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Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Military: From Service to Civilian Life

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DATA BRIEF | MAY 2021

ASIAN AMERICANS & PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN THE MILITARY: FROM SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE



POPULATION

Asian American & Pacific Islander Service Members & Veterans

ACTIVE DUTY, GUARD, & RESERVE

118,000+

Asian/Pacific Islander Active Duty and Selected Reserve Members to date

Total Military Force

77,000+ active duty service members

41,000+ selected reserve members

VETERANS

318,000+

Asian veterans in the U.S.

277,000+
MALE VETERANS

41,000+
FEMALE VETERANS

132,000+ POST 9/11 ASIAN VETERANS

Views on Military Service

TOP MOTIVATIONS FOR MILITARY SERVICE



TOP SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES STRENGTHENED BY MILITARY SERVICE

- ▶ Teamwork (87%)
- ▶ Work ethic/discipline (87%)
- ▶ Mental toughness (83%)
- ▶ Adaptation to different challenges (83%)
- ▶ Ability to get things done (80%)
- ▶ Self-Discipline (80%)
- ▶ Leadership & management skills (80%)
- ▶ Professionalism (80%)
- ▶ Perseverance (76%)
- ▶ Confidence & self-esteem (76%)

WAS MILITARY SERVICE WORTH IT?

85% reported that joining the military was a GOOD decision



87% served outside of the continental United States operating across different cultures, nations, and regions

STEM

48% reported that their military specialization was **STEM RELATED**



Transition

TOP REASONS FOR LEAVING ARMED SERVICES

42%

Lost faith or trust in military or political leadership

42%

Pursue education and training opportunities



39%

Career change/ alternative job opportunities

32%

Concerns & grievances about service experiences

28%

Completion of military service obligation (less than 20 years)



26%

Family Reasons



Transition Difficulties & Key Challenges

53%

characterized their **employment transition** as difficult or very difficult compared with 49% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents.

36%

characterized their **financial transition** as difficult or very difficult, compared with 48% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents.

38%

characterized their **overall transition** as difficult or very difficult, compared with 43% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents.

TOP TRANSITION CHALLENGES

- ▶ 63% Navigating VA administration or benefits
- ▶ 61% Getting a job
- ▶ 48% Skills translation
- ▶ 45% Employment preparation
- ▶ 43% Depression
- ▶ 42% Getting socialized to civilian culture
- ▶ 40% Financial struggles
- ▶ 37% Disability



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COMMUNITY SERVICES

LESS THAN 1%

of military members/veterans seeking services in **AmericaServes networks** identified as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander

TOP SERVICE CATEGORIES

for Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander clients were:

- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Housing & Shelter
- ▶ Benefits Navigation



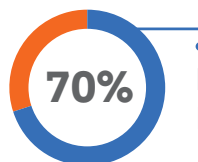
TIME TO EMPLOYMENT

Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander

37% OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED IT TOOK LESS THAN THREE MONTHS TO FIND EMPLOYMENT AFTER THEIR TRANSITION

compared with 51% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents

MILITARY INFLUENCE ON POST SERVICE ASPIRATIONS



REPORTED THAT MILITARY SERVICE PREPARED THEM FOR THEIR CIVILIAN CAREER

49%

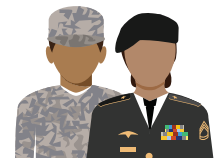
indicated the desire to pursue a career DIFFERENT from their military specialty (MOS, AFSC, etc.)

30%

indicated the desire to pursue a career SIMILAR to their military specialty

21%

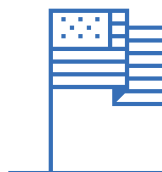
indicated they are UNSURE if they will pursue a career similar to their military specialty



CITIZENSHIP AND VOTING

Citizenship

- 63% Native born U.S. citizens (in the U.S. or Puerto Rico/ other U.S. Island areas)
- 31% Foreign born & U.S. citizen by naturalization
- 6% U.S. citizens born abroad to American Parent(s)



Voting

In the November 2020 elections

61% VOTED



17% VOTED IN-PERSON ELECTIONS

44% VOTED BY MAIL

Employment

UNEMPLOYMENT

In 2020, Asian veteran unemployment was at **5.1%**
IN 2019, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 3.6%

THIS IS LOWER THAN TOTAL VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT WHICH WAS AT 6.5%



In 2020, Asian post 9/11 veteran unemployment was at **6.7%**
IN 2019, THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE WAS 3.9%

THIS IS LOWER THAN TOTAL POST 9/11 VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT WHICH WAS AT 7.3%



EARNINGS

IN 2019

\$83,516



Average earnings for Asian / Pacific Islander veterans

HIGHER compared to Asian/Pacific Islander nonveteran counterparts who earn about \$75,875

HIGHER compared to non-minority veteran counterparts who earn about \$82,608

IN 2019

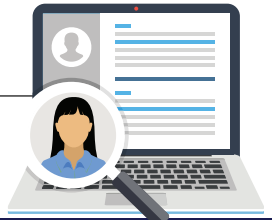
TOP FIVE OCCUPATIONS

- ① Office & Administrative
- ② Business & Financial
- ③ Management
- ④ Installation, Maintenance, & Repair
- ⑤ Healthcare Practitioners & Technical

IN 2019

TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES

- ① Educational, Health & Social Services
- ② Public Administration
- ③ Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, & Waste Management Services
- ④ Manufacturing
- ⑤ Transportation & Warehousing



STEM WORKFORCE

Of those veterans in the STEM workforce, 3% are Asian

\$92,051

AVERAGE EARNINGS FOR ASIAN VETERANS IN STEM



\$99,551

AVERAGE EARNINGS FOR ASIAN VETERANS IN STEM WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE OR HIGHER



\$78,043

AVERAGE EARNINGS FOR ASIAN VETERANS IN STEM WITH LESS THAN A COLLEGE DEGREE



Entrepreneurship



In 2019, 9% of Asian/Pacific Islander veterans were self-employed

MOTIVATIONS FOR PURSUING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- 39%** Make own decisions
- 36%** Maintain personal freedom
- 36%** Acquire a comfortable living



IN 2020

TOP RESOURCES

- 47%** Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC)
- 31%** SBA District Offices
- 31%** Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)
- 28%** Other entrepreneurs
- 25%** SCORE Business Mentors

CURRENT BARRIERS

IN 2020

- Lack of initial capital (44%)
- Current economic situation (32%)
- Federal regulations and policies (28%)



Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) is the first national institute in higher education singularly focused on advancing the lives of the nation's military, veterans and their families. Through its professional staff and experts, the IVMF delivers leading programs in career and entrepreneurship education and training, while also conducting actionable research, policy analysis, and program evaluations. The IVMF also supports veterans and their families, once they transition back into civilian life, as they navigate the maze of social services in their communities, enhancing access to this care working side-by-side with local providers across the country. The Institute is committed to advancing the postservice lives of those who have served in America's armed forces and their families. For more information, visit ivmf.syracuse.edu.

Higher Education

81% indicated that the military experience left a lasting impression in their education success

MOTIVATIONS FOR PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

- ▶ Career/job opportunities (89%)
- ▶ Potential for making money/Improve economic status (72%)
- ▶ Self-improvement & personal growth (71%)

IN 2019

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Asian/Pacific Islander post 9/11 veterans have achieved:



BACHELOR'S OR HIGHER



SOME COLLEGE/
ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE



HIGH SCHOOL



LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL

BARRIERS

That Hindered Pursuit of Higher Education

- 51% Lack of financial resources/
Financial burden
- 27% Personal/family obligations
- 22% Difficult courses

RESOURCES

and Assets for Veteran Success

- 77% Flexible class schedules
- 71% Academic advising/counseling
- 70% Military/veteran friendly campus

References

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2019 Demographics DoD Profile of the Military Community (2019). Retrieved from: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/data-research-and-statistics/military-community-demographics/2018-demographics-profile>
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Views of Military Service

Data of Asian and Pacific Islander service members/veteran (n=154) used from Zoli, C., Maury, R., & Fay, D. (2015, November). Missing Perspectives: Servicemembers' Transition from Service to Civilian Life data-driven research to enact the promise of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Syracuse, NY: Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University.

Transition

Data of Asian and Pacific Islander veteran (n=154) used from Zoli, C., Maury, R., & Fay, D. (2015, November). Missing Perspectives: Servicemembers' Transition from Service to Civilian Life data-driven research to enact the promise of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Syracuse, NY: Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Syracuse University.

Transition difficulty and time to employment were analyzed from unpublished data collected for the 2018-2016 Blue Star Families' annual Military Family Lifestyle Surveys. Please note these findings are limited due to small sample size (n< 100) for Asian and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander veteran respondents. This effort is from Blue Star Families in collaboration with the IVMF. For more information, see Blue Star Families, 2018-2016 Military Family Lifestyle Survey Comprehensive Report. Blue Star Families. Retrieved from <https://bluestarfam.org/survey/>

Data from AmericaServes is from the beginning of the AmericaServes to May 2021.

Citizenship and Voting is data analysis based on Current Population Survey, November 2020 Voter Supplement's data of Asian and Pacific Islander veteran (n=137). Data can be downloaded at https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/time-series/demo/cps/cps-suppl_cps-repwt/cps-voting.html

Employment/Entrepreneurship

Analysis based on Current Population Survey, November 2020 Voter Supplement's data of Asian and Pacific Islander veteran (n=137). Data can be downloaded at https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/time-series/demo/cps/cps-suppl_cps-repwt/cps-voting.html

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Earnings, industry, occupation, and self-employment is data analyzed using Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0 [U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimate]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V7.0>.

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Higher Education

Steven Ruggles, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 7.0 [U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey 1-year estimates]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V7.0>.

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