



Understanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Defense Communities

One Military, One Community
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey Findings

MARCH 2021

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COMMUNITY

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The Association of Defense Communities—a private, 501(c)(3) organization—prepared this report with pro bono technical support from Booz Allen Hamilton. This report was not sponsored nor supported by the Department of Defense or Department of Veterans Affairs.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2020, multiple events highlighted the issue of racial inequality in America and shaped an ongoing national discussion. Military leadership—both uniform and civilian—have indicated that the military needs to do more to address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).¹

The Association of Defense Communities (ADC) is an organization that represents communities and regions with significant military presence by serving the interests of installation support organizations, state governments, and industry on community–military issues and installation management that enhances the knowledge, information sharing, and best practices for its members and the military.² ADC believes it is important to continually inform its members of the values of the military and its mission, which now includes strong efforts to address racial inequalities. ADC recognizes that DEI challenges in the military—and the solutions—are not solely a military issue and extend into defense communities too.³

In October 2020, ADC launched the One Military, One Community (OMOC) initiative, an effort focused on ensuring that all individuals feel welcomed, safe, and included in defense communities. The initiative’s goal is to build understanding, increase awareness, and share information about DEI in defense communities that will support its members. As an initial step in this process, ADC is interested in understanding the views of those who live in defense communities. This information will serve as

a foundation for subsequent steps that will engage communities directly through local listening sessions and resource development.

In total, 1,726 individuals took the survey and provided racial/ethnic identity information, with the majority of respondents (1,484 or 80 percent) also affiliating as active duty Service members, Veterans, or military spouses/domestic partners.⁴ ADC also received information from 242 respondents who affiliated as National Guard members, Reservists, DoD dependents, and military Service branch and DoD civilian employees. Although the response size for these groups was insufficient to quantitatively examine responses by race/ethnicity, analysts did examine these respondents’ feedback to open-ended items. Page 15 of this report provides a demographic breakdown of respondents included in both the qualitative and quantitative findings.

Key Findings

This report documents the survey results and provides an initial understanding of community members’ sentiments toward DEI and analyzes how these perspectives differ by DoD affiliation and race/ethnicity. The survey found that some demographic and affiliation groups have substantially different experiences living in defense communities than other individuals, and individual perceptions of DEI are distinctive across racial/ethnic minority groups.

1 In December 2020, the Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion released a report with 15 recommendations to increase diversity and inclusion within DoD. See Department of Defense. (2020). (rep.). *Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military*. Retrieved from <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/18/2002554852/-1/-1/0/DOD-DIVERSITY-AND-INCLUSION-FINAL-BOARD-REPORT.PDF>.

2 ADC defines defense communities as, “towns, cities, counties, regions and states that serve as home to our nation’s military missions, installations and industrial partners”

3 Association of Defense Communities (2020). One Military, One Community Fact Sheet. https://defensecommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/OMOC_FactSheet_20201112_FINAL.pdf.

4 Of 1,845 people who initially responded to the survey, 119 participants did not provide information on race/ethnicity, and therefore, these responses were not included in the analyses.

The survey data revealed the following overarching, salient themes:

- **Black/African American respondents perceive greater effects of racial inequity in defense communities:** Black/African American active duty Service member, Veteran, and military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated greater perceived effects of racial inequality compared to white, Hispanic, and other race respondents. For example, Black/African American respondents indicated lower perceptions of acceptance and support and more frequent experiences of discrimination within their communities. Additionally, Black/African American respondents indicated the perceived effects of structural barriers to a greater degree than white, Hispanic, and other race respondents. While these findings reflect the sentiments of Black/African American respondents during a period of heightened racial unrest in the United States, they also align with the longstanding and disproportionate effects of systemic racism.
- **Military spouses/domestic partners perceive greater challenges related to DEI than active duty Service member and Veteran peers in defense communities:** Military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated lower perceptions of racial/ethnic inclusiveness compared to active duty Service member and Veteran respondents, regardless of their racial/ethnic identities. Military spousal/domestic partner experiences are not uniform across race/ethnicity, as racial/ethnic minority⁵ (i.e., Black/African American, Hispanic, and other race) spouses/domestic partners do not feel racial inclusion to the perceived extent that white military spouses/domestic partners indicated. Military spouses/domestic partners exhibited

a greater disposition toward identifying areas of inequity to address within their communities compared to active duty Service member and Veteran respondents. Moreover, military spouses/domestic partners across all racial/ethnic groups feel less community acceptance and support compared to their active duty Service member peers. The findings from military spouses/domestic partners underscored the importance of tailoring specific DEI efforts to military spouses/domestic partners, as this group typically serves as the conduit to the community during a Service member's career

- **National Guard members, Reservists, dependents, military Service branch and DoD civilian employees:** Similar to their active duty Service member, Veteran, and military spouse/domestic partner peers, National Guard members, Reservists, military Service branch and DoD civilian employees indicated education and government/policy as top areas to address to eliminate inequities and make their community more equitable and inclusive in their open-ended responses.

The survey explored seven topic areas, and the major finding for each topic area is below:

- **Community belonging:** While most active duty Service members, regardless of racial/ethnic background, feel a strong sense of belonging to their community, racial/ethnic minority (i.e., Black/African American, Hispanic, and other races) Veterans and military spouses/domestic partners feel a weaker sense of belonging when compared to their white peers.
- **Community acceptance and support:** Military spouses/domestic partners, irrespective of racial/ethnic background, perceive their communities to be less accepting and supportive

5 Racial/ethnic minority refers to respondents who identified as Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

compared to active duty Service members, who had high perceptions of community acceptance and support overall. Additionally, racial/ethnic minority Veterans generally feel less acceptance and support from their community compared to white Veterans.

- **Racial/ethnic inclusiveness:** Overall, active duty Service members of each racial/ethnic background displayed consistently high perceptions of racial/ethnic inclusiveness in their communities. Hispanic military spouses/domestic partners feel the lowest sense of racial/ethnic inclusiveness in their communities. Additionally, Black/African American Veterans and military spouses/domestic partners indicated greater frequency of discrimination compared to white, Hispanic, and other race respondents.
- **Physical safety:** Active duty Service members, Veterans, and military spouses/domestic partners feel greater concern for their physical safety off installation than on installation, but the degree of variation differs across racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- **Structural barriers:** Across active duty Service member, Veteran, and spousal/domestic partner respondents, Black/African Americans indicate that structural barriers cause inequity in their communities to a greater extent than their white, Hispanic, and other race peers. Additionally, nearly all Black/African American military spousal/domestic partner respondents believe that structural barriers in employment and law enforcement and criminal justice cause inequities in their community.
- **Involvement in addressing DEI:** Compared to active duty Service member and Veteran respondents, military spouses/domestic partners are more inclined to increase their level

of involvement in community DEI efforts, and they wanted more information about ways to get involved.

- **Top areas to address to reduce inequity:** Regardless of race/ethnicity, active duty Service members, Veteran, and military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated that education and employment are key areas to creating racially equitable communities. Specifically, Black/African American active duty Service members indicated criminal justice as the top area to address, and their Veteran and military spouse/domestic partner peers indicated employment as the top area to address. White, Hispanic, and other race Veterans indicated K-12 education as the top area to address. Hispanic respondents indicated K-12 education as the top area across all demographic groups.

Opportunities for Further Exploration

The survey findings demonstrate that DEI and racial equity challenges—such as community belonging, acceptance and support, racial/ethnic inclusiveness, physical safety, and structural barriers—affect Service members, Veterans, and military spouses/domestic partners and families in different capacities. Therefore, equitable solutions must involve a full range of stakeholders, including community leaders, installation leaders, and community members. Given ADC's role as a connection point for various players within defense communities, ADC is uniquely positioned to sponsor discussions about the "one community" approach to improve DEI and racial equity in defense communities. Based on the findings and concepts explored in the report, the following opportunities for further exploration have been identified at the community and national policy level:

Community Areas of Exploration

Community leaders, such as representatives from installations, local government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations, should consider pursuing the following activities:

- **Understand DEI issues in individual communities:** Conduct annual or biannual local surveys and continuously execute listening sessions to understand DEI issues in specific regions and inform solutions to local challenges.
- **Develop local strategies to address DEI:** Convene leaders from the military installation, local government agencies, and community organizations to define priorities, strategies, and measurable actions to address racial equity in a specific region.
- **Consider DEI in all community decisions:** Apply an equity lens to all ongoing and future programs and policies—especially communities' COVID-19 responses—to ensure that racial disparities are mitigated and not exacerbated.

ADC Areas of Exploration:

- **Connecting stakeholders:** Serve as a convenor between military installations, community organizations, local governments, and other affiliated entities to enable a coordinated community response to increase inclusive excellence in defense communities.
- **Facilitating information sharing:** Develop a DEI portal on the ADC website to facilitate communication and collaboration between leaders from military installations, local government, and community organizations; individuals will be able to share information and best practices, and ADC will also develop resources to publish on the portal.

- **Overseeing sustained DEI efforts:** Establish an advisory committee to ensure DEI initiatives are underway, recommend areas for future action, set measurable goals, and monitor progress toward those goals.

DoD Areas of Exploration:

Finally, this survey does not attempt to address the scope of DoD's current DEI initiatives nor is ADC privy to information about internal DoD plans, priorities, or activities; however, DoD may consider exploring the following opportunities:

- **Engage on DEI issues with defense communities:** While DoD is taking large strides toward creating a diverse and inclusive environment within its force, DoD may consider collaborating with defense communities through community leadership to address DEI challenges to ensure that military families live in safe environments that promote well-being and a high quality of life.
- **Explore ways to support defense community DEI efforts:** Consider whether DoD, possibly through the DoD Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation, could support community DEI efforts, given that racial equity directly affects the resilience and quality of life for military members and their families.

"Communication and involvement [are] the key to all of these issues. Get people together to talk and get to know one another, to discuss the problems and how communities can come together. I realize easier said [than] done."

– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner



INTRODUCTION

Background

During 2020, on the heels of several pivotal events highlighting persistent injustices, America reckoned with entrenched, historical racial inequities.⁶ Although Black Lives Matter—a movement centered on ending white supremacy through grassroots actions—had propelled the issue of police brutality into the mainstream narrative for several years, three high-profile deaths captured national media attention. In February, two white men chased Ahmaud Arbery in a pick-up truck and shot him; in March, police officers executed a no-knock warrant and killed Breonna Taylor in her home; finally, in May, a police officer killed George Floyd, after pressing his knee into Mr. Floyd’s neck for nearly nine minutes.⁷

As societal unrest related to police brutality gained momentum, the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) demonstrated that racial inequities also pose a dire health threat. The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention noted that many racial and ethnic minority groups experience an increased risk of getting sick, having more severe illness, and dying from COVID-19.⁸ As a result, Pacific Islanders, Latino, Black, and Indigenous Americans all have a COVID-19 death rate double or more than of white and Asian Americans, as of February

2020.⁹ The effects of the pandemic underscored the far-reaching implications of racial equity and emphasized the criticality of intentional, focused action.¹⁰

ADC’s Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

ADC, a 501(c)(3) organization, dedicates itself to creating one community inside and outside an installation. ADC understands that communities play a vital role in promoting cohesiveness and a sense of belonging among community members, and people thrive when they feel welcomed and valued in their community. Therefore, ADC is committed to supporting defense communities in their local efforts to create a more equitable place for all Service members and their families to call home.

Racial disparities can affect for every aspect of an individuals’ life—including health, education, employment, housing, and safety outcomes.¹¹ As ADC’s president noted, it “is still an aspiration and not the truth” that defense communities are immune from racial bias, systems, and policies that contribute to racial inequity in America.¹² Since ADC seeks to foster defense communities where all individuals thrive, ADC pledged to intentionally and proactively identify and remove any barriers that may inhibit

6 Chang, A., Martin, R., & Marrapodi, E. (2020, August 16). *Summer of Racial Reckoning*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2020/08/16/902179773/summer-of-racial-reckoning-the-match-lit>.

7 Ibid.

8 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, December 10). *COVID-19 Racial and Ethnic Disparities*. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/racial-ethnic-disparities/index.html>.

9 APM Research Lab Staff. (2021, February 4). *Color of Coronavirus: COVID-19 deaths analyzed by race and ethnicity*. <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/covid/deaths-by-race>.

10 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Health Equity Considerations and Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups*. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html>.

11 Bernabei, E. (2017, May). *Racial Equity: Getting to Results*. https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/GARE_GettingtoEquity_July2017_PUBLISH.pdf.

12 Association of Defense Communities. (2020, June 15). *Not in Our Community*. <https://defensecommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Not-In-Our-Community.pdf>.

equitable treatment, respect, and appreciation of defense community members.

Addressing the reality of racial disparities in America, ADC released a public statement in June 2020 condemning the “institutions and attitudes” that contribute to racism and inequality.¹³ ADC acknowledged that “[o]ur communities, our nation and our military have changed in many ways for the better since 1962 . . . But, while we have made great progress, scars of the past are still healing, and intolerance still exists.”¹⁴ Unfortunately, undercurrents of racial bias and injustice may run through some defense communities, so ADC pledged to address these challenges through deliberative action and leadership.¹⁵

To ensure a sustained and concerted effort to foster racial equity in defense communities, ADC—with Booz Allen Hamilton’s¹⁶ pro bono technical support—launched the One Military, One Community (OMOC) initiative on October 1, 2020. OMOC strives to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive defense communities, ensuring that no individual in the community faces racism, inequality, or injustice. To accomplish this goal, ADC identified four immediate actions:

- Listen to community members’ experiences.
- Collect data to understand issues of racism and inequality in defense communities.
- Plan for collective action.
- Learn through research, resources, and engagements.

ADC’s initiatives on racial equity run complementary to, although independent of, DoD’s actions. DoD seeks to ensure that all employees and their families feel valued for their differences. As Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin remarked in February 2020, “Service members, DoD civilian employees, and all those who support our mission, deserve an environment free of discrimination, hate, and harassment. It is incumbent upon each of us to ensure that actions associated with these corrosive behaviors are prevented.”¹⁷ ADC believes that it is its responsibility to champion equity for all individuals who live in defense communities.

Purpose of this Report

As part of the OMOC initiative, ADC conducted a nationwide survey, with pro bono technical support from Booz Allen Hamilton, to better understand individuals’ experiences and perspectives about DEI in their community. This report comprises the findings from that survey. Throughout the report, ADC contextualized and explained the survey’s findings with leading research, data, and reports from other institutions, which are cited in the report’s footnotes.

This report accomplishes four objectives:

- Provide data about how individuals perceive the state of DEI in their community based on their experience, and highlight these perspectives by respondents’ DoD affiliation and self-identified race/ethnicity.

13 Association of Defense Communities. (2020, June 15). *Not in Our Community*. <https://defensecommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Not-In-Our-Community.pdf>.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 For more than 100 years, business, government, and military leaders have turned to Booz Allen Hamilton to solve their most complex problems. A consulting firm with experts in analytics, digital, engineering and cyber, Booz Allen helps organizations transform and is a key partner on some of the most innovative programs for governments worldwide.

17 Department of Defense, Secretary of Defense (2021, Feb 5). Stand-Down to Address Extremism in the Ranks. <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Feb/05/2002577485/-1/-1/0/STAND-DOWN-TO-ADDRESS-EXTREMISM-IN-THE-RANKS.PDF>.

- Create a baseline of community members' sentiments about DEI to measure future progress.
- Identify which areas resonate with community members as essential to eliminating inequities in their community.
- Identify areas that communities, ADC, and DoD should explore to foster more racially/ethnically diverse and equitable communities.

Although studies exist that focus on DEI within the military, the OMOC survey and report provide a unique perspective on DEI within defense communities. ADC defines defense communities as the “towns, cities, counties, regions and states that serve as home to our nation’s military missions, installations and industrial partners.”¹⁸ There are hundreds of defense communities around the country, and each of them consist of organizations dedicated to providing important services to military Service members, families, Veterans, and DoD civilian employees.

It is so important to study defense communities because more than 70 percent of military families in the United States live off military installations and in civilian communities.¹⁹ Given military members’ distinctive job requirements and frequent relocations, military members and families differ from most civilian citizens and families. This report advances the domain knowledge by providing insight into respondents’ perspectives on DEI with defense communities, and the report can equip leaders from military installations, local government agencies,

and organizations to address defense community members’ needs more precisely.

History of DEI Initiatives Within DoD and Defense Communities

Beginning in 1962, the DoD acknowledged and addressed the importance of diversity and inclusion in defense communities.¹⁸ President John F. Kennedy established the Committee on the Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces, and the Committee noted that Black/African American Service members and their families experience particular hardships when they move to certain installations or communities. At the time, Black/African American Service members experienced “daily suffering, humiliation, and degradation in communities near bases at which they [were] compelled to serve.” The Committee asserted that “community conditions are a constant affront and constant reminder that the society they are prepared to defend is a society that depreciates their right to full participation as citizens.”²¹ To address this hardship, the Committee focused on the following:

*What measures should be employed to improve equality of opportunity for members of the Armed Forces and their dependents in the civilian community, particularly with respect to housing, education, transportation, recreational facilities, community events, programs and activities?*²²

18 Association of Defense Communities. (2020, Jan 27). *About Defense Communities*. <https://defensecommunities.org/defense-communities/>.

19 National Military Family Association. (rep.). *Finding Common Ground: A Toolkit for Families Supporting Military Families*. https://militaryfamily.org/wp-content/uploads/Finding_Common_Ground_A_Toolkit_for_Communities_Serving.pdf.

20 Congressional Research Service. (2019, June 5). *Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress*. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R44321.pdf>.

21 The President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces. (1963, June 13). *Equality of Treatment and Opportunity for Negro Military Personnel Stationed Within the United States*.

22 Letter from President John F. Kennedy to Gerhard A. Gesell. (1962, June 22). <http://chapters.rowmanlittlefield.com/07/425/0742545326ch3.pdf>.

Following the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, DoD issued a policy that contained specific provisions to address discrimination faced off installations.²³ To reinforce DoD policies against discrimination, the DoD issued the first DoD Human Goals Charter in 1969. The purpose of the Charter was to establish the Department's values to guide its operations and allow DoD to fulfill its mission. The charter explicitly recognized that respect for diversity among Service members, civilian employees, and family members was integral to its mission:

Our nation was founded on the principle that each individual has infinite dignity and worth. The Department of Defense . . . must always be guided by this principle. In all that we do, we must show respect for Service members, civilian employees, and family members, recognizing their individual needs, aspirations, and capabilities.

In the 1970s, DoD established the Defense Race Relations Institute—later rebranded as the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute—to operationalize and standardize diversity and inclusion initiatives. For the next several decades, DoD provided education and training programs related to diversity and equal opportunity, among other topics. In 2009, to address declining diversity at higher officer grades, Congress established the Military Leadership Commission. The Commission recommended 20 actions to improve diversity within DoD, 16 of which were completed by 2020.²⁴ Most recently, then-Secretary of Defense Mark T. Esper directed wide-ranging initiatives within DoD to promote morale, cohesion, and force readiness. As part of his directive, he mandated a DoD Diversity

and Inclusion Board to comprehensively assess the state of DEI within DoD; the Board published a report in December 2020 that contained 15 recommendations to propel DoD's DEI efforts for the 21st Century.²⁵

To supplement DoD's tremendous focus on DEI within the defense force, ADC wants to honor the individuals and families dedicated to serving our nation by cultivating respectful, equitable, and inclusive defense communities. ADC firmly believes that all people affiliated with the DoD should live in communities that embody the military's principles. Therefore, ADC's OMOC initiative pursues this goal.

23 Department of Defense. (1964, July 24). DoDI 5525.2: Processing of Requests by Military Personnel for Action by the Attorney General Under the Civil Rights Act (Cancelled).

24 Department of Defense. (2020). (rep.). *Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military*. Retrieved from <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/18/2002554852/-1/-1/0/DOD-DIVERSITY-AND-INCLUSION-FINAL-BOARD-REPORT.PDF>.

25 Ibid.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Design

ADC, with Booz Allen Hamilton's pro bono technical support, designed the Defense Community Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey (Appendix A). The survey contained two sections. The first survey section gathered demographic data from respondents, including affiliation, rank, race, ethnicity, gender,²⁶ and age. This section also collected data about respondents' living location, including zip code, whether their housing was on or off installation, and the length of time they lived in their current location. The second section of the survey asked about respondents' perceptions of DEI in their community. There were three opportunities for respondents to provide open-ended feedback.

In the survey, ADC provided the following definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, community, and structural barriers to develop a collective understanding among respondents.

- **Diversity:** Includes but is not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, Veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic information, and learning styles.
- **Equity:** Guarantees fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

- **Inclusion:** Bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes and activities to create a culture where all people contribute, participate, and have a sense of belonging.
- **Community:** Includes the geographical area where you currently live and the interactions you have within that environment with institutions, social groups, and individuals both on and off the installation.
- **Structural Barriers:** Includes laws, policies, systems, and norms that disadvantage certain people and make it harder for communities to be racially equitable.

The survey did not collect personally identifiable information. All data reported are aggregated on a national level. Therefore, responses cannot be associated with specific respondents or military installations.

Survey Administration

ADC administered the Defense Community DEI Survey through Microsoft Forms between December 3, 2020 and January 8, 2021. ADC posted the survey link on its website and asked its members, nonprofit organizations, defense-related media outlets, and DoD-affiliated member groups to distribute the survey. ADC obtained responses through a convenience sample; thus, results do not represent the full population and cannot be used to make general conclusions about society.

26 ADC used gender categorizations that the Office of Management and Budget's and U.S. Census Bureau use on demographic questionnaires.

Survey Participants

Of the 1,845 initial survey responses, ADC received information from 1,484 (or 80 percent) individuals who affiliated as active duty Service members, Veterans, or military spouses/domestic partners. Additionally, ADC received information from 242 respondents who affiliated as National Guard members, Reservists, DoD dependents, and military Service branch and DoD civilian employees. Although

the response size for these groups was insufficient to quantitatively examine responses by race/ethnicity, analysts did examine these respondents' feedback to open-ended items. Lastly, 119 respondents did not provide information on race/ethnicity, and therefore, these responses were not included in the analyses. Table 1 displays the sample size of respondents included in qualitative findings by their DoD-affiliations and race/ethnicity.

Table 1. Racial/Ethnic Breakdown of Respondents by DoD-Affiliation, Qualitative Findings Sample

DoD Affiliation	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Active Duty	107	11%	46	14%	30	16%	26	13%
Veteran	549	55%	223	68%	102	55%	109	53%
Military Spouses/ Domestic Partners	181	18%	34	10%	36	19%	41	20%
DoD Dependent	3	0%	2	1%	1	1%	1	0%
DoD Civilian Employee	17	2%	1	0%	0	0%	2	1%
Military Service Branch Civilian Employee	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%
National Guard	40	4%	4	1%	3	2%	8	4%
Reserves	24	2%	6	2%	4	2%	5	2%
Unknown	84	8%	11	3%	11	6%	12	6%
Total	1,006	100%	328	100%	187	100%	205	100%

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

Table 2 shows the final sample size organized by DoD affiliation (14 percent active duty Service members; 66 percent Veterans; 20 percent military spouses/domestic partners). Overall, the survey sample comprised of the following racial/ethnic categorizations, as identified by respondents: 56 percent white, 20 percent Black/African American, 11 percent Hispanic, and 12 percent of respondents who identified as another race. The “other

race” demographic category was composed of respondents who identified as either Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; multiracial; or American Indian or Alaska Native. ADC collapsed these demographic groups into one category so that the response size was large enough to analyze the data with reliability.

Table 2. Demographic and Geographic Variables by DoD Affiliation of Respondents

Variable	Active Duty		Veteran		Military Spouse/Domestic Partner	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Total Sample	209	14%	983	66%	292	20%
Race/Ethnicity						
White	107	51%	549	56%	181	62%
Black/African American	46	22%	223	23%	34	12%
Hispanic	30	14%	102	10%	36	12%
Other	26	12%	109	11%	41	14%
Gender						
Male	135	65%	729	74%	8	3%
Female	68	33%	238	24%	279	96%
Other/Unknown	6	3%	16	2%	5	2%
Age						
19-30	25	12%	17	2%	33	11%
31-40	92	44%	107	11%	124	42%
41-50	77	37%	284	29%	79	27%
51-60	13	6%	298	30%	42	14%
Over 60	2	1%	266	27%	12	4%
Unknown	0	0%	11	1%	2	1%
Housing Location						
On installation	73	35%	12	1%	37	13%
Off installation	136	65%	961	98%	255	87%
Unknown	0	0%	10	1%	0	0%
Census Region						
Northeast	5	2%	59	6%	8	3%
South	136	65%	559	57%	174	60%
Midwest	10	5%	105	11%	12	4%
West	47	22%	223	23%	79	27%
Other/Unknown	11	5%	37	4%	19	7%

For additional information on how these samples compare to their respective populations by racial/ethnic identity, see Appendix B (Methodology: Sample Comparison to General Population on Race/Ethnicity).

Ninety-one percent of survey respondents lived off an installation, so the subsequent survey findings should be interpreted through this lens. Of ADC's active duty Service member respondents, 65 percent indicated that they live off installation, which is slightly higher than the general military population.²⁷ The majority of spousal/domestic partner (98 percent) and Veteran (87 percent) respondents lived off installation too.

Although men represent 82 percent of active duty Service²⁸ members and 91 percent of Veterans,²⁹ they only slightly outnumbered women in both the active duty Service member and Veteran respondent groups—representing 65 percent and 74 percent of the respondents in the sample, respectively. The inverse occurred with military spouses/domestic partners, with nearly all (96 percent) respondents recording female as their gender, slightly higher than their representation in the population (91 percent).³⁰

Active duty Service member and military spousal/domestic partner respondents were relatively older compared to their respective populations' age distributions. While nationally, the majority of

active duty³¹ Service members and military spouses/domestic partners³² are aged 30 years old or younger, representing 67 percent and 50 percent of their respective populations, respondents in the sample were relatively older, with those aged 31 to 50 years old representing 81 percent and 69 percent of active duty Service members and military spouses/domestic partners, respectively. The inverse occurred with Veterans, as Veterans³³ aged 50 years old and above reflect 71 percent of national representation, compared to 57 percent in the sample.

Relatively younger Veteran representation in the sample likely stems from higher female representation, given that women enter the military in an official capacity later than men.

ADC used the U.S. Census Bureau's regional designations and respondents' zip codes to categorize responses by geographic region.³⁴ Active duty Service member respondents' geographic distribution closely reflects the national active duty population. Sixty-five percent of active duty Service member respondents reside in the south compared to 56 percent nationally, 22 percent in the west compared to 32 percent nationally, and the remainder reside in the midwest (5 percent) and northeast (2 percent).

27 Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. (rep.). *Annual Report to the Congressional Defense Committees on the Department of Defense Policy and Plans for Military Family Readiness*. Retrieved from <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/FY2016-Report-on-DoD-Policy-and-Plans-for-MFR.pdf>.

28 Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. (rep.). *2018 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community*. Retrieved from <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2018-demographics-report.pdf>.

29 Representation of women in the Military Services varies widely by Service, with data from 2018 showing women's representation as follows: Marine Corps: 9 percent; Army: 15 percent; Navy and Air Force: 20 percent. See *ibid*. Veteran status is even more predominated by men, with the 2019 Census estimating 91 percent of Veterans identified as male. See United States Census Bureau. *Sex by Age by Veteran Status for the Civilian Population 18 Years and Over*. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=veterans&tid=ACSDT1Y2019.B21001&hidePreview=false>.

30 Department of Defense, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy. (rep.). *2018 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community* (p. 162). Retrieved from <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2018-demographics-report.pdf>.

31 *Ibid*, p. 37.

32 *Ibid*, p. 134.

33 Department of Veterans Affairs. *The Veteran Population* (p. 32). <https://www.va.gov/VETDATA/docs/SurveysAndStudies/VETPOP.pdf>.

34 U.S. Census Bureau. *Statistical Groupings of States and Counties*. <https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/reference/GARM/Ch6GARM.pdf>.

Survey Analysis

ADC analyzed close-ended and opened-ended responses using industry standard data analytic methods and software. For close-ended questions, analysts used R descriptive statistics and crosstabulations. Respondents answered close-ended questions using a five-point Likert scale, which measured agreement (“strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”) and frequency (“never” to “very often”). For Likert scale questions measuring agreement, analysts collapsed the response options into a three-point scale of “agree/strongly agree,” “neutral,” and “disagree/strongly disagree”. Since too few respondents fell into extreme ends of the scale (i.e. “strongly agree” and “strongly disagree”), collapsing categories increased interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. For Likert scale questions measuring frequency, analysts collapsed the “often” and “very often” response options. For open-ended questions, analysts used R and Microsoft Excel to code responses, then performed an inter-rater review using Cohen’s kappa coefficient to ensure level of agreement on themes.

Measurement of Key Concepts

Race/Ethnicity: To operationalize race and ethnicity in this survey, ADC adapted categories provided by the Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Census Bureau. Respondents could identify as more than one category; thus, if a respondent chose multiple racial categories, they were subsequently coded as multiracial and collapsed in the other race category.³⁵ Additionally, anyone who selected “Hispanic” ethnicity was categorized as “Hispanic,” regardless of racial category.

Multidimensional concepts, such as community belonging, community acceptance and support, and community racial/ethnic inclusiveness require measurement through composite variables. To analyze the Defense Community DEI Survey data, analysts created composite variables by combining two or more individual variables, called indicators, into a single variable. Each indicator alone fails to provide sufficient information, but altogether these indicators can provide the more complex concept.

Community Belonging:³⁶ To measure the concept of community belonging, analysts used the following survey items, which were highly associated with one another.

- *After initially moving to this community, I felt welcomed during the first 30 days.*³⁷
- *I feel a sense of belonging in my community.*
- *Individuals in my community treat people with my racial and/or ethnic background fairly and equitably.*

Community Acceptance and Support:³⁸ To measure the concept of community acceptance and support, analysts used the following survey items, which were highly associated with one another.

- *I feel that my community is friendly.*
- *I feel that my community is respectful.*
- *I feel that my community is supportive.*
- *I feel that my community is welcoming.*

35 Within the sample, most respondents who selected multiracial identified as Black/African American, Native American, and white.

36 To validate correlation between items, analysts used Cronbach’s Alpha, a measure of internal consistency, which indicates how closely related a set of items are as a group. A Cronbach’s Alpha of greater than 0.7 represents internal consistency. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the three survey items used to construct the concept of community belonging was 0.87.

37 Only respondents who had lived in their community for 30 days or greater were asked this question (n=1,458).

38 To validate correlation between items, analysts used Cronbach’s Alpha. The survey items used to construct the concept of community acceptance and support had a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.94, which verifies internal consistency.

Community Racial/Ethnic Inclusiveness:³⁹ To measure the concept of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness, analysts used the following five-point Likert scale items, which were highly associated with one another.

- *I feel that my community is anti-racist (i.e., actively opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance).*
- *I feel that my community is diverse.*
- *I feel that my community is integrated.*

Physical Safety: ADC asked respondents how often in the past six months they felt concerned for their physical safety on and off installation. Respondents answered the questions using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “never” to “often,” or they could select “not applicable.” Additionally, ADC asked respondents whether they feel safe in their community, and respondents could provide an answer ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

Structural Barriers: ADC asked respondents whether structural barriers cause inequity in youth education, healthcare, housing, employment, and law enforcement and criminal justice.⁴⁰ Respondents answered each prompt using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”.

39 To validate correlation between items, analysts used Cronbach's Alpha. The survey items used to construct the concept of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.79, which verifies internal consistency.

40 ADC used outcomes identified in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity's (GARE) “Racial Equity Scorecard,” which is a model to track equity metrics in communities. See Nelson, J., & Brooks, L. (2016, December). *Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity*. https://racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/GARE-Racial_Equity_Toolkit.pdf.

SURVEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Organization of this Section

The Defense Community DEI Survey explored seven topic areas, and this section is organized into subsections by topic. Within each subsection, ADC presents findings by respondents' DoD affiliation as an active duty Service member, Veteran, or military spouse/domestic partner.

Topic 1: Community Belonging

A sense of belonging is an important determinant of psychological and physical well-being. When individuals feel that they belong in a community, they can be their authentic selves and contribute in their own, unique way, which leads to a more prosperous and vibrant community.

To measure community belonging, ADC asked respondents to indicate feelings of belonging in their community. Key findings on community belonging include:

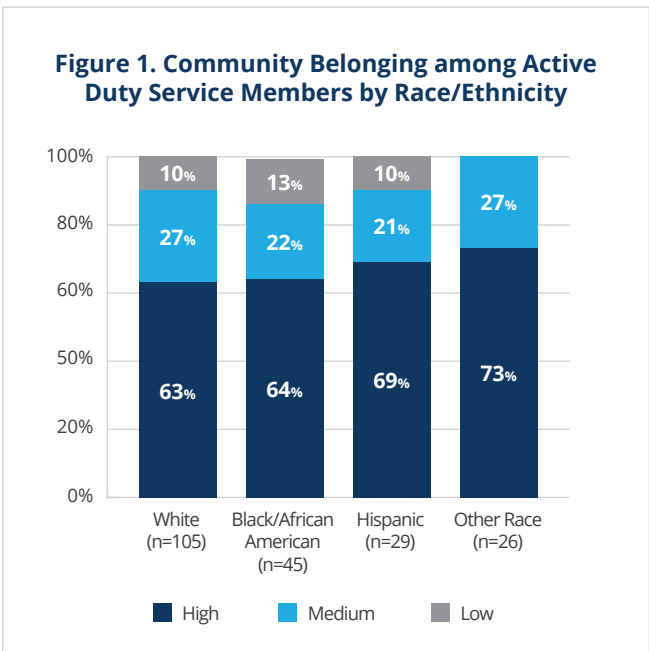
- Active duty Service members, regardless of race/ethnicity, felt that they belong in their community. For example, white and Black/African American respondents indicated about the same level of community belonging.
- Racial/ethnic minority (i.e., Black/African American, Hispanic, and those identifying as other races) Veterans indicated a lower sense of belonging than white Veterans. Most significantly, only 46 percent of Black/African American Veterans indicated a high level of community belonging, compared to 81 percent of white Veterans.

- Military spouses/domestic partners indicated different perceptions of community belonging across race/ethnicity.

A discussion on these findings proceeds below.

Active Duty Service Member Respondents

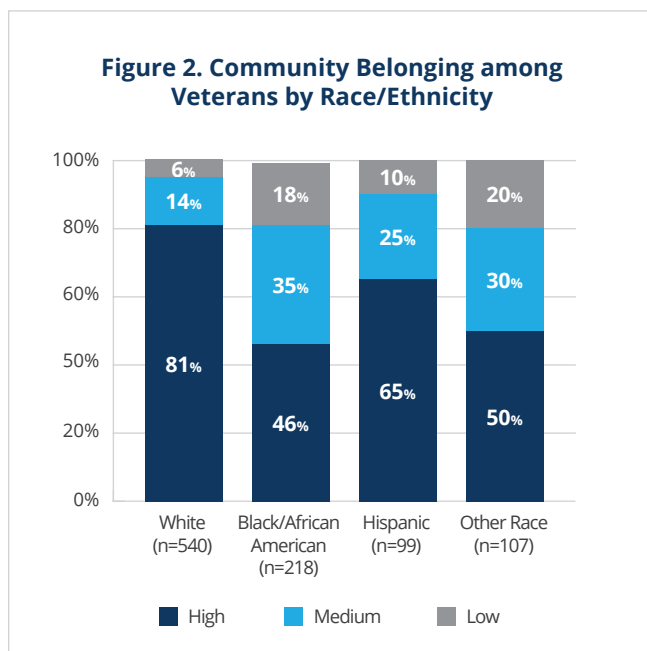
Most active duty Service member respondents indicated a high level of community belonging with very slight variation across racial/ethnic demographics. Although overwhelmingly positive, those active duty Service members who identified as other races perceived the highest levels of community belonging—roughly 10 percentage points higher than white and Black/African American respondents (Figure 1).



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Veteran Respondents

Racial/ethnic differences in perceived community belonging among Veterans vary more prominently than their active duty Service member counterparts (Figure 2). When examining survey results by race, white Veteran respondents indicated the highest levels of community belonging (81 percent) and were nearly twice as likely as Black/African American Veteran respondents to indicate a high sense of community belonging (46 percent). Only half of those Veteran respondents who identified as another race indicated a high sense of community belonging, while about two-thirds of Hispanic Veteran respondents felt the same.



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

"People are relegated to areas where they seem to 'belong,' treated differently in restaurants and stores based on the appearance of ability to pay."

– Black/African American Male Veteran

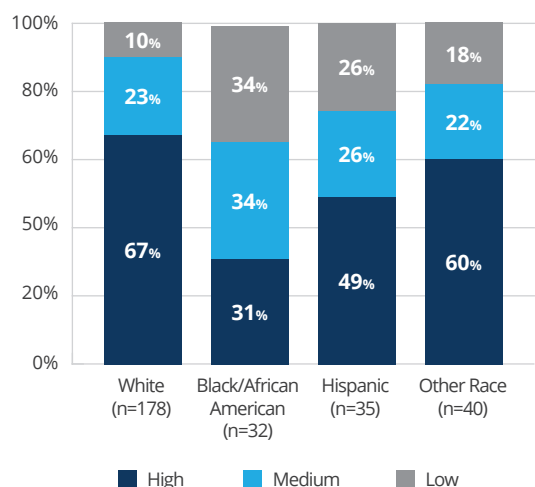
Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

Unlike active duty Service members who can rely on their military unit for connectedness, military spouses/domestic partners may have fewer institutional or formalized opportunities for community belonging when they geographically relocate. Despite that, two-thirds of white military spouses/domestic partners and 60 percent of those identifying as other race perceived high levels of community belongingness (Figure 3). In comparison, less than one-third of Black/African American respondents and half of Hispanic respondents' felt the same way. A sense of community positively affects military spouses/domestic partners' psychological well-being,⁴¹ and thus, may contribute to increased retention of their active duty Service member partners. A lack of community belonging may have even greater consequences for the diversity and inclusion of the active duty force if partners of color do not thrive within military culture and lifestyle.⁴² Particularly essential during deployment, community belonging lessens the stress of separation and provides military partners with a support system that can foster inclusion.

41 Wang, M.-C., Nyutu, P. N., Tran, K. K., & Spears, A. (2015). Finding resilience: The mediation effect of sense of community on the psychological well-being of military spouses. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 37(2), 164–174. <https://doi.org/10.17744/mehc.37.2.07054x614489204m>.

42 Westhuis, D. J., Fafara, R. J., & Ouellette, P. (2006). Does Ethnicity Affect the Coping of Military Spouses? *Armed Forces & Society*, 32(4), 584–603. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095327X06287050>.

Figure 3. Community Belonging among Military Spouses/Domestic Partners by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

"I am part of the Junior League and we fight food insecurity. [W]e also host events and actively work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. I am also fighting food insecurity as a volunteer manager with the school district, getting food to families who are not able to pick up the meals provided by the schools."

– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

Topic 2: Community Acceptance and Support

An inclusive environment fosters a culture that makes everyone feel accepted, respected, valued, regardless of race/ethnicity. When individuals feel that other people accept and support them for who they are, they are more likely to feel confident and secure in their environment. Therefore, ADC believes

that acceptance and mutual respect for each other's differences are fundamental attributes of a strong community.

To assess community acceptance and support, ADC asked respondents to indicate the level of agreement regarding their community as friendly, respectful, supportive, and welcoming. Key findings on community acceptance and support include:

- Active duty Service members' responses varied the least across racial/ethnic demographic groups, and there were more significant differences across racial/ethnic demographic groups for Veterans and military spouses/domestic partners. For active duty Service members, less than 10 percent of respondents indicated a low level of community acceptance and support for each racial/ethnic demographic group.
- Responses varied more for Veterans; notably, three-quarters of white Veterans indicated a high level of community acceptance and support compared to only half of Black/African American Veteran respondents.
- Fewer military spouses/domestic partners across all racial/ethnic demographic groups indicated a strong level of community acceptance and support compared to active duty Service members of the same race/ethnicity.

A discussion on these findings proceeds below.

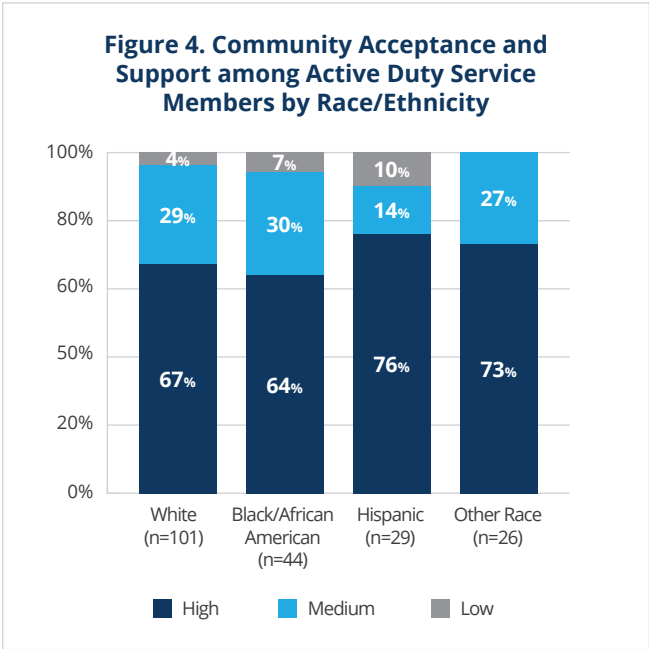
Active Duty Service Member Respondents

Active duty Service members are part of a closed community of individuals with a common purpose and experience; therefore, their service on its own may provide members with a sense of belonging.⁴³ Given this, most active duty Service member respondents indicated a high level of community acceptance and support with low variance across

⁴³ Psychiatric Times. Burden, Belonging, and Capability: An Interpersonal View of Military Suicides. <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/view/burden-belonging-and-capability-interpersonal-view-military-suicides>.



racial/ethnic demographics (Figure 4). Active duty Service members who identified as another race perceived the highest levels of community acceptance and support—without indicating perceived low levels of support.



“Other race” includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

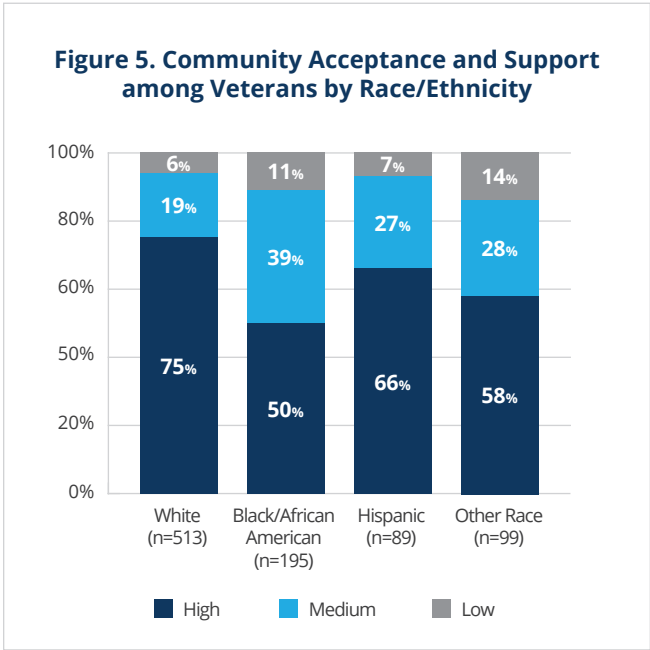
“Educate the community that everyone deserve[s] equal treatment and respect.”

– Hispanic Male Active Duty Service Member

Veteran Respondents

Most Veterans around the country currently live off military installations,⁴⁴ making the community critical to provide support structures and meet the needs of all community members. The survey found that most Veteran respondents indicated a high level of community acceptance and support (Figure 5). Veterans who identified as white (75 percent)

indicated the highest level of community acceptance and support—a quarter higher than Black/African American (50 percent) Veteran respondents.



“Other race” includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

“Provide more information on where to seek support if needed.”

– Black/African American Male Veteran

“Own and support more Black Owned Business[es].”

– Black/African American Male Veteran

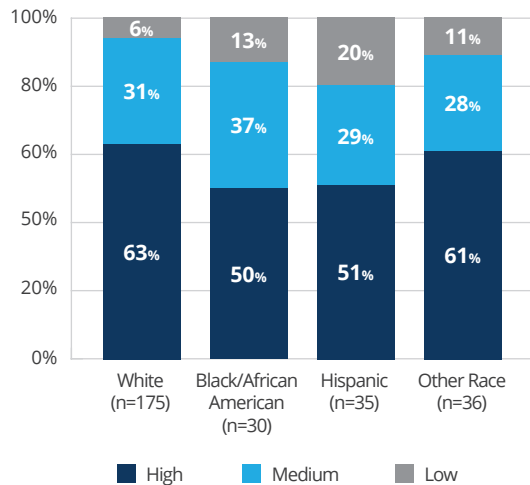
Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

Given the transitional aspects of military life, military spouses/domestic partners adapt to the culture of the communities where they reside—whether on or off installation. Most military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated a high level of

⁴⁴ Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment. Facilities Investment & Management Directorate. https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/fim/Housing/Housing_FAQs.html#1.

community acceptance (Figure 6). However, Hispanic and Black/African American military spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived the lowest levels of community acceptance compared to white and other race respondents. Hispanic (20 percent) and Black/African American (13 percent) military spouses/domestic partners were at least two times as likely to indicate a low perception of community acceptance and support compared to white (6 percent) military spouses/domestic partners. This is an important finding, given that 65 to 70 percent of military families live off installations and in defense communities.⁴⁵

Figure 6. Community Acceptance and Support among Military Spouses/Domestic Partners by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

"Changing the current atmosphere, calling on everyone to look at things differently, asking everyone to teach their children to be inclusive, asking local businesses to embrace diversity, asking local officials to support a more diverse and inclusive work environment."

– Multiracial Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

When discussing community acceptance and support, it is important to consider that ADC conducted this survey during the COVID-19 pandemic. Precautions associated with the pandemic, such as physical distancing and social isolation, may have influenced respondents' perception of community acceptance and support. For example, survey respondents noted that COVID-19 affected their involvement with DEI issues in their community:

"Covid restrictions make community involvement (particularly as a family that PCS-ed to this location less than 6 months ago) difficult".

– Multiracial Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Once opportunities return to 'in-person' format, rather than virtual."

– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"If it wasn't for this pandemic."

– Hispanic Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

Even if the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated feelings of isolation and instability and affected respondents' perceptions, there may be underlying reasons for variation among active duty Service members, Veterans, and military spouses/domestic partners that warrant further exploration.

⁴⁵ Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment. Facilities Investment & Management Directorate. https://www.acq.osd.mil/eie/fim/Housing/Housing_FAQs.html#1.

Topic 3: Community Racial and Ethnic Inclusiveness

ADC strives to create and support diverse and inclusive defense communities. At the same time, ADC recognizes that a diverse community may not appear nor feel inclusive. While diversity focuses on the makeup of a community, inclusion focuses on a culture where people recognize, include, and value each other's differences. ADC aspires to foster diverse and inclusive defense communities where all are included and valued, allowing all community members to thrive.

To assess community racial/ethnic inclusiveness, ADC asked respondents to indicate the level of agreement regarding their community as anti-racist, diverse, and inclusive. Additionally, ADC asked respondents about the frequency of discrimination they experienced in the past six months.

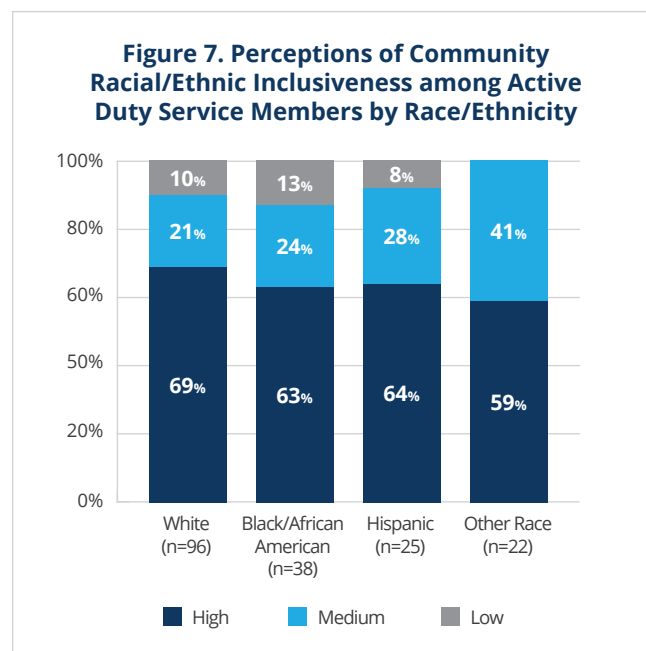
Key findings on community racial/ethnic inclusiveness include:

- Active duty Service members and Veterans indicated high levels of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness.
- Black/African American and Hispanic military spouses/domestic partners feel even less included than white and other race spouses/domestic partners.
- Only 14 percent of Black/African American military spouses/domestic partners never felt discriminated against in the past 6 months, which is starkly different from white military spouses/domestic partners, 67 percent of whom indicated that they never felt discriminated against.

A discussion on these findings proceeds below.

Active Duty Service Member Respondents

Most active duty Service member respondents indicated a high level of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness (Figure 7). Black/African American active duty Service member respondents perceived the lowest level of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness. Other race active duty Service member respondents perceived the highest levels of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness—without indicating perceived low levels of support.

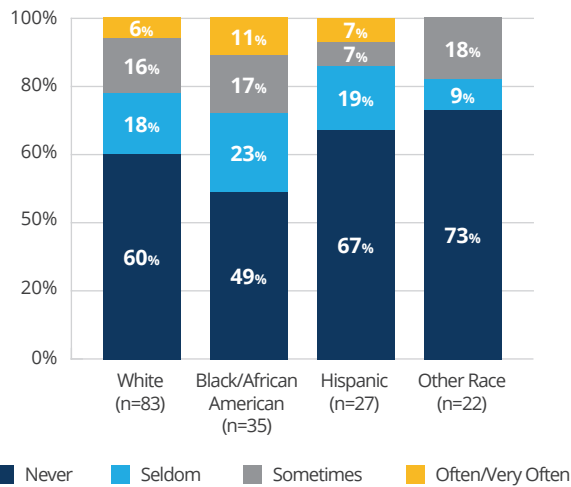


"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Black/African American active duty Service member respondents felt a higher level of discrimination when compared to white respondents, Hispanic respondents, and respondents who identified as another race (Figure 8). This emphasizes the unique historical and contemporary racialized experiences that Black/African Americans active duty Service members face within the military and the U.S. society at large that other racial/ethnic groups may not necessarily endure.⁴⁶

46 The BIPOC Project. <https://www.thebipocproject.org/>.

Figure 8. Perceptions of Discrimination in the Past Six Months among Active Duty Service Members by Race/Ethnicity

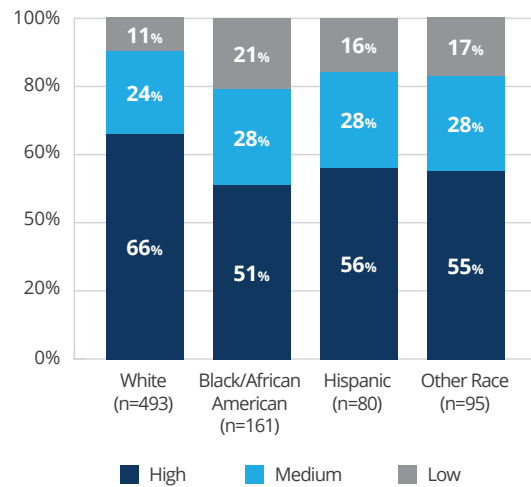


"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into the "very often" response option; therefore, analysts collapsed "often" and "very often" to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Veteran Respondents

Most Veteran respondents indicated a high level of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness (Figure 9). Black/African American Veteran respondents perceived the lowest level of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness when compared to white and Hispanic Veteran respondents and respondents who identified as another race.

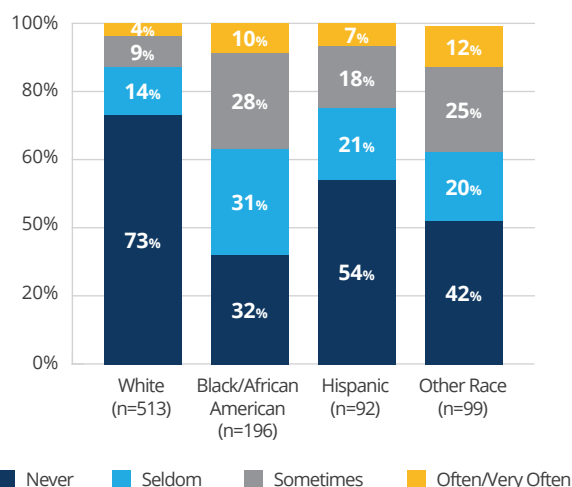
Figure 9. Perceptions of Community Racial/Ethnic Inclusiveness among Veterans by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Black/African American and other race respondents felt discriminated against more often compared to white and Hispanic respondents (Figure 10). More specifically, more than one-third of Black/African American Veterans (38 percent) and other race Veterans (37 percent) felt discriminated against sometimes to very often in the past six months. This highlights the chasm between white Veterans and racial minority Veterans (i.e., Black/African Americans and other races) when it pertains to the lived experiences of discrimination in their communities.

Figure 10. Perceptions of Discrimination in the Past Six Months among Veterans by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into the "very often" response option; therefore, analysts collapsed "often" and "very often" to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Additionally, 40 percent of white active duty Service members and 27 percent of white Veterans perceived some level of discrimination within the past six months. Indeed, white people can experience racial prejudice, but not racism. Racial prejudice comprises discriminatory or derogatory attitudes people may hold based on preconceived notions of race. Although often conflated with racial prejudice or discrimination, the concept of racism refers to a systemic relationship to power. In the U.S., whiteness has the power to define the terms that racialized others' existence.

Reverse racism, on the other hand, attempts to ignore the power–privilege dynamic between the individuals/groups involved; the myth of reverse racism assumes that racism occurs on a so-called level playing field, when in actuality, it does not. This general concern, voiced by white respondents to the survey, is rooted in the belief that the welfare

of minority groups must come at the expense of white people.⁴⁷ Although racial equity is not a zero-sum game, acknowledging that this perception is widely held among white individuals living in defense communities may create an opportunity for reframing misconceptions of DEI initiatives. For example, some white active duty Service members and Veterans provided the following comments in the survey's open-ended response.

"This issue has made my race the target of racism. Being most-qualified for a job isn't the issue now; [y]our race, particularly Black, is who gets the job."
– White Female Veteran

"The concept of 'diversity' and racial justice specifically targets white people and creates a racist view towards white people."
– White Male Active Duty Service Member

"For people to understand that excluding people because they are white is [still] discrimination."
– White Female Active Duty Service Member

"[It's] time to end the days of always blaming white people. There is no inclusion [or] diversity if we don't stop allowing hatred against ANY ethnic/ racial groups. When I see these programs designed to blame only one group and exclude one group [that's] not diversity, that's not inclusive. [It's] time to stop hiding behind the fraud of diversity as a cover for hatred of white people."
– White Male Veteran

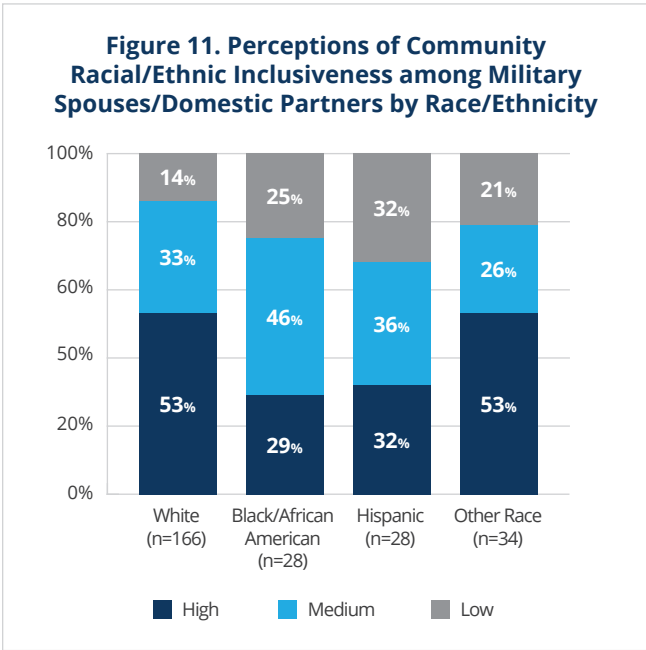
"White men are singled out and now are becoming enemy #1 by the [diversity and inclusion] community race baiting to ensure their professional career remains [intact]."
– White Male Active Duty Service Member

"If racism against white people were acknowledged to also be real."
– White Female Veteran

47 Norton, M. I., & Sommers, S. R. (2011). Whites See Racism as a Zero-Sum Game That They Are Now Losing. https://www.hbs.edu/ris/Publication%20Files/norton%20sommers%20whites%20see%20racism_ca92b4be-cab9-491d-8a87-cf1c6ff244ad.pdf.

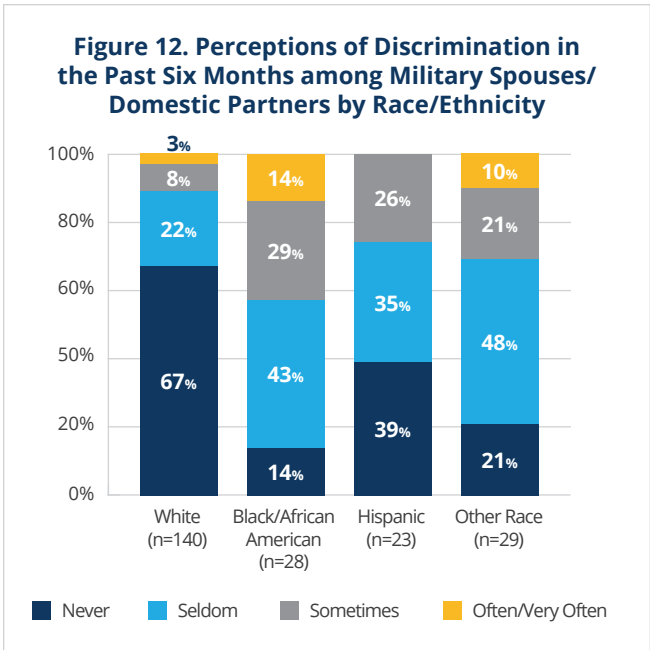
Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

Most military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated a low to medium level of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness (Figure 11). Black/African American, Hispanic, and other race spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated a greater percentage of low levels of community racial/ethnic inclusiveness compared to white respondents.



“Other race” includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Greater than one-third of Black/African American military spouses/domestic partners felt discriminated against sometimes to very often, compared to only 11 percent of their white counterparts (Figure 12). Those identifying as Hispanic and another race perceived discrimination more often than white military spouses/domestic partners, with 26 percent and 31 percent feeling discrimination in the last six months, respectively.



“Other race” includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into the “very often” response option; therefore, analysts collapsed “often” and “very often” to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Topic 4: Community Safety

Community safety is an essential aspect of building strong defense communities and achieving a positive state of well-being for members. By preventing crime and violence, individuals feel secure and willing to participate in their community, leading to stronger, more vibrant, and cohesive environments. Since one’s perception of safety may affect his, her, or their level of comfort and willingness to engage in the community, ADC understands the criticality of examining current sentiments about community safety by race/ethnicity and affiliation.

To measure perceptions of safety, ADC asked respondents to indicate the frequency in which they experienced concern for their physical safety both on installation and off installation in the surrounding community. ADC also asked respondents to indicate their perception of whether they believe

their community is safe. A limitation is that the latter question elicits a broader understanding of safety from participants, compared to the former, which specifically asks for perception regarding physical safety. Therefore, responses to the statement, “I believe my community is safe,” are left to respondents’ interpretation of safety and may diverge from findings aligned to responses regarding physical safety.

Key findings on community safety include:

- Black/African American and other race Veterans were over seven times more likely to feel physically unsafe sometimes to very often while on installation than white Veterans, and they felt physically unsafe off installation more than twice as often compared to white Veterans. Similarly, Black/African American military spouses/domestic partners were five times more likely to feel unsafe on installation than white and Hispanic peers.
- To further highlight that Black/African American respondents have a different experience than others, more than half of Black/African American military spouses/domestic partners (57 percent) felt unsafe sometimes to very often off installation, which is at least 22 percent higher than their peers.
- Black/African American respondents’ perceived level of safety reflects the sentiment of the general population in 2020. The Gallup Panel administered a survey from June 23–July 6, 2020, asking respondents about their sense of safety in their neighborhood. As seen in the Defense Community DEI Survey, Black/African American respondents felt the least safe compared to their peers, and women felt more unsafe compared to men.⁴⁸

- Although societal context may explain why Black/African American respondents may feel unsafe in their community, survey findings revealed that safety is a concern for white respondents too. For active duty Service members, less white respondents (46 percent) indicated that they never felt concern for physical safety while off installation compared to Black/African American respondents (59 percent). Although findings for white Veteran and military spousal/domestic partner respondents did not reflect this same pattern, this finding suggests that community safety is a concern that transcends all demographic groups.

A discussion on these findings proceeds below.

Active Duty Service Member Respondents

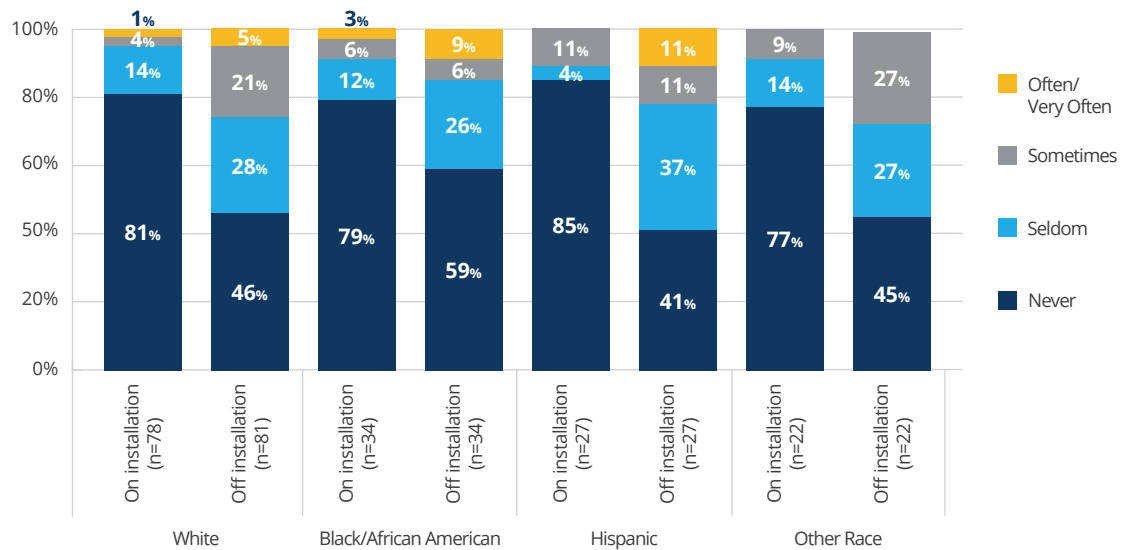
Overall, active duty Service member respondents, regardless of race/ethnicity, felt more physically safe on installation compared to off installation (Figure 13). Black/African American and Hispanic active duty Service member respondents felt less physically safe off installation compared to white respondents and respondents who identified as another race. This signifies that although DoD-affiliated respondents of color may perceive the installation as a safe physical space, this perception does not necessarily apply to the surrounding DoD community.

“Since the military has such an economic impact and rol[e] here in this community, they should take up initiatives to protect its members of color out in the local community. The military never advocates or gives the appearance of even caring about what happens to [its] member[s] once the[y] depart the installation.”

– Black/African American Female Active Duty

48 Kluch, S., & McCarthy, J. (2020, August 21). Black Americans Less Likely to Feel Safe in Their Community. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/317756/black-americans-less-likely-feel-safe-community.aspx>.

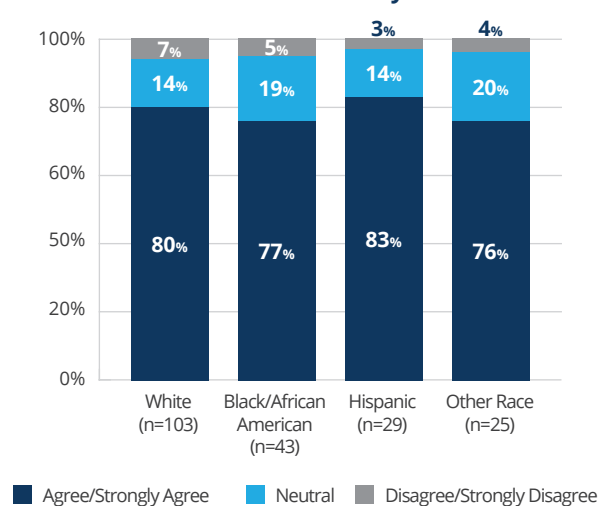
Figure 13. Active Duty Service Members' Perception of Physical Safety On and Off Installation in the Past Six Months by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into the "very often" response option; therefore, analysts collapsed "often" and "very often" to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Despite these on and off installation⁴⁹ differences, over three-quarters of active duty Service members agreed that their communities were safe with negligible differences by race/ethnicity (Figure 14). Active duty Service member respondents may have considered safety both on and off installation when determining their opinions on this question, leading the time spent on installation to outweigh negative perceptions of safety off installation.

Figure 14. Active Duty Service Members' Perceptions of Community Safety by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into extreme ends of the five-point Likert scale (i.e., "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree"); therefore, analysts collapsed both ends to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

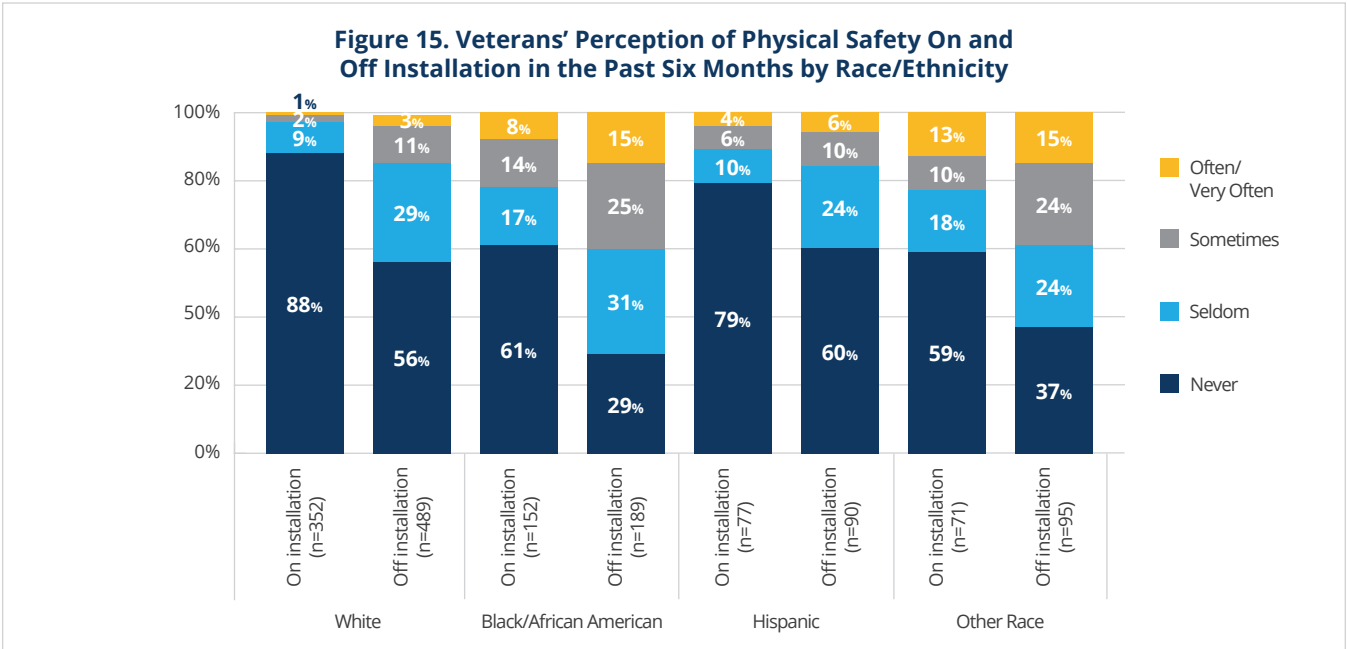
49 The term "installation" includes any location a member is stationed (e.g., Naval ship/port, Army base, Air Force airfield).

Veteran Respondents

Veteran respondents, like their active duty Service member counterparts, perceived on installation as the safest place for their physical safety (Figure 15). However, while only three percent of white Veteran respondents felt physically unsafe sometimes to very often on installation, over seven times as many Black/African American Veterans (22 percent), seven times as many Veterans identifying as another race (23 percent), and three times as many Hispanic Veterans (10 percent) felt the same.

"I would like to be a part of this community and my voice be heard because I'm very concern[ed] about my family's safety due to housing issues with neighbors who don't follow the rules and creat[e] a very toxic and hostile environment for me and my family."

– Asian Female Veteran



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into the "very often" response option; therefore, analysts collapsed "often" and "very often" to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

When asked about the general safety of their community, Veteran respondents, irrespective of racial/ethnic identity, generally perceived their communities as safe (Figure 16). However, Black/African American Veterans and Veteran respondents identifying as another race perceived their communities as slightly less safe than white and Hispanic respondents.

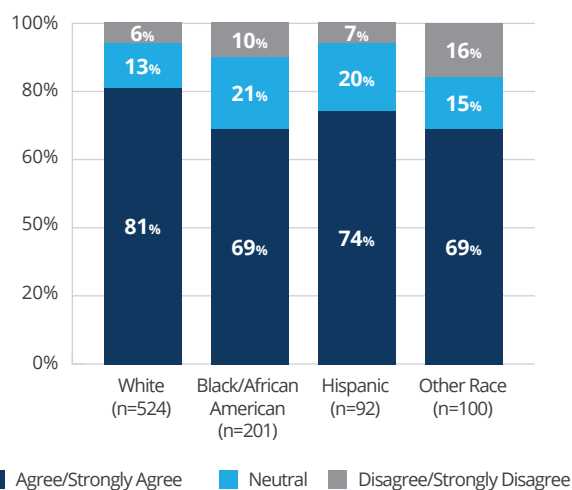
"Teach, from birth, that our blood is the same color. We all have the same DNA, the color of our skin, and our gender should not matter in our safety and ability to take care of our families."

– Multiracial Female Veteran

"Safety is an issue with rural communities."

– Black/African American Female Veteran

Figure 16. Veterans' Perception of Community Safety by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into extreme ends of the five-point Likert scale (i.e., "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree"); therefore, analysts collapsed both ends to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

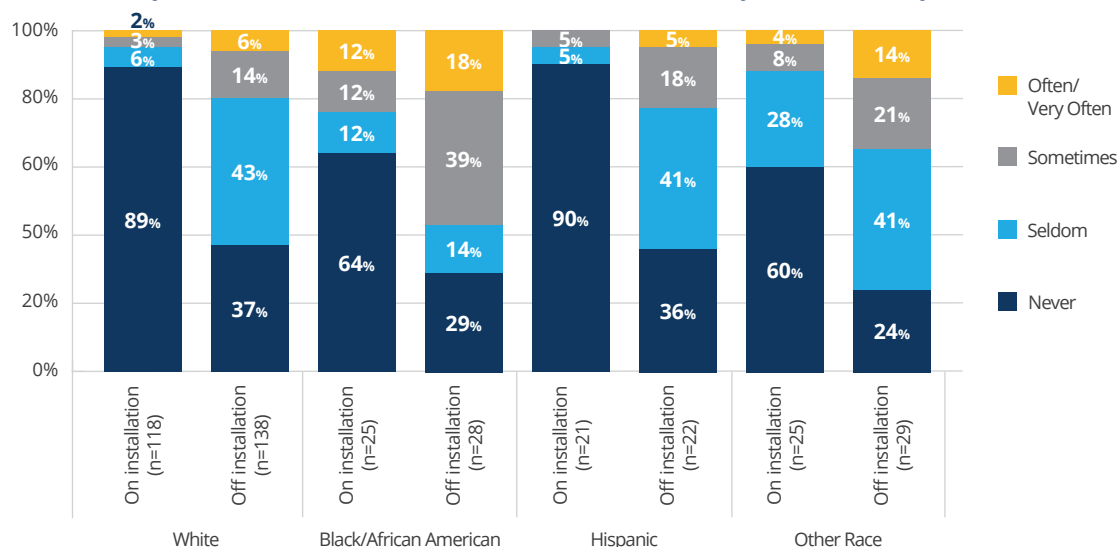
Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

While military spouses/domestic partners generally felt safer on installation, differences exist between racial/ethnic identities. Only five percent of white and Hispanic military spousal/domestic partner respondents felt as though their physical safety had been threatened sometimes to very often while on installation (Figure 17). Comparatively, Black/African American respondents were five times as likely (24 percent) as white and Hispanic military spouses/domestic partners to feel that their physical safety had been threatened sometimes to very often in the past six months. Those military spouses/domestic partners identifying as another race fell somewhere in the middle, with roughly 12 percent indicating feelings of concern for physical safety sometimes to very often while on installation.

"Focus on safety for everyone."

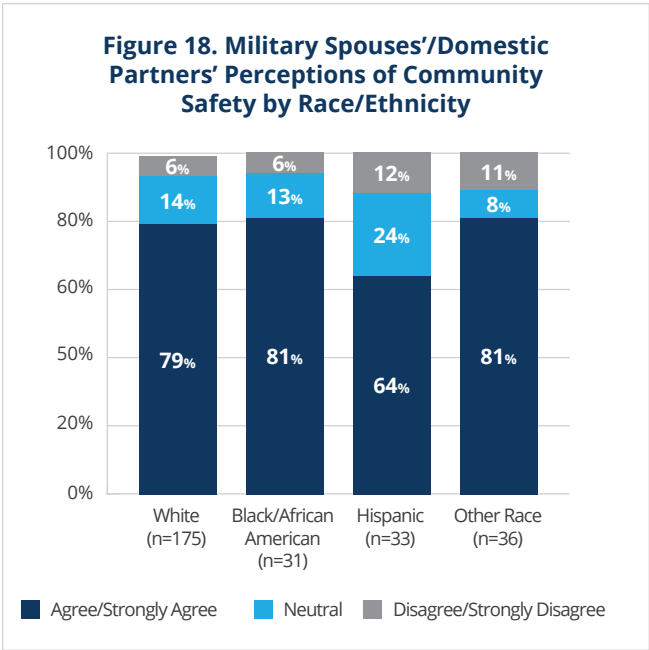
– White Female Military Spouse

Figure 17. Military Spouses'/Domestic Partners' Perception of Physical Safety On and Off Installation in the Past Six Months by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into the "very often" response option; therefore, analysts collapsed "often" and "very often" to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

When asked about general safety in their community, most military spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived their communities as safe (Figure 18). Hispanic military spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived their community as less safe when compared to white, Black/African American, and other race respondents.



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Too few responses fell into extreme ends of the five-point Likert scale (i.e., "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree"); therefore, analysts collapsed both ends to increase interpretability without sacrificing data granularity. Due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100 percent.

Topic 5: Structural Barriers to Equity

ADC recognizes that the effects of historical, racially-motivated policies and decisions linger today and continue to serve as barriers to opportunity for certain demographic groups. ADC believes that there should not be barriers in defense communities inhibiting the success of any person, and it recognizes that thoughtful and inclusive action is required to make this goal a reality. Therefore, ADC asked respondents about their perspectives on structural barriers in their community to understand

which areas respondents perceive as most critical to address to achieve equitable communities.

ADC asked respondents whether structural barriers prevented equity within the following areas: law enforcement and criminal justice, employment, housing, healthcare, and youth education.

Key findings on structural barriers include:

- For all affiliations, more Black/African American respondents indicated that structural barriers exist compared to their white, Hispanic, and other race peers.
- Nearly all Black/African American military spouses/domestic partners believed there were structural barriers for employment (97 percent) and law enforcement and criminal justice (91 percent). These findings demonstrate that Black/African American respondents may be more acutely aware of the historical policies, practices, and norms that continue to generate racial disparities today.

A discussion on these findings proceeds below.

Active Duty Service Member Respondents

Overall, active duty Service member respondents perceived structural barriers cause inequities in housing more than any other area (Figure 19). Black/African American active duty Service member respondents were almost two times as likely to perceive that structural barriers cause inequities in law enforcement and criminal justice, employment, housing, healthcare, and youth education than white, Hispanic, and other race respondents. White active duty Service member respondents identified housing most frequently (47 percent) as an area where structural barriers cause inequity, although there was no significant variation in their perception across the other areas. Additionally, while Hispanic and other race active duty Service

member respondents had the lowest perceptions of structural barriers causing inequity compared to Black/African American and white active duty Service member respondents, there was no significant variation in their perception across the different areas in question.

"Investment in minority communities through education, financial literacy, family support, and employment opportunities."

– Black/African American Female Active Duty Member

"Reduce the prices of housing."

– White Male Active Duty Respondent

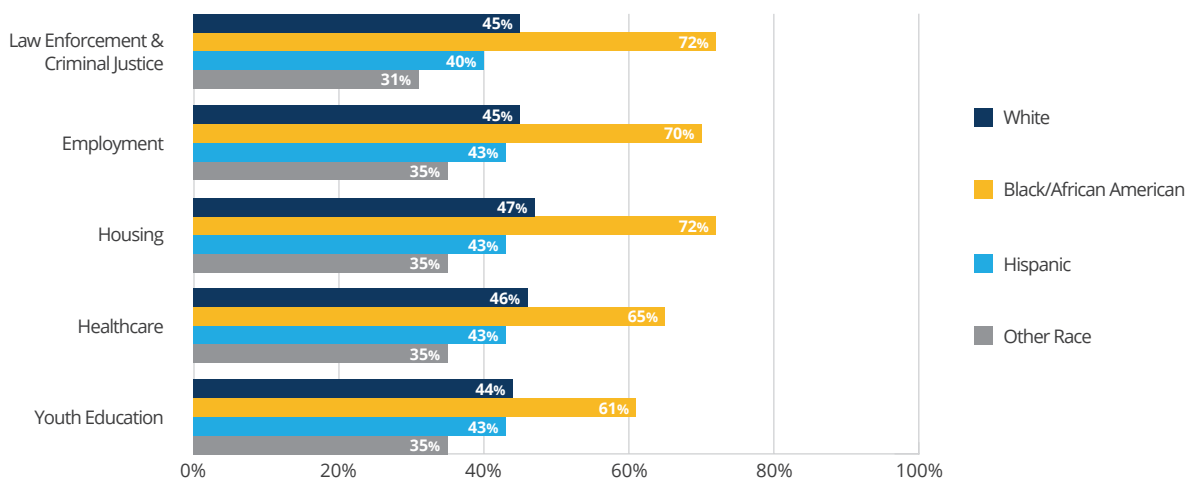
"Increase the amount of minorit[ies] in higher positions of businesses, access to better education, access to non-racial healthcare and food."

– Black/African American Male Active Duty Member

"Racial inclusion in housing communities on post."

– White Female Active Duty Member

Figure 19. Active Duty Service Member Respondents' Perception of Structural Barriers by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Percentages reflect proportion of respondents who answered "agree" or "strongly agree" to each structural barrier question.

Veteran Respondents

Black/African American Veteran respondents were nearly two times as likely to perceive that structural barriers cause inequities in law enforcement and criminal justice, employment, housing, healthcare, and youth education than white, Hispanic, and other race Veteran respondents (Figure 20). Most Black/African American Veteran respondents perceived that structural barriers cause inequities in employment (86 percent), whereas white Veteran respondents showed the greatest perception of structural barriers in employment (39 percent) and housing (39 percent). Hispanic Veteran respondents most frequently perceived structural barriers in housing (54 percent). Veterans identifying as another race most frequently perceived structural barriers in youth education (58 percent).

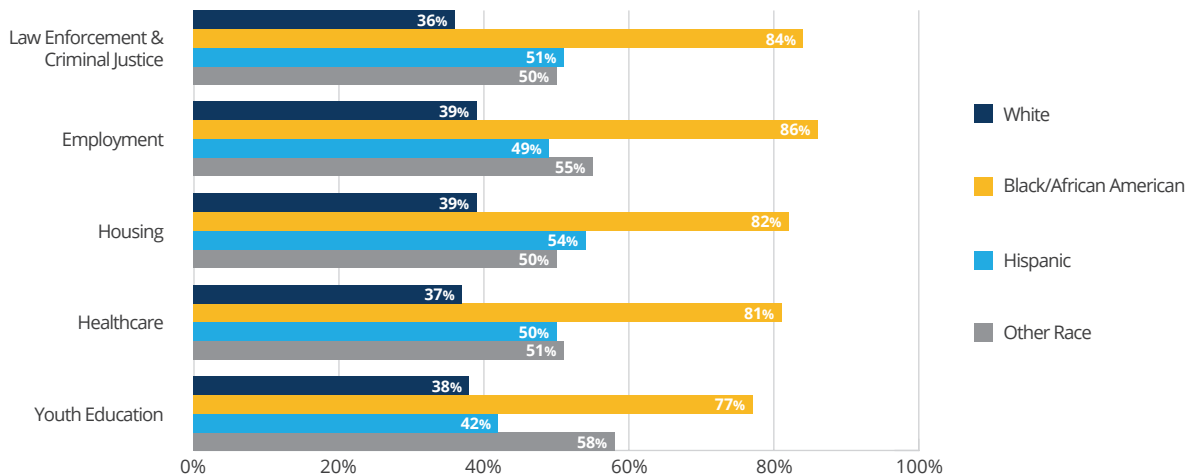
"Need more state and federal programs aimed at assisting in equal housing and social service programs"

– White Female Veteran

"Eliminate racism through adequate government policy. Provide equal employment, housing, healthcare, safety through proper policing, and funding for community projects."

– Black/African American Male Veteran

Figure 20. Veteran Respondents' Perception of Structural Barriers by Race/Ethnicity



"Other race" includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Percentages reflect proportion of respondents who answered "agree" or "strongly agree" to each structural barrier question.

Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

Overall, the majority of military spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived structural barriers cause inequities in employment (Figure 21). Across each area in which ADC asked respondents whether they believe structural barriers cause inequity in their community, Black/African American spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived structural barriers as causing inequity in their community to a significantly greater degree compared to their white, Hispanic, and other race counterparts. Most Black/African American military spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived structural barriers in employment (97 percent), whereas the majority of white military spousal/domestic partner respondents perceived structural barriers in employment (66 percent) and healthcare (66 percent). Hispanic military spousal/domestic partner respondents most frequently perceived structural barriers in

employment (67 percent), housing (67 percent), and healthcare (67 percent), and other race military spousal/domestic partner respondents most frequently perceived structural barriers in healthcare (63 percent).

“Living wage, affordable and high-quality childcare, healthcare for all, safe and affordable housing. The list goes on and on.”

– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

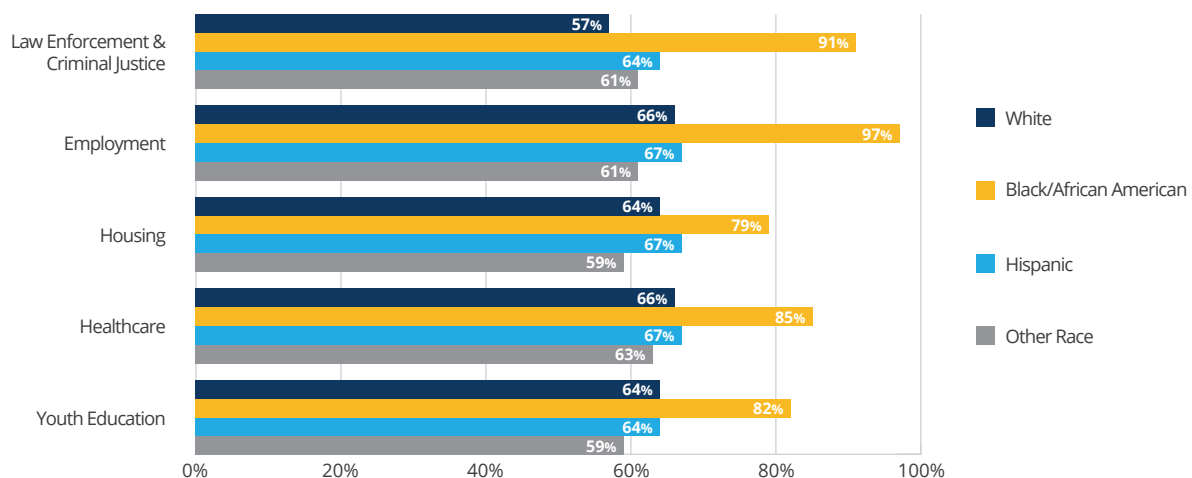
“Invest in community programs.”

– Hispanic Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

“Creat[e] incubator hubs for youth to focus on entrepreneurship, leadership, and advocacy development.”

– Black/African American Female Military Spouse/
Domestic Partner

Figure 21. Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents' Perception of Structural Barriers by Race/Ethnicity



“Other race” includes Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native. Percentages reflect proportion of respondents who answered “agree” or “strongly agree” to each structural barrier question.

Respondents provided open-ended responses consistent with the quantitative findings above that highlight the importance of education and employment to achieve racially equitable societies.

"Education is critical! Revamping what kids are taught in school will help tremendously."

– Black/African American Male Veteran

"Not that my community does not make an adequate effort now to ensure equity and inclusiveness, but it could (not even should) focus on education. Ensuring that the children of all backgrounds receive access to quality education and educational programs will help earn employment."

– White Male Active Duty Service Member

"Sustain federal, state, and local governmental support to disadvantaged families and youth through education, athletics, and horizon-broadening opportunities separate from religious and state [and] private education systems."

– White Male Active Duty Service member

"Though I believe that my community addresses issues of equality and inclusiveness well, there is always room for improvement and therefore nothing better than to make education and employment opportunities stronger."

– White Male Veteran

"Continue to provide quality education for all and stress the value of hard work and dedication to achieve goals."

– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Educate lower income families about the importance of an education."

– Black/African American Female Military Spouse/
Domestic Partner

"Ensure education is accessible and affordable."

– Black/African American Female
Active Duty Service Member

"Continue to communicate the many changes and updates to law and policies to both Service members and families. Also continue to revamp classes with new materials and innovative ways to be informed."

– Hispanic Female Active Duty Service Member

"Increase the amount of minority in higher positions of businesses, access to better education, access to non-racial healthcare and food."

– Black/African American Male
Active Duty Service Member

Topic 6: Community Member Action in DEI

ADC recognizes that advancing DEI requires individual and collective awareness and action. Community members' level of involvement may differ based on access to information, availability of opportunities, community support, personal priorities, and perceived need for change. Therefore, ADC asked respondents about their desired level of involvement in DEI initiatives in their communities and reasons prohibiting greater participation.

ADC asked respondents whether they were satisfied with their level of involvement in DEI initiatives in their community. Key findings on community action in DEI include:

- Military spouses/domestic partners were less satisfied with their level of involvement compared to active duty Service member and Veteran respondents, but they indicated that they wanted more information about ways to get involved. This finding is consistent with other initiatives within military spouse/domestic partner member groups. In 2020, following societal unrest regarding racial injustices, military spouses organized formal and informal events

to talk about the racial divide in the country and hundreds have visited the Facebook page called “Military Spouses for Black Lives Matter.”⁵⁰

- Black/African American respondents indicated a greater desire to be involved in DEI initiatives in their community compared to their white, Hispanic, and other race counterparts.
- Half of Black/African American (50 percent) and over one-third of Hispanic (37 percent) military spouses/domestic partners indicated that they would be more involved in DEI initiatives if their opinions were valued.

A discussion on these findings proceeds below.

Active Duty Service Member Respondents

Hispanic (50 percent), other race (38 percent), and white (34 percent) active duty Service member respondents felt satisfied with their current level of engagement in DEI (Table 3). In comparison, less than a quarter of Black/African American active duty Service member respondents (22 percent) felt satisfied with their current level of engagement in DEI, and more than one-third of Black/African American active duty Service member respondents (37 percent) indicated that they wanted more information about ways to be involved.

Table 3. Active Duty Service Member Respondents’ Reasons Prohibiting Greater Involvement in Community DEI Efforts by Race/Ethnicity

Response Option	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
I felt that my opinion was valued	20	19%	11	24%	3	10%	6	23%
I felt that this is an issue in my community	15	14%	3	7%	4	13%	5	19%
I had more information about ways to get involved	22	21%	17	37%	8	27%	7	27%
I had more time	29	27%	10	22%	9	30%	5	19%
I had more training	13	12%	7	15%	3	10%	4	15%
I had the support of my community	9	8%	6	13%	4	13%	2	8%
There were more opportunities to get involved	15	14%	13	28%	7	23%	5	19%
Other	8	8%	3	7%	0	0%	2	8%
None of the above - I am satisfied with my current level of engagement	36	34%	10	22%	15	50%	10	38%
Response Sample	106		46		30		26	

* “Other race” includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

50 Keilar, B. (2020, June 8). Military Spouses across the U.S. Organize and March in Support of Black Lives Matter. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/politics/military-spouses-black-lives-matter/index.html>.

Veteran Respondents

Over one-third of white (37 percent) and Hispanic (38 percent) Veteran respondents felt satisfied with their current level of engagement (Table 4). Black/African American Veteran respondents were two times as likely (38 percent) to indicate that

they would be more involved in DEI efforts if they had more information about ways to get involved compared to white Veteran respondents (16 percent). Additionally, nearly one-third of Veteran respondents identifying as another race (31 percent) indicated a desire for more opportunities to get involved in DEI efforts.

Table 4. Veteran Respondents' Perspectives Reasons Prohibiting Greater Involvement in Community DEI Efforts by Race/Ethnicity

Response Option	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
I felt that my opinion was valued	102	19%	70	32%	20	20%	31	29%
I felt that this is an issue in my community	127	23%	28	13%	13	13%	22	20%
I had more information about ways to get involved	90	16%	83	38%	25	25%	32	30%
I had more time	123	22%	38	17%	13	13%	32	30%
I had more training	38	7%	38	17%	14	14%	21	19%
I had the support of my community	36	7%	45	20%	5	5%	28	26%
There were more opportunities to get involved	89	16%	82	37%	24	24%	33	31%
Other	40	7%	11	5%	8	8%	10	9%
None of the above - I am satisfied with my current level of engagement	200	37%	30	14%	38	38%	22	20%
Response Sample:	547		220		101		108	

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

Military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated that they were less satisfied with their current level of engagement compared to active duty Service member and Veteran respondents. Notably, Black/African American (50 percent) and Hispanic (37 percent) spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated that they would be more involved in DEI efforts if they felt their opinion was valued (Table 5). Additionally, Black/African American military spousal/domestic partner respondents were over twice as likely to indicate this sentiment than white military spousal/domestic partner respondents (21 percent). Over one-third of white (39 percent), Black/African American (35 percent), Hispanic (35 percent), and military spousal/domestic partner respondents

identifying as another race (39 percent) indicated a desire for more information about ways to get involved in DEI efforts.

"I think my expectation of racial and gender equality contradict the established members of the base and its surrounding neighborhoods. I don't participate because I am afraid of repercussions and blowback on the current CO, who is exceptional at all he does and is aware of."

– Hispanic Female Military Spouse/
Domestic Partner

"If I didn't fear retaliation by military leadership."

– Hispanic Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

Table 5. Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents' Reasons Prohibiting Greater Involvement in Community DEI Efforts by Race/Ethnicity

Response Option	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
I felt that my opinion was valued	37	21%	17	50%	13	37%	13	32%
I felt that this is an issue in my community	24	13%	2	6%	3	9%	10	24%
I had more information about ways to get involved	69	39%	12	35%	12	34%	16	39%
I had more time	60	34%	6	18%	8	23%	13	32%
I had more training	34	19%	3	9%	7	20%	4	10%
I had the support of my community	14	8%	6	18%	6	17%	8	20%
There were more opportunities to get involved	54	30%	16	47%	7	20%	14	34%
Other	7	4%	1	3%	4	11%	3	7%
None of the above - I am satisfied with my current level of engagement	36	20%	4	12%	5	14%	6	15%
Response Sample:	178		34		35		41	

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

Topic 7: Top Areas to Address to Eliminate Inequity

To address inequities in defense communities, ADC recognizes that access to community resources, such as quality education, healthcare, equal employment opportunities may not be equally accessible to all individuals. To shape direct future DEI initiatives, ADC asked respondents which areas are most critical to address to eliminate inequity in their community. Key findings on top areas to address to eliminate inequity include:

- Regardless of racial/ethnic group and affiliation, respondents consistently indicated K-12 education as an important focus area to eliminate inequities in their community.
- Black/African American active duty Service member respondents indicated criminal justice as the top area to address compared to their Veteran and military spouse/domestic partner peers who indicated employment as the top area to address.
- Black/African American Veteran and military spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated

employment as the top area to address, which differed from white, Hispanic, and other race Veterans, each of which indicated K-12 education as the top area to address. Hispanic respondents indicated K-12 education as the top area across all demographic groups.

A discussion of the findings proceeds below.

Active Duty Service Member Respondents

White (41 percent) active duty Service member respondents and those who identified as another race (42 percent) indicated that employment was the most important area to address to eliminate inequity (Table 6). Significantly more Black/African American (62 percent) active duty Service member respondents indicated criminal justice as the most critical area to address compared to white (38 percent), Hispanic (29 percent), and other race active duty Service member respondents (35 percent). Additionally, over half of Black/African American (58 percent) and Hispanic (57 percent) active duty Service member respondents identified K-12 education as the most important area to address inequity in their communities.

Table 6. Active Duty Service Member Respondents' Perceptions on Top Areas to Address by Race/Ethnicity

Response Option	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
K-12 Education	41	40%	26	58%	16	57%	10	38%
Healthcare	26	25%	20	44%	8	29%	10	38%
Employment	42	41%	23	51%	14	50%	11	42%
Public Safety	25	25%	18	40%	7	25%	8	31%
Criminal Justice	39	38%	28	62%	8	29%	9	35%
Housing	28	27%	20	44%	12	43%	7	27%
Food Insecurity	29	28%	14	31%	8	29%	5	19%
Other	9	9%	2	4%	0	0%	3	12%
No Areas	15	15%	5	11%	7	25%	8	31%
Response Sample:	102		45		28		26	

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).



Veteran Respondents

White (46 percent) and Hispanic (49 percent) Veteran respondents identified K-12 education as the most important area to address inequity (Table 7). Notably, Black/African American Veterans indicated a higher level of importance across each area to address inequities compared to white, Hispanic, and Veteran respondents identifying as

another race. Across each area, the vast majority of Black/African American (80 percent) Veteran respondents identified employment as the most important area to address to eliminate inequity. Over half of Veteran respondents identifying as another race (56 percent) indicated employment and K-12 education as the most important areas to address inequity in their communities.

Table 7. Veteran Respondents' Perceptions on Top Areas to Address by Race/Ethnicity

Area	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
K-12 Education	250	46%	154	69%	49	49%	61	56%
Healthcare	145	27%	147	66%	39	39%	43	40%
Employment	204	38%	177	80%	47	47%	61	56%
Public Safety	135	25%	122	55%	32	32%	45	42%
Criminal Justice	186	34%	156	70%	38	38%	54	50%
Housing	172	32%	147	66%	37	37%	50	46%
Food Insecurity	159	29%	88	40%	34	34%	31	29%
Other	45	8%	15	7%	10	10%	9	8%
No Areas	119	22%	13	6%	19	19%	18	17%
Response Sample:	540		222		100		108	

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents

More Black/African American spousal/domestic partner respondents indicated a greater need to address inequity in nearly every area compared to white, Hispanic, and other race military spouses/domestic partners (Table 8). Black/African American (91 percent) military spouses/domestic partners identified employment as the most important area to address. This finding is consistent with 97 percent of Black/African American military spouses/domestic partners who identified inequitable employment opportunities as an area affected by structural barriers in their communities (Figure

21). Furthermore, white (66 percent), Hispanic (71 percent), and military spousal/domestic partner respondents identifying as another race (55 percent) showed the greatest concern for K-12 education as the most important area to address inequities.

Table 8. Military Spousal/Domestic Partner Respondents' Perceptions on Top Areas to Address by Race/Ethnicity

Area	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
K-12 Education	117	66%	23	70%	25	71%	22	55%
Healthcare	86	49%	23	70%	20	57%	20	50%
Employment	90	51%	30	91%	21	60%	19	48%
Public Safety	58	33%	17	52%	16	46%	16	40%
Criminal Justice	86	49%	24	73%	22	63%	17	43%
Housing	86	49%	23	70%	19	54%	18	45%
Food Insecurity	89	51%	16	48%	15	43%	18	45%
Other	8	5%	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%
No Areas	13	7%	0	0%	3	9%	6	15%
Response Sample:	176		33		35		40	

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

When analyzing qualitative data in open-ended responses, respondents noted education as a key area to take action to make their community more equitable and inclusive. This supports the quantitative finding that K-12 education is a top issue to address to eliminate inequities.

"Education is always the key."

– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"More education. Stronger schools."

– White Male Veteran

"More comprehensive K-12 education through immersion in racial, ethnic and gender stereotypes."

– White Male Veteran

"Educate all races and help eliminate through education any biases that may exist."

– White Male Reservist

"More funding for public schools to provide better education to our youth which would need to include providing life skills courses to students like cooking, applying to jobs and balancing budgets."

– Black/African American Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Awareness training (Diversity and Inclusion Training)."

– Black/African American Female Military Service Branch Civilian Employee

"More education and training."

– Hispanic Female Veteran

"Education about diversity and the disparities that exists across education, wealth and the legal system."

– Black/African American Male National Guardsman

"Providing education to children to help stop discrimination at the roots. Providing educational opportunities for adults to learn what "equity, inclusion, diversity, and discrimination" actually mean and how they can present in real-life situations as well as ways to help prevent negative situations from [occurring]."

– Female Active Duty Service Member

"Education is a great place to start, offering quality education at all levels may positively impact multiple generations."

– Black/African American Female Veteran

"Emphasize staying in school and training for professional, technical, or vocational positions."
– Multiracial Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Better education."
– White Male DoD Civilian Employee

Additionally, federal, state, and local government and policy emerged in the open-ended responses as another key area to take action to make respondents' communities more equitable and inclusive.

"Elected officials being aware of inequities and making change via policy to improve equity in our city/county. Community organizations can have an impact but policy changes will not be crafted/creating change if elected leaders don't understand what the issues are and make it a priority."
– Hispanic Female Dependent

"More serious leadership at the state level to address systemic inequities."
– White Male Veteran

"Legislation that aims to eradicate racism and discrimination."
– Hispanic Male Active Duty Member

The [government] must support the victims against discrimination."
– Black/African American Male Active Duty Member

"Have local government agencies ask for input."
– White Male DoD Civilian Employee

"Evaluate the effectiveness of programs that are receiving government dollars to address community level issues. Those programs that are proving to be effective to address community level issues need to be supported while ineffective programs need to not receive dollars."
– American Indian/Alaska Native Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Transparency of local government."
– Asian Male National Guardsman

"Develop programs and opportunities to become more involved—fairness for all."
– White Female DoD Civilian Employee

"Open and honest dialogue, followed up with concrete policies and physical actions of leaders in the community. This is a top down issue that requires leadership at all levels to influence and enforce."
– Black/African American Male Veteran

"City involvement. Offering public training programs and outreach to the community. Offering recognition of the problems that exist and looking for constructive feedback on possible solutions."
– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Provide government sponsor programs that will address these areas."
– Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Male Reservist

"Policies and law changes on a broader level."
– Multiracial Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

"Education, training, acceptance, and a willingness to change within the education system, law enforcement, and local government."
– Hispanic Male Veteran

"Sustain federal, state, and local governmental support to disadvantaged families and youth through education, athletics, and horizon-broadening opportunities separate from religious and state [and] private education systems."
– White Male Active Duty

"There should be more opportunities for involvement and engagement. More policies, procedures, and legislative changes would also be important in working towards equity and inclusion."
– Black/African American Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE DEI

IN DEFENSE COMMUNITIES

The survey findings demonstrate that DEI and racial equity issues affect Service members, Veterans, and military spouses/domestic partners in different capacities. Therefore, the solutions must involve a full range of stakeholders, including representatives from installations, local government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and community members. Given ADC's role as a connection point for various players within defense communities, ADC is uniquely positioned to guide and coordinate efforts to improve DEI and racial equity in defense communities. As such, we have identified areas that local communities, DoD, and ADC should explore in the future to create more equitable and inclusive communities.

Community Areas of Exploration

Community Area of Exploration 1: Conduct Local Surveys and Listening Sessions

The purpose of the Defense Community DEI Survey was to develop a baseline understanding of community members' perspectives on racial equity in their community that ADC can continue to track as DEI initiatives become more robust. The survey data revealed that certain populations in defense communities have substantially different experiences than others.

To better understand the underlying reasons that cause differences between demographic groups, community leaders could conduct local DEI surveys that focus on respondents in their community. Annual or biannual surveys will allow community leaders to collect data that inform solutions to

challenges that military families, spouses, Veterans, and other members of the community face. By incorporating survey data into future programs and policies, community leaders will be more responsive to community members' sentiments and concerns. ADC will help community leaders develop survey questions to address specific areas of interest, administer the survey, and analyze baseline results that communities can trend over time.

Installation and community leaders may also consider conducting joint community partnership listening sessions to clarify and contextualize the Defense Community DEI Survey data. By creating safe spaces for discussion, local community leaders will hear personal stories, understand experiences that shape participants' perspectives, and build trust with community members. Local leaders should also consider hosting listening sessions for specific demographic groups so that participants can delve into specific topics that are particularly relevant for the group. ADC will help local leaders plan and execute listening sessions by offering resources, sharing best practices, and connecting leaders with experts in the DEI domain.

Some survey respondents identified listening sessions as a way to make their community more equitable and inclusive. Two respondents stated:

Communication and involvement [are] the key to all of these issues. Get people together to talk and get to know one another, to discuss the problems and how communities can come together. I realize easier said [than] done.
– White Female Military Spouse/Domestic Partner

Giv[e] people a safe space to address their concerns in a platform where their voices are heard without retaliation. I think that people should learn how to address social injustice of other races without bias. More opportunities need to open for others to be a part of the causes that matter to them.

– Black/African American Female Military Spouse/
Domestic Partner

Community Area of Exploration 2: Develop Strategic Roadmap for DEI Initiatives

Every defense community is unique and has its own needs and challenges, which means that there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to racial equity. Therefore, community stakeholders representing a diverse set of interests—installation leaders, government representatives, community members, and affiliated organizations—may consider collaboratively developing and executing a local or regional roadmap that defines priorities, strategies, and measurable actions to address racial equity in their region. Given that the most sustainable and effective initiatives are locally driven, adapted to the surrounding context, long term, and inclusive,⁵¹ local stakeholders are the best positioned to execute effective DEI strategic plans.

As local community leaders develop and execute DEI efforts in their communities, leaders may want to consider the ethnicity and race of their local population. The survey data suggested that some white respondents did not believe that racism was an issue in their community, and instead, reverse

racism actually harms white community members. As discussed previously, reverse racism attempts to ignore the power–privilege dynamic between white people and racial/ethnic minorities.⁵² Since social science suggests that some Americans may view multiculturalism as a threat to their group’s core values, focusing on racial and ethnic differences could deter initiatives that promote racial equality if white community members adopt less tolerant attitudes.⁵³ One approach to address the perception of reverse racism while advancing racial equity is to highlight shared goals and commonalities between community members.⁵⁴ ADC is committed to identifying and sharing additional strategies and practices to overcome the perception of reverse racism so that local leaders can address racial equity in their community while making all participants more accepting of DEI.

Community Area of Exploration 3: Incorporate Equity Considerations in Community Decision Making

Community leaders should consider how to incorporate DEI in all aspects of community planning. It is important to address the institutional components of racism and inequality by designing and implementing programs, policies, and activities that mitigate racial disparities. As such, ADC urges communities to consider the following factors when making decisions: the diversity of individuals delegated to decision-making roles in the community; the way in which resources and services are promoted and offered in proximity to those who need them most; the populations that

51 Armstrong, N. J., McDonough, Jr., J. D., & Savage, D. (rep.). *Driving Community Impact: The Case for Local, Evidence-Based Coordination in Veteran and Military Family Services and the AmericaServes Initiative*. Retrieved from https://ivmf.syracuse.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/DrivingCommunityImpactTheCaseforLocalEvidenceBasedCoordinationACC_03.08.18.pdf.

52 Norton, M.I., Sommers, S.R. (2011). Whites See Racism as a Zero-Sum Game That They Are Now Losing. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 6(3), 215-218. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691611406922>.

53 Morrison, K. R., Plaut, V. C., & Ybarra, O. (2010). Predicting Whether Multiculturalism Positively or Negatively Influences White Americans’ Intergroup Attitudes: The Role of Ethnic Identification. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(12), 1648-1661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167210386118>; Saadani, S., Balas, N., Rodhain, F. (2021). Manufacturing controversy: “reverse racism” as backlash to antiracist interventions in France. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, Volume in Publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-07-2020-0205>.

54 Ibid.

are adversely impacted by racial/ethnic disparities in the community; and the extent to which community programs and policies are intentionally transformative and equitable.

Currently, the unrelenting COVID-19 pandemic presents an opportunity for communities to proactively address equity in their continued responses. Evidence shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected people of color, exacerbating existing inequities in society.⁵⁵ Since the effects of the pandemic will continue to grip all communities for years to come, recovery efforts need to lead to more equitable outcomes without deepening entrenched racial and ethnic disparities. Therefore, it is important for communities to proactively consider racial/ethnic disparities when communicating with community members, developing policy, operating recovery activities, and allocating funding.

ADC Areas of Exploration

ADC Area of Exploration 1: Serve as Convenor for Coordinated Community Response

Successfully addressing racial equity requires the collective effort, attention, and dedication of many community players. The survey revealed that racial equity challenges do not reside within one domain or demographic group; therefore, a coordinated community approach is required to comprehensively address these nuanced issues. Given that ADC represents nearly 300 communities, states, and regions around the country, ADC is well positioned to serve as a connection point for individuals from military installations, local government, and nonprofit organizations who are interested in addressing DEI in their community. By making connections, ADC can harness the power of its network to collectively progress toward more equitable and inclusive defense communities.

ADC Area of Exploration 2: Develop DEI Portal for Community Leaders

As an organization focused on supporting defense communities, ADC wants to provide the tools and resources to enable leaders from communities around the United States to work together to collectively address racial inequity. To enable greater collaboration, communication, and problem solving, ADC will explore creating a portal on its website as a resource for leaders from military installations, local government, and community organization. The website will be a centralized location to exchange information about DEI initiatives, including best practices, research, survey data, contact information, lessons learned, and leadership tools.

ADC will also develop resources to publish on the portal. These resources may include strategies to enhance diversity within the military support community, best practices that other communities used, and anonymized data from local surveys and listening sessions. By creating a common space rich with helpful resources, ADC hopes that defense communities will be able to help each other achieve outcomes that no single community could accomplish on its own.

ADC Area of Exploration 3: Establish an Advisory Committee

To guarantee that racial equity continues to be a top priority for ADC in the upcoming years, ADC will consider establishing an advisory committee to oversee its DEI initiatives. The advisory committee will ensure that DEI initiatives are underway, recommend areas for ADC to address, set achievable and measurable goals, and monitor progress toward those goals. The advisory committee will meet with the ADC Board quarterly to report on its progress and discuss future activities. By establishing an advisory committee, ADC

⁵⁵ Brown, S. (2020, July 1). The COVID-19 Crisis Continues to Have Uneven Economic Impact by Race and Ethnicity. <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/covid-19-crisis-continues-have-uneven-economic-impact-race-and-ethnicity>.

demonstrates its deep and sustained commitment toward increasing DEI in defense communities.

DoD Areas of Exploration

DoD Area of Exploration 1: Consider Collaborating with Community Leaders on DEI Initiatives

This survey does not attempt to address the scope of DoD's current DEI initiatives nor is ADC privy to information about internal DoD plans, priorities, or activities. However, given DoD's strong and long-standing commitment to both military communities, DoD may consider collaborating with community leaders to address DEI outside the installation. Just as DoD has implemented other programs and policies focused on improving well-being for members of military communities, ADC believes that racial equity affects all defense community members' quality of life, so these issues may be within DoD's purview. ADC would value the opportunity to work with DoD to address DEI challenges in defense communities to ensure that military spouses/domestic partners, families, and Veterans live in environments that are safe and equitable.

ADC believes that DoD support on the federal and local could promote racial equity in defense communities. For example, on the federal level, policy and oversight could support DEI initiatives in the community. On the local level, installations could partner with local community leaders to develop a unified approach to racial equity that reaches inside and outside the gate. With DoD's involvement, ADC believes that defense communities will be able to establish a stronger foundation for enduring change, ultimately improving diversity and inclusion for all individuals who have made sacrifices to support the military—including military spouses/domestic partners, families, and Veterans.

DoD Area of Exploration 2: Explore OLDCC Funding for Community DEI Initiatives

The DoD Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) leverages capabilities of state and local partners through grants. To support the National Defense Strategy, OLDCC currently provides over \$1.3 billion to nearly 200 communities that host installations. One type of grant is for "Community Infrastructure," which is given to communities that support the readiness and resiliency of installations, as well as provide safe places for service members and families to live, work, and play. Considering that DEI and racial equity directly affect the resilience and quality of life for military families and other defense community members, DoD may consider whether the scope of Community Infrastructure grants includes DEI initiatives that foster safe and equitable defense communities.

APPENDIX A

Defense Community Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

INTRODUCTION:

This Defense Community Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey asks questions about your perspective on racial equality in your community. This survey will solicit feedback from a broad range of individuals—including Service members (Active duty, Reserves, National Guard, and Coast Guard), family members veterans, and civilians—who live in military communities. The responses from this survey will be used for a national report on diversity, equity, and inclusion in defense communities, and the report will be publicly available in early 2021.

This survey is part of the One Military, One Community initiative. The Association of Defense Communities (ADC) launched this initiative on October 1, 2020, in response to the national conversation on racial justice. The initiative seeks to ensure that defense communities are diverse, equitable, and inclusive, and that no individual in the community faces racism, inequality, or injustice.

ADC is a 40-year-old 501(c)(3) organization focused on building resilient communities that support America's military. ADC serves as a connection point for leaders from communities, states, the military, and industry to address community-military issues by enhancing knowledge, information sharing, and exchanging best practices.

DISCLAIMER:

This survey is not sponsored by the Department of Defense. It is created and distributed by the Association of Defense Communities, a private not-for-profit organization. The survey addresses respondents in their capacity as individual private citizens, not their capacity as government employees.

- **Participation:** This survey is completely voluntary, and you may exit the survey at any time. If you choose to participate, you may skip any question you feel uncomfortable answering.
- **Privacy:** Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous. This survey does not ask for personally identifiable information (PII), such as your name, birth date, social security number, or contact information. Please do not include PII in the open-ended question at the end of the survey.
- **Data use:** ADC will use your responses to develop a baseline of community members' sentiments on racism, inequality, and injustice, which will inform ADC's priorities and future actions. ADC will use the data to write a national report that will be published and made public in early 2021. Booz Allen Hamilton, ADC's partner on the One Military, One Community initiative, will help ADC store, collect, and analyze responses. ADC will own and access the responses for the duration of the One Military, One Community initiative to measure community members' sentiments in defense communities over time.

Thank you for participating!



Demographics

1. Are you currently on Active duty (Title X or Title 32)?
 - ☐ YES: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air force, Space Force, Coast Guard
 - ☐ YES: National Guard
 - ☐ NO
2. What is your military Service Branch?
 - ☐ Army
 - ☐ Navy
 - ☐ Marine Corps
 - ☐ Air Force
 - ☐ Space Force
 - ☐ Coast Guard
3. What is your pay grade?
 - ☐ E-1 to E-3
 - ☐ E-4 to E-6
 - ☐ E-7 to E-9
 - ☐ W-1 to W-5
 - ☐ O-1 to O-3
 - ☐ O-4 to O-6
 - ☐ O-7 to O-10
4. What is the zip code for the address where you are currently living?

The value must be a number
5. Where is your housing located?
 - ☐ On installation
 - ☐ Off installation

6. How long have you lived in this location?

- ☐ Less than 1 month
- ☐ 1-6 months
- ☐ 7-12 months
- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ More than 2 years

7. How long have you lived in this location?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer Not to Answer
- ☐

8. What is your race?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ White (e.g., German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.)
- ☐ Black or African American (e.g., African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.)
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native (e.g., Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.)
- ☐ Asian (e.g., Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, etc.)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (e.g., Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Chamorro, etc.)
- ☐ Prefer Not to Answer
- ☐

The following questions ask about your experiences in your community. When answering these questions, please consider the following geographical area where you currently live and the interactions you have within that environment, both on and off the installation. Be sure to consider institutions (e.g., community organizations, grocery stores, houses of worship, schools, social groups, recreational areas) and individuals in that geographical area (e.g., educators, friends, law enforcement officers, leaders, military members, and neighbors.)

11. After initially moving to this community, I felt welcomed during the first 30 days.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

12. I feel a sense of belonging in my community.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

13. Individuals in my community treat people with my racial and/or ethnic background fairly and equitably.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

14. I feel that my community is:

Please select one option for each adjective.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Friendly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anti-racist (i.e., actively opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diverse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respectful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Welcoming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Racism, inequality, and injustice are problems in my community.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

16. In the past 6 months, how often have you felt discriminated against in your community?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Very Often

Please consider the following definitions prior to answering the questions.

- Diversity: Includes but is not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic information, and learning styles.
- Equity: Guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.
- Inclusion: Bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes and activities to create a culture where all people contribute, participate, and have a sense of belonging.

20. My local government is adequately addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion through programs, policies, and initiatives.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I Do Not Know

21. Community organizations and individuals not affiliated with the local government are adequately addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion through programs, policies, and initiatives.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ I Do Not Know

22. I would be more active in addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in my community:

Mark all that apply.

- ☐ If I had more information about ways to get involved
- ☐ If there were more opportunities to get involved
- ☐ If I had more training
- ☐ If I had more time
- ☐ If I had the support of my community
- ☐ If I felt that my opinion was valued
- ☐ If I felt that this is an issue in my community
- ☐ None of the above - I am satisfied with my current level of engagement
- ☐ Other

23. In my community, I know where to seek support when personally dealing with issues of discrimination and prejudice.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Please consider structural barriers that may exist in your community. Structural barriers are laws, policies, systems and norms that disadvantage certain people and make it harder for communities to be racially equitable.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

24. Structural barriers cause inequity in youth education.

This may look like differences in access to early education, youth reading levels, and graduation rates by race.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

25. Structural barriers cause inequity in healthcare.

This may look like differences in infant mortality rates, quality of healthcare, rates of illness, and life expectancy by race.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

26. Structural barriers cause inequity in housing.

This may look like differences in access to safe housing, access to affordable housing, and home ownership rates by race.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

27. Structural barriers cause inequity in employment.

This may look like differences in education and training, unemployment rates, career advancement opportunities, and household income by race.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

28. Structural barriers cause inequity related to law enforcement and the criminal justice system.

This may look like differences in stop rates, arrest rates, conviction rates, and the nature of relationships with law enforcement officials by race.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

29. The most important areas to address to eliminate inequity in your community are:

Mark all that apply

- ☐ K-12 education
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Public Safety
- ☐ Criminal justice
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Food insecurity
- ☐ There are no areas my community needs to address
- ☐ Other

30. What actions can be taken in your community to make it more equitable and inclusive?

Enter your answer

APPENDIX B

Methodology: Sample Comparison to General Population on Race/Ethnicity

Since ADC used a convenience sample, the racial/ethnic composition of active duty respondents differs slightly from the active duty population⁵⁶ (Table B1). Notably, the respondent sample includes a greater share of Black/African Americans than is reflected in the active duty population (22 percent and 16 percent, respectively) and a slightly greater share of respondents identifying as another race than is reflected in the active duty population (12 percent and 11 percent, respectively). Additionally, white and Hispanic respondents comprised slightly smaller shares in the survey sample than in the active duty population.

Similar to the active duty respondent sample, the racial/ethnic composition of Veteran respondents differs slightly from the Veteran population⁵⁷ (Table B1). Notably, the respondent sample includes

a larger share of Black/African American, Hispanic, and those identifying as another race than is reflected in the Veteran population⁵⁸. In contrast, white Veteran respondents comprised a smaller share in the survey sample than in the Veteran population.

Military spousal/domestic partner respondents' composition by race/ethnicity reflects that of the military spouse/domestic partner population⁵⁹ closely, as 38 percent of military spousal/domestic partner respondents identified as a racial/ethnic minority compared to 39 percent in the population.

Table B1. Comparison of Population and Sample for Active Duty Service Members and Veterans by Race and Ethnicity

DoD Affiliation	White		Black/African American		Hispanic		Other Race*	
	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample
Active Duty	56%	51%	16%	22%	17%	14%	11%	12%
Veteran	76%	56%	12%	23%	8%	10%	6%	11%

* "Other race" includes respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races (i.e., multiracial).

56 Defense Manpower Data Center. (2019 September). *Active Duty Military Personnel Master File*. Retrieved from: <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2019-demographics-report.pdf>.

57 Department of Veteran Affairs. (2018). *Race/Ethnicity Population Tables*. Retrieved from: https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp.

58 The U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs did not separate Hispanic ethnicity from those who identified as Black/African American or another race. Therefore, a small portion of these two racial categories are also included in the Hispanic category for population statistics.

59 DoD Office of People Analytics. (2019). *2019 Survey of Active Duty Spouses*. Retrieved from: https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Surveys/ADSS1901_MOS-Briefing-508-Revised.pdf.

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COMMUNITY