



## To achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education and information

Following are summaries of BPW/USA and BPW Foundation's primary activities  
For details, please visit the respective websites.

- **BPW Foundation Veterans Research:** Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Foundation conducted a research project entitled *Workingwomen Speak Out II: Women Veterans in Transition* to provide insight into the experiences of women veterans as they transition from the military into the civilian workforce. Over 1600 women were surveyed and the results have sparked action to help create better employment transitioning programs for applicable support for women veterans.
  - Go to [www.bpwusa.org](http://www.bpwusa.org). Click on > *BPW Foundation* > *Rawalt Online Resource Center* for further research projects and downloads.
- **Women Joining Forces (WJF):** The population of women veterans in the United States is projected to continue to rise reaching 1.9 million in 2020 when they will make up 10 percent of the veteran population. It is estimated that 150,000 women will transition out of the military over the next five years. This program is dedicated to veterans transitioning from the military into civilian professional life providing a number of resources including education, networking, encouragement and mentoring.
  - Go to [www.womenjoiningforces.org](http://www.womenjoiningforces.org) to support or connect a vet or review membership scholarships available.
- **2008 National Employer Summit:** Business Professional Women Foundation invites you to the [2008 National Employer Summit in DC](#), June 20th. Discover the future workplace of promising practices. Join professionals of operational excellence, investor & public relations, standardization policy, researchers and innovative strategists. Discuss retention, multi-generational workforce, workplace flexibility and strategies for success. Take home the newly published *Successful Workplaces Digest* and a copy of *Retire Retirement: Career Strategies for the Boomer Generation*, a book by Tammy Erickson. More information at [www.bpwfoundation.org](http://www.bpwfoundation.org).
  - Go to [www.bpwusa.org](http://www.bpwusa.org). Click on > *BPW Foundation* > [National Employer Summit](#) to register and participate.
- **BPW/USA Membership and eSubscription Options:** BPW/USA fosters the success of workingwomen by providing career advancement resources, worklife strategies and personal and professional connections. Consider membership options available to suit your individual needs and schedule. **Friends of BPW/USA** is an e-subscription which entitles you to exclusive access to BPW/USA's online publications providing coverage on issues that impact workingwomen, such as: career advancement, worklife effectiveness, money matters, health and wellness, book reviews, tech talk, policy updates, interviews with women leaders.
  - Go to [www.bpwusa.org](http://www.bpwusa.org). Click on "Join Now" on the right hand side.

For more information about our programs, events and research, please visit [www.bpwusa.org](http://www.bpwusa.org) or contact us at 202.293.1100. We welcome your donations and support!



## VETERANS RESEARCH

To Understand the Needs

### Understanding the Complexity of Women Veterans' Career Transitions

**Overview** The transition from the military into the civilian workforce for women veterans may be a longer and more complex process than previously thought by those working with women veterans. "One day you were in the military, the next day you are responding to entirely different responsibilities in the civilian world," according to many women veterans.

(BPW) Foundation's survey *Women Veterans in Transition* tells a compelling story about their triumphs and challenges as they transition. Respondent separation from the military and entry into the civilian workforce is often viewed as a time-limited event by those providing transition supports. While the official physical separation occurs within a limited time frame, results from a recent survey of women veterans indicates that the psychological transition can take place over an extended period of time even for those who have successfully secured post-military employment. Standardized transition activities may not be taking into account the full breadth and range of the needs of women veterans. Similarly, employers seeking to engage women veterans in the workplace may not know everything necessary to take full advantage of this growing source of intellectual capital.

An initial look at the results of a 2007 survey of women veterans, undertaken by BPW Foundation as part of a pilot study on the career transition experiences of women veterans, indicates that the transition from the military into the civilian workforce is a multi-dimensional process for women veterans, and decision makers may need to look at a number of factors in order to craft programs and services that more fully support women veterans moving into the civilian workforce. This reality has implications not only for the types of resources needed by women veterans as they transition but also the timing and duration of those resources.

**Snapshot on Education-Related Issues.** Over 80 percent of the over 1600 survey respondents had some college education at the time of their separation and this number increases to over 90 percent of respondents with some college or more at the time of their survey response. Of that number, approximately 60 percent used military benefits to attain their current level of education.

The research found that older, college-educated veterans were more likely to look for work prior to their separation and were much more likely to say they found a job with which they were happy. They were also more likely to say they understood the value of the skills developed in the military in the civilian workforce.

They also reported more success in taking classes to improve job specific skills, but still less than half – 46 percent – did so. However, more than half, nearly 60 percent, who took such a course reported it as being useful, and such women veterans were more likely to be happy with the job they found.

For information on how your organization can support the Women Veterans in Transition Research Project, visit [www.bpwfoundation.org](http://www.bpwfoundation.org).

For more information about our programs, events and research, please visit [www.bpwusa.org](http://www.bpwusa.org) or contact us at 202.293.1100. We welcome your donations and support!



**BPW FOUNDATION**

Established in 1956, Business and Professional Women’s (BPW) Foundation became the first foundation dedicated to conducting research and providing information solely about workingwomen. In the 21st Century, BPW Foundation is striving to transform workplaces by focusing on issues impacting workingwomen, their families and their employers. Every day, BPW Foundation aims to fulfill its mission to empower workingwomen to achieve their full potential and to partner with employers to build successful workplaces.

As a neutral convener, BPW Foundation uses the power of research, education, policy and knowledge to engage the public and key stakeholders in order inspire collaboration, to create systemic change in the workplace and to expand the options workingwomen have for more equitable, flexible workplaces.



**What is Women Joining Forces (WJF) program?**

Millions of America’s bravest and most exceptional women serve our country in the Armed Forces. Upon fulfillment of their patriotic duty, these women face the challenge of successfully transitioning into civilian life and the workforce.

Women veterans evolve into corporate professionals, civic leaders, and pillars of our communities. It is with their needs in mind at this time of transition that Business & Professional Women/USA (BPW/USA) created the Women Joining Forces – Closing Ranks, Opening Doors program to express appreciation and support for our heroic women veterans.

As the nation’s leading advocate for workingwomen, BPW/USA recognizes the crucial role that women veterans play in our society and is proud to champion their cause through this cooperative initiative. Designed to facilitate successful career transitions and offer much-needed professional and personal support, this initiative will provide resources to a previously underserved population of workingwomen.

**How does the program support female veterans?**

With corporate support, BPW/USA will offer a dues waiver for a 1-year introductory membership to approximately 1,500 women exiting military service in 2006-2007. Additionally, BPW/USA will offer discounted introductory dues to any woman veteran interested in membership. As members, these women will have full access to the many benefits that BPW offers through its state and local networks including:

- Leadership Opportunities
- Peer Mentoring
- Networking Events
- Professional Development Training
- Continuing Education Scholarships

[www.womenjoiningforces.org](http://www.womenjoiningforces.org)



## **Top Ten Recommendations to Support Women Veterans**

### ***For Employers/ Service Organizations:***

1. Develop collaboration between social and business organizations that supports government efforts to educate women veterans about veteran benefits and services.
2. Proactively work with potential employers to increase their understanding and appreciation for what women veterans have to offer, and how to take advantage of their valuable skill sets and leadership abilities.
3. Urge employers to create women- and veteran-friendly workplaces and to ensure that the structure and workplace culture supports this assertion.
4. Encourage women service members to begin their transition before they separate from the military including accessing the Transition Assistance Program.
5. Encourage and expand upon the leadership abilities of women veterans by integrating them into existing leadership training within employers and through organizations.
6. Stress the importance of networking and mentoring; strongly encourage them to join veterans' service organizations and professional organizations.

### ***For Researchers:***

7. Create public/private partnerships to conduct research on the career transition, adjustment experiences and needs of all veterans.
8. Collect and publish success stories and lessons learned on how to successfully support transitioning veterans.

### ***For Decision Makers:***

9. Extend the time frame during which transition support is offered to women veterans to enable successful re-integration with families and civilian life.
10. Understand that many workplace challenges experienced by women veterans are shared by all workingwomen including balancing work and care giving roles, convincing employers of the value of their skills and shouldering a substantial share of the financial responsibility for their families.

To access Women Veterans in Transition research, go to [www.bpwfoundation.org](http://www.bpwfoundation.org)

## Women Veterans in Transition Research: An Overview

On October 19, 2007, BPW Foundation disseminated its initial findings from its *Women Veterans in Transition* research project. Respondents to BPW Foundation's 2007 survey of women veterans stated that when they left the military they sought workplaces that offered fair compensation, opportunities for advancement, training and professional development opportunities, family leave options, health/dental insurance, flexible work schedules, retirement plans and paid vacations. To download the full report, visit [www.bpwfoundation.org](http://www.bpwfoundation.org).

More than 2,150 women veterans accessed the survey; 1,629 completed it and 50 percent of those opted in to participate in continued research.

Initial results from the pilot study of women veterans' career transition experiences indicate that the transition from the military into the civilian workforce is a multi-dimensional process that lasts over an extended period including after a civilian job has been secured. As women veterans enter the civilian workforce, their workplace requirements mirror that of other workingwomen and they experience many of the same challenges.

Based on both the results of its own survey of women veterans and conversations with other organizations that support women veterans, BPW Foundation offers practical recommendations to provide greater support to women veterans on Veterans Day and beyond. Upcoming research from this project includes focus groups, fact sheets and programming content.

*This survey was completed with the generous support of the Harley-Davidson Foundation, Inc. and Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust.*

### Demographics of respondents

- Represent all branches of the military (Army (46 percent), Navy (24 percent), Air Force (22 percent), Marine Corps (10 percent));
- 75 percent are between the ages of 30-40;
- Racial breakdown: White/Non-Hispanic (50 percent), Black/NH (30 percent), Hispanic (10 percent);
- Average time of service is 12 years;
- 86 percent are enlisted (1,398) and 14 percent officers (220);
- Average age of military separation is 33 years;
- Average time out of service is seven years;
- Almost 50 percent reported having a disability;
- 80 percent had some college at time of separation which increased to 90 percent at time of survey