs. He has published dozens of opinion columns and is the author of *Diplomatic Divorce: Why America Should End Its Love Affair With the United Nations*.



Shawn Skelly served as the Director of the Office of the Executive Secretariat at the U.S. Department of Transportation from June 2016 until January 2017. She previously served two and one-half years as Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics at the Department of Defense, coordinating the Warfighter Senior Integration Group. In that role, she was responsible for facilitating the Departmental response to the most urgent and unique support requirements of Combatant Commanders, including the Counter ISIL Campaign and operations in Afghanistan. Ms. Skelly served on active duty in the U.S. Navy for 20 years as a Naval Flight Officer, retiring with the rank of Commander. Between her military service and 2013, Ms. Skelly spent five years in industry with ITT Exelis. She received a bachelor's in history from the University of South Carolina and a Master in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College.