

## Summary of Military Hearings

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service hosted two public hearings at the Partnership for Public Service in Washington, D.C. Each hearing featured expert panelists who gave opening statements and answered questions from Commissioners. Time at the end of each hearing was reserved for members of the public to offer comments. Complete hearing materials, including a recording of the hearings, preparatory memos drafted by Commission staff, and panelists' written testimony are available at: <https://inspire2serve.gov/content/hearings>.

## Creating New Pipelines to Service and Fostering Critical Skills

The May 16<sup>th</sup> morning hearing addressed issues related to recruitment, retention, and development of critical skills within military service as well as creating new pipelines to service. Panelists touched on these issues, offering support for new and existing recommendations; recurring themes stressed fostering an effective culture and leveraging existing authorities to attract technical talent.

**Nicole Camarillo, Executive Director, U.S. Army Cyber Command**, stated the outcomes of major conflicts will be decided by a state's ability to effectively use technology to defend from cyber-attacks. She argued the U.S. is currently hampered by its inability to attract and retain technologists and cyber experts. Ms. Camarillo noted that the Defense Digital Services (DDS) and the Army created the "Jyn" Program to address challenges with recruiting expert cyber and tech talent. Jyn enables service members to work out of uniform and on "SWAT" teams to address challenging problems, creating a culture better suited for technical talent.

**Dr. David Chu, President, Institute for Defense Analyses**, noted the primary opportunities for serving one's country are through the federal government or the military, but neither are well-understood by Americans. He recommended that military service broaden the ASVAB and build on its Career Exploration Program (CEP). Dr. Chu advocated for expanding and facilitating a continuum of service for military components, increasing permeability between time in the military and private or public sector careers to better attract young Americans.

**Dr. Sharon Hamilton, Director of Liaison and Military Operations, University of North Georgia**, summarized the plan Senior Military Colleges (SMC) developed to mitigate critical skills shortfalls. She said they aligned cyber curriculum and activities with Department of Defense (DoD) focus areas. Their "cyber institute" model includes four discrete proposals: funding scholarships linked to post graduation DoD jobs, initiating the security clearance process upon receipt of scholarship awards, providing incentives for students enrolled in strategic foreign languages, and supplementing universities with military officers and DoD professionals. She said the goal of her institution is to create a continuous pipeline of talent possessing critical skillsets to the military and DoD.

**Katherine Kidder, Political Scientist, RAND Corporation**, focused on newly created authorities from the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), noting that this bill provided permissive rather than directive or restrictive authorities for the military. Additionally, these new authorities provide service secretaries with increased flexibility for personnel management. She cautioned that the authorities could lead to different outcomes among the services, adding that it is critical to recognize that the services are fundamentally requirement-based organizations with unique individual cultures.

**Raj Shah, Co-Founder, Arceo.ai**, stated the “greatest ongoing challenge of the Armed Forces is continuing to attract talented human capital.” He highlighted the need for tech savvy leaders and identified talent shortfalls as a long-term threat to national security. Mr. Shah spoke to issues caused by the civil-military divide, advocating for expansion of ROTC opportunities, expansion of the Reserve component, and better retention of high-performing service members.

### Increasing Awareness among Young Americans and Lessening the Civil-Military Divide

The May 16<sup>th</sup> afternoon hearing focused on the growing divide between military and civilian communities and ways to increase awareness of the military among American youth. Panelists discussed the causes and consequences of the civil-military divide and explored ways to improve engagement between these communities and increase participation in military service.

**CJ Chivers, Author and Writer, The New York Times**, described the gap in understanding and experience between the American public and service members serving in the wars since 9/11. He argued that the relatively small size of the American military compared with the overall population, in combination with the geographic distribution of military and veteran communities, allows most Americans to avoid serious consideration of the use of force and whether they might need to serve the country in uniform.

**Dr. Lindsay Cohn, Professor, U.S. Naval War College**, cautioned against dire interpretations of problems caused by the civil-military divide, but observed that current trends would make it increasingly hard for the military to recruit and retain personnel. She provided several recommendations addressing these trends, which focused on improving the culture of the military to expand the pool of people interested in serving, arguing that greater cultural inclusivity would enable the military to “attract the right mix of people” and make it more “capable of approaching challenges from multiple perspectives.”

**Ernie Gonzales, Former Director of Youth Programs, Department of Defense**, articulated the importance of youth outreach programs for the military and society, arguing that these programs “made some difference in lessening the civil-military divide among our nations communities and youth.” Mr. Gonzales addressed various proposals related to youth programs in the Commission staff memo and called for dedicated funding and expanded staffing for JROTC. He also argued for increased cooperation between the military and other service organizations, including the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC).

**Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Senior Vice President, Center for Strategic and International Studies**, emphasized her support for the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) as the best model for accessing military personnel in the United States, but added that the AVF “creates unique challenges for civil-military relations” that the nation should address. Dr. Hicks outlined several recommendations for improving relationships between military and civilian communities, and in particular highlighted the need for civilian training courses before entering senior government service.

**Mr. Anthony Kurta, Performing the Duties of the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense**, identified the widening civil-military divide as a key issue that impacts the DoD’s “ability to effectively recruit and sustain” the AVF. He characterized the civil-military divide as resulting in part from misperceptions and a lack of understanding about opportunities available in the military and noted that the divide exacerbates already difficult recruiting conditions for the military services. Mr. Kurta highlighted steps DoD is taking to expand awareness about opportunities in the military, including marketing campaigns directed at influencers such as parents and family members.