



Strategic Findings on Post-9/11 Veterans and Military Families

The Military Service Initiative (MSI), with our partners at the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University, has undertaken a first of its kind research study and analysis of the experiences, concerns, and needs of post-9/11 veterans and their families. This work not only informs the programming of MSI, but also assists the field in understanding this population and how they can more effectively support them. Key research findings include:

- Employment and education are the primary concerns of post-9/11 veterans, as they impact so many other social, economic, and wellness outcomes over the course of veterans' lives.
- The social and cultural distance between post-9/11 veterans and civilians—referred to as the Military-Civilian Divide—represents a pervasive barrier to post-service life for veterans. This divide is highlighted by the fact that 84% of veterans say Americans have little or no understanding of them, while 71% of Americans say they have no or little understanding of veterans.
- The media has not accurately represented the issues of post-9/11 veterans well, but can play a powerful and enduring role in shaping the narrative that will define this generation of veterans.
- Transition and reintegration concerns for post-9/11 veterans vary significantly by cohort. Veterans and veterans with disabilities are distinct populations with differing needs and priorities. Military rank, seniority, and gender also impact transition concerns.
- Women veterans face a distinct set of challenges during and after their military service; women are often more socially isolated, serve as primary caregivers in their families, less likely to self-identify as veterans and participate in veteran programs, and sometimes are subject to Military Sexual Trauma.
- Post-9/11 veterans—particularly the youngest veterans—are generally unprepared for the transition from military to civilian life.
- Family reintegration issues are among the most pressing of concerns for post-9/11 veterans, yet are too often overlooked.
- While coordinated and effective policies and programs are critical at the national level, the most urgent need for support services for the post-9/11 veteran population is at the local and community-based level where veterans ultimately relocate.
- There is a significant and enduring role for the private sector, philanthropy, and non-profit organizations in advancing the social, economic, and wellness concerns of post-9/11 veterans and their families.

The Bush Institute's Military Service Initiative

The goal of the Bush Institute's Military Service Initiative is to unite and empower a network of private sector, philanthropic, and non-profit organizations with Presidential leadership and resources that lead to effective and impactful outcomes for the post-9/11 veteran and military families. To advance that goal, this year the Military Service Initiative will:

- Release a research study this spring on the experiences, concerns, and needs of post-9/11 veterans and families, which will inform the programming of MSI going forward and assist the field in better understanding this population.
 - The Military Service Initiative, with our partners at the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University, has undertaken this research through an analysis of academic research, historical survey data, philanthropy and media reporting, and thought leader surveys.
 - When released, the full report will focus on key issue areas of employment, homelessness, education, wellness, family, and will also look at unique concerns of women veterans.
- Create and release a tool this fall that will: 1) allow veteran- and military-serving non-profits to assess their effectiveness; 2) help funders align their resources to those organizations that are having an impact; and 3) provide information for veterans to help them assess which organizations to turn to for assistance.
 - There are over 46,000 organizations that have at least a portion of their mission statement directed toward improving the lives of vets. Yet, when surveyed, veterans respond that their needs are not being met by these very same non-profits.
 - The Bush Institute, in partnership with IVMF, is developing a tool for the field that will define a set of characteristics of effective organizations.
 - As part of the development of the tool, the Bush Institute will also publish in-depth case studies of 20 veteran-serving organizations that can serve as models and demonstrate promising practices.
- Perform an analysis of the specific issues related to jobs for post-9/11 veterans to identify the specific barriers that keep veterans from getting jobs and identify where there are gaps. This fall, MSI will spotlight organizations and private sector partners that are effectively addressing this issue with the goal of closing the unemployment gap for post-9/11 veterans.
 - Based on the initial findings from the research study, which show that unemployment for post-9/11 veterans is a primary concern to all post-9/11 veterans and a particular issue for the youngest post-9/11 veterans (aged 20-24), female veterans, Hispanic veterans, and combat arms veterans, the Bush Institute will do a deeper analysis into the issues facing veterans related to jobs.
 - The Institute will work with partners from the public and private sector to build the business case, both qualitatively and quantitatively, for hiring veterans.
 - This fall, we will spotlight effective organizations that are addressing this issue with the goal of closing the unemployment gap for post-9/11 veterans.

- Continue to execute Team 43 Sports (W100K and Warrior Open) and conduct a Fall Conference.
 - Team 43 Sports honor the service and sacrifice of our warriors, raise awareness of the transition and reintegration challenges they face, and recognize the high-performing organizations that play key roles in their transition and continued service and leadership.
 - Summits and conferences serve as platforms to convene public, private, and non-profit sector entities to work together for effective and efficient outcomes for our veterans and military families.

About the George W. Bush Institute: The Bush Institute is the policy arm of the George W. Bush Presidential Center, which includes the Presidential library and museum, located on the campus of SMU in Dallas. For more information about the Bush Institute and the Military Service Initiative, please visit www.bushcenter.org, [Facebook](#), and [Twitter](#).