AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS
From Service to Civilian Life

This infographic provides key highlights of African American service members and veterans. The information and statistics in this document are from our various data collection efforts centered on military life, transition, employment, entrepreneurship, and higher education.

AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS
TOP SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES STRENGTHENED BY MILITARY SERVICE
- Teamwork (91%)
- Work ethic/discipline (89%)
- Leadership and management skills (83%)
- Mental toughness (81%)
- Professionalism (80%)
- Adaptation to different challenges (80%)
- Self-Discipline (80%)
- Ability to get things done (79%)
- Coping with adversity (78%)
- Social/Communication skills (78%)
- Working effectively with supervisors and other authorities (76%)

WAS MILITARY SERVICE WORTH IT?
89% of African American service members reported that JOINING THE MILITARY WAS A GOOD DECISION

STEM 41% reported that their military specialization is STEM RELATED

82% SERVED OUTSIDE OF THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES operating across different cultures, nations, and regions

TOP MOTIVATIONS FOR MILITARY SERVICE
- EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS 62%
- OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE NEW EXPERIENCES, ADVENTURES, OR TRAVEL 52%
- CAREER OPPORTUNITIES 47%
- DESIRE TO SERVE MY COUNTRY 40%
- FINANCIAL SECURITY 31%
- SENSE OF PURPOSE 31%

TOP HISTORICAL NUMBERS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN SOLDIERS
- ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, APPROXIMATELY 20% OF THE COLONIAL POPULATION OF 2.5 MILLION MEN WERE AFRICAN AMERICAN.
- 200,000+ MANY OF THEM FORMER SLAVES, SERVED IN THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES DURING THE CIVIL WAR
- 400,000+ SERVED IN UNIFORM DURING WORLD WAR I.
- 900,000+ SERVED IN UNIFORM DURING WORLD WAR II.

AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS: FROM SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE
FEBRUARY 2020
TOP REASONS FOR LEAVING ARMED SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lost faith or trust in military or political leadership</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Reasons</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue education and training opportunities</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military retirement (20 years or more)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career change/alternative job opportunities</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of military service obligation (less than 20 years)</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MILITARY INFLUENCE ON POST-SERVICE ASPIRATIONS

- Post Military Career: 54%
  - Indicated the desire to pursue a career different from their military specialty (MOS, AFSC, etc.)
  - 46%
  - Indicated the desire to pursue a career similar to their military specialty
  - 39%
  - Indicate they are unsure if they will pursue a career similar to their military specialty
  - 15%

POSITIVE IMPACTS OF SERVICE

- Felt pride from their accomplishments during service: 93%
- Reported their service had a positive impact on their life*: 91%
- Indicated they matured as a result of their service: 90%

56% reported they would be happy if their child(ren) were to join the military*

TRANSITION DIFFICULTY

55% OF BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERAN RESPONDENTS characterized their financial transition as difficult or very difficult, compared with 48% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents.

59% OF BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERAN RESPONDENTS characterized their employment transition as difficult or very difficult, compared with 49% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents.

TIME TO EMPLOYMENT

30% of Black/African American veteran respondents reported it took less than three months to find employment after their transition, compared with 51% of White/Non-Hispanic veteran respondents.
Employment for African American Veterans

UNEMPLOYMENT

IN 2019 AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT WAS AT 4.9%
IN 2019 AFRICAN AMERICAN POST 9/11 VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT WAS AT 6.8%

EARNINGS

58,351 AVERAGE EARNINGS AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS

TOP FIVE OCCUPATIONS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS
1. Service Occupations (security guards, police officers, correctional officers and jailers, firefighters)
2. Transportation and Material Moving Occupation
4. Office and Administrative Support Occupation
5. Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts, and Media Occupation

TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS
1. Public Administration
2. Health Care and Social Assistance
3. Transportation and Warehousing
4. Manufacturing
5. Retail Trade

Entrepreneurship for African American Veterans

IN 2018 7% of African American veterans were self-employed compared to 5% of their nonveteran counterparts

THUS African American veterans are 1.275Xs more likely to be self-employed COMPARED TO AFRICAN AMERICAN NONVETERANS

OBSTACLES

82% AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS EXPERIENCE AT LEAST ONE OBSTACLE/BARRIER TO STARTING & OWNING THEIR BUSINESS
Top obstacles: 1. Lack of necessary networks 2. Lack of Capital
"If I was a white male, it would be easier."

RESOURCES AFRICAN AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURS FIND MOST HELPFUL:
- Information on/from Conferences and Workshops
- Education
- Networking/Peer Network

AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS IN STEM WORKFORCE

OF THOSE VETERANS IN THE STEM WORKFORCE, 8% ARE AFRICAN AMERICAN. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN A DECLINE IN AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS PARTICIPATING IN STEM SINCE 2012 (0.844 % POINTS PER YEAR)

$81,942 AVERAGE EARNINGS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS IN STEM

$94,241 AVERAGE EARNINGS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN VETERANS IN STEM WITH A COLLEGE DEGREE OR HIGHER

REASONS FOR PURSUING ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- Dissatisfaction with the civilian workforce
- Creativity & flexibility
- Financial & independence
- Recognize business opportunities

"There are multiple financial options...determining which services can be challenging."
In 2018, African American post 9/11 veterans achieved:

- Bachelor’s degree or higher: 36%
- Some college or associate degree: 43%
- High school degree: 18%
- Less than high school degree: 4%

**BARRIERS THAT HINDERED PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

- Lack of financial resources/ Financial burden (62%)
- GI Bill benefits expire before I complete my degree (30%)
- Personal/family obligations (24%)
- Health/disability issues (24%)
- Conflict between job and school (18%)
- Bureaucracy associated with VA paperwork and processing (18%)

**HELPFUL RESOURCES AND ASSETS FOR VETERAN SUCCESS**

- Military/veteran friendly campus (68%)
- Flexible class schedules (67%)
- Academic advising/counseling (65%)
- Preferred classroom settings & instruction (59%)
- Dedicated veterans office & administrators on campus (56%)
- Veterans supportive faculty (56%)
- Career services and counseling (54%)
- Academic preparation courses & remediation (53%)

**CHALLENGES WHILE PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION**

- Lack of financial resources (37%)
- Age differences (29%)
- Few veterans resources on campus (26%)
- Working full time job (26%)
- Family responsibilities (22%)
- Transferring academic credits (20%)

**REFERENCES**

Service Member Population


Military Service for African American Veterans

Transition for African American Veterans


Higher Education for African American Veterans


**EDUCATION ATTAINMENT**

In 2018, African American post 9/11 veterans achieved:

- Bachelor’s degree or higher: 36%
- Some college or associate degree: 43%
- High school degree: 18%
- Less than high school degree: 4%

**SUGGESTED CITATION**