

**RECORD VERSION**

**STATEMENT BY**

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**ON ARMY DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PROGRAMS**

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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Chairman Banks, Ranking Member Kim, distinguished members of this Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on behalf of the men and women of the United States Army.

The Army's mission remains constant: to fight and win our nation's wars. We do this with a trained and ready Force, prepared to respond to the evolving threat landscape. There is no better investment to ensure the readiness of the Army than our people. Our people are our strength, and our strategic advantage. We draw talent from every state and territory, building cohesive teams of people with the infinite backgrounds, talents, and viewpoints they bring to the fight. Therefore, our number one priority is people—our soldiers, Army civilians, families, caregivers, survivors, and veterans who are soldiers for life. Our goal is to ensure that everyone in the force can serve honorably and advance professionally within a safe environment, and our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) program is an important part of that work.

### **Mission of Army Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)**

In 2019, the Army published the Army People Strategy (APS), which describes a clear framework to “acquire, develop, employ, and retain the diversity of Soldiers and Army Civilians’ talent needed to achieve Total Army readiness.” The vision of this strategy is to build cohesive teams that capitalize on the positive and powerful aspects of Army culture, create people-focused commands and organizations that prevent harmful behaviors, and build trust across our formations.

Nothing corrodes team cohesion and reduces its effectiveness faster and more completely than the scourge of harmful behaviors we are fighting as a society, including sexual harassment and assault, domestic violence, and suicide. The first line of defense to combat these harmful behaviors in our formations is prevention. We know that the most effective way to address these problems is to create conditions to ensure that they don't happen in the first place. To do this, we rely on leaders at all levels to create and sustain positive command climates. DEIA is central to fostering the trust, strength, and resiliency that is so crucial to maintaining readiness.

A mature DEIA program leverages people's attributes, experiences, cultures, characteristics, and backgrounds to build stronger teams, enabling organizational agility and adaptability. The values of equality, fairness, civility, respect, and dignity are the foundation of the American Dream and the building blocks of a diverse and inclusive mission-ready Total Force. We cannot defend this country, and fight and win wars, if our people are not able to contribute, do not feel valued, or do not want to come to work every day to accomplish the mission.

**Recruiting and Leading a Diverse Force**

Today’s Army is more diverse in nearly every measurable characteristic than at any time in its history.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Army AC (FY11)</b>	<b>Army AC (FY22)</b>	<b>10-year Change</b>
White	61.7%	53.6%	-8.1%
Black	19.9%	20.3%	+1.2%
Hispanic	11.4%	17.6%	+6.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.7%	6.9%	+2.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.9%	0.9%	No change
Women	14%	16%	+2%

Figure 1. Army Demographics<sup>12</sup>

Both Generation Z and Millennials want leaders who support a diverse and inclusive workplace.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, one of the main impediments to recruiting Generation Z is an

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Army, Army Demographics: FY11 Army Profile, 30 September 2011. <https://api.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/566201.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Army, Demographic Diversity: FY22 Army Profile Representing the Nation We Serve, 30 September 2022. <https://api.army.mil/e2/c/downloads/2022/11/18/f61c370e/army-profiles-fy22-tri-fold.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ed O’Boyle, “4 Things Gen Z and Millennials Expect From Their Workplace,” *Workplace Gallup*, 30 March 2021. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/336275/things-gen-millennials-expect-workplace.aspx>

existing knowledge and relatability gap with the Army.<sup>45</sup> We must close this gap by revolutionizing how we recruit and demonstrating that the Army is an employer of choice.

To adapt how we recruit in this new environment, we are telling the Army's story in new ways. We are starting to meet young Americans from all backgrounds, talents, and regions where they are—both physically and digitally, and giving them multiple reasons to join the Army. Our goal is to help all Americans see themselves in what the Army has to offer.

One example of a new approach to outreach is the U.S. Army Recruiting Command's Diversity Outreach and Inclusion Team (DOIT). DOIT is comprised of Officers and Noncommissioned Officers from Active Duty and Active Guard Reserve with diverse backgrounds and experiences who are uniquely equipped to provide relatable information to potential applicants, influencers, and community leaders. DOIT engages and shares real-life Army stories from team members to connect with diverse audiences and communities on a personal level.

### **Diversity and Readiness**

The principles of DEIA enable the Army to better accomplish its mission—to fight and win our nation's wars. Research shows that diverse teams drive innovation.<sup>67</sup> Equitable treatment allows everyone to share their talents to build readiness and support the mission.

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<sup>4</sup> Association of the United States Army, "Survey: Gen Z Unaware of Many Benefits of Service," 17 June 2022. <https://www.ausa.org/news/survey-gen-z-unaware-many-benefits-service>

<sup>5</sup> United States Army, "Army Recruiting Media Round Table July 26, 2022," 27 July 2022. [https://www.army.mil/article/258809/transcript\\_army\\_recruiting\\_media\\_round\\_table\\_july\\_26\\_2022](https://www.army.mil/article/258809/transcript_army_recruiting_media_round_table_july_26_2022)

<sup>6</sup> Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin, "How Diversity Can Drive Innovation," *Harvard Business Review Magazine*, December 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Jay Kulkarni, "Why Diverse Teams Excel At Innovation and Tips for Employers," *Forbes*, 22 April 2022. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2022/04/22/why-diverse-teams-excel-at-innovation-and-tips-for-employers/?sh=30f46f5e24bc>

The Army is advancing multiple DEIA initiatives across the Force that are aligned with the Secretary of the Army's Objectives. The Army recently released the DEIA Roadmap as part of the Army People Strategy's Military Implementation Plan. The Roadmap outlines strategic goals that represent the next three years of initiatives designed to build and sustain the foundational phase of DEIA organizational growth and establish an analytical baseline for future policy decisions. The five strategic goals outlined in the Roadmap are: Enhance Mission Readiness; Enhance Leadership Commitment and Engagement; Enhance Training and Education Programs to Meet the Demands of the Total Force; Enhance the Army as the Employer of Choice; and Enhance an Army-wide Inclusive Culture.

The DEIA Roadmap and the Army People Strategy enable the Army to acquire and retain America's top talent. In 2021, the Army reestablished the Army Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council (ADEIC), co-chaired by the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army. The ADEIC, which meets every six months, functions as a senior, strategic-level body to align DEIA efforts within the Army. It enables Army Senior Leaders to address strategic-level DEIA challenges and promote initiatives that enhance readiness, build diverse, cohesive teams, and ensure that the Army is a 21st-century competitive employer.

The Army transformed outreach and engagement to generate a more dynamic two-way conversation to strengthen relationships within underserved communities. The Army published an Army Senior Leader and Army-wide Outreach and Engagement Strategy. The strategy focuses on building relationships with national organizations, affinity groups, and community influencers that share mutual commitment in providing full access and opportunity when attracting, recruiting, hiring, retaining, and developing talent. These efforts enable the Army to more effectively engage underserved communities and identify viable opportunities to highlight achievements of past, present, and future soldiers and Army civilians. Army leaders communicate the Army's commitment to inclusion through outreach and engagement activities, including employment programs, scholarships, employment benefits, military careers, and paid

internships. These engagements provide community feedback regarding experiences and perceptions about the Army and inform eligible Americans of the opportunity to know the Army as a community asset and employer of choice.

### **Diversity Training and Education**

By statute, we as a department are required to conduct Equal Employment Opportunity (5 USC §9902 and §2301) and Military Equal Opportunity (10 USC §2001 and §7418) training. This training is an annual requirement, codified in Army Regulation 350-1, Army Training and Leader Development. We empower our commanders to develop strong and cohesive teams by meeting both statutory requirements and senior leader guidance.

The Army focuses on developing effective leaders who are capable of building cohesive teams. The Army's basic Leadership Model—Be, Know, Do—has always specifically pointed out the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Specifically, the model encourages leaders to be aware of and understand their people's backgrounds, what makes them who they are, and the unique perspectives they bring to the team. Further, the model highlights the need to develop soldiers, which is one way to provide them the tools they need to succeed, and further build a positive environment.

In November 2022, the Army released an updated Field Manual 6-22, Developing Leaders. This manual integrates best practices and years of team-building to assist leaders in developing cohesive and effective teams.

### **Conclusion**

The Nation we serve is becoming increasingly diverse and the soldiers and Army civilians we recruit are reflecting those trends. Investment in DEIA policies, practices, and training creates understanding and deeper bonds between people who have different cultures, beliefs, experiences, and backgrounds, and teaches leaders to build inclusive and cohesive teams. These are all critical to mission success and readiness. To keep our Army strong and accomplish the mission, we must attract, recruit, and

retain people who embody the best of America, and we must offer them opportunities that allow them to fulfill their aspirations. A diverse and talented force of trained and cohesive teams is the most important indicator of our readiness.

Chairman Banks, Ranking Member Kim, and members of this Subcommittee, I thank you for your generous and unwavering bipartisan support of our outstanding soldiers, civilian professionals, and their families, caregivers, and survivors.