

Commemoration of the
75th ANNIVERSARY
of the
DESEGREGATION
of the
U.S. ARMED FORCES

**BLACK VETERANS & GOOD JOBS
RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE**

Current State of Black Veteran Employment

July 27th, 2023

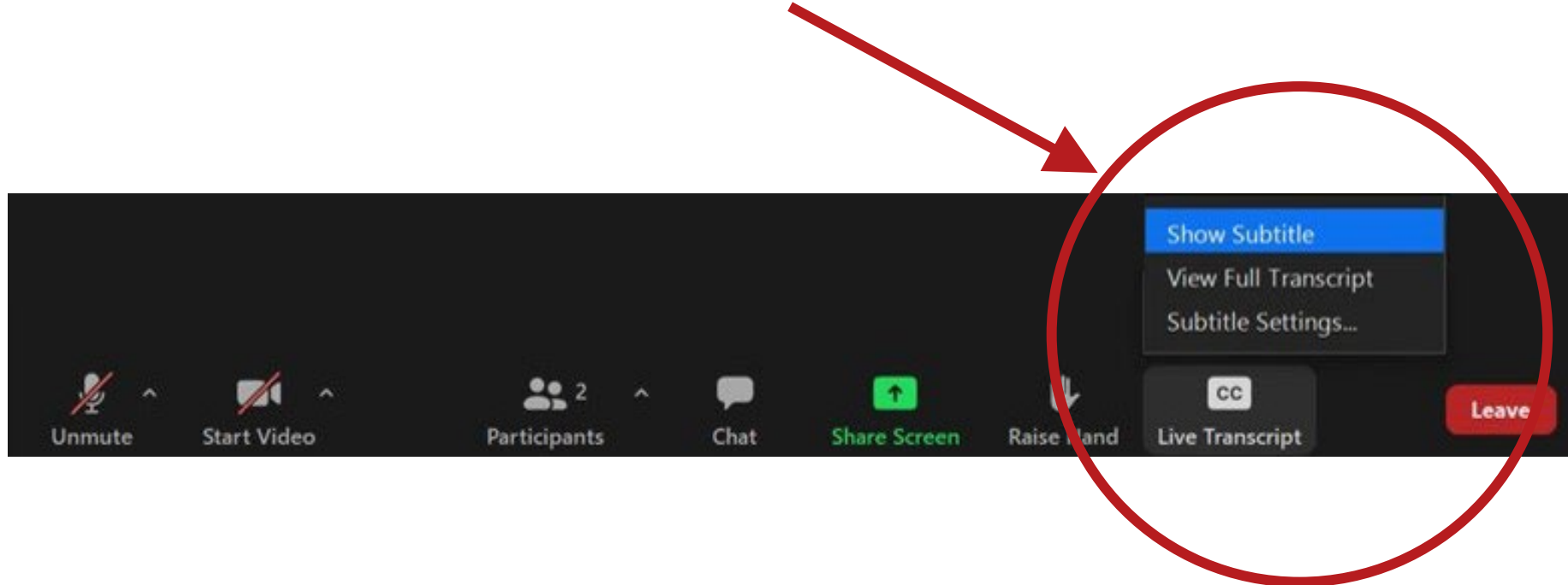


Chief Evaluation Office
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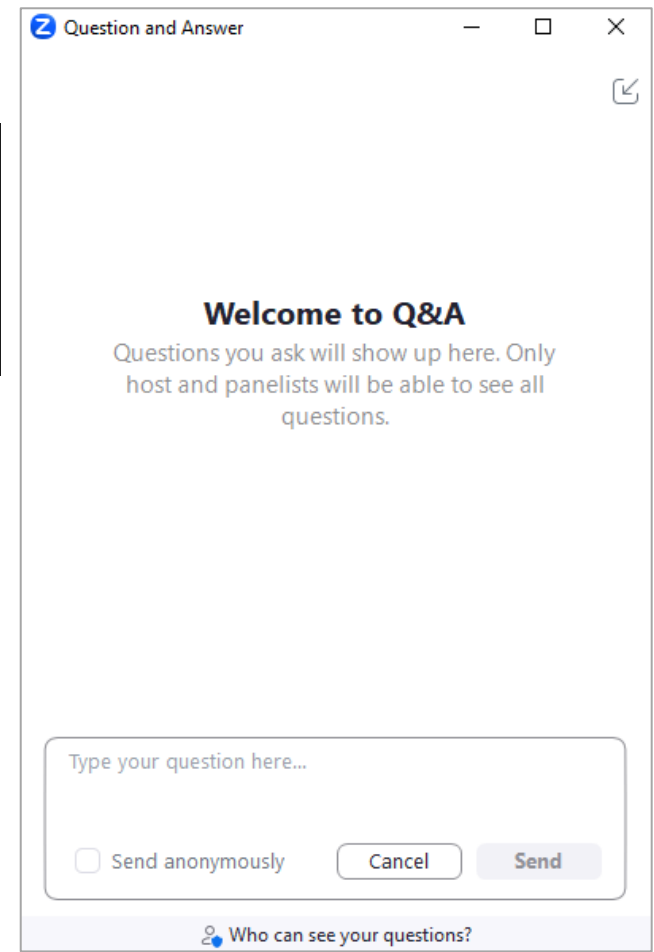
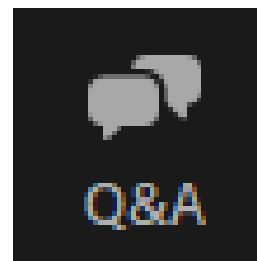
Housekeeping

To view closed captioning, click on the “CC Live Transcript” icon on the toolbar and select “Show Subtitle” or “View Full Transcript.”



Q&A

- Content Questions can be submitted in the Q&A
- Click on the Q&A icon
- The Q&A window will appear
- Type your question and click send



Black Veterans Research

Yolanda Peacock

Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)

Background

- Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government directs federal agencies to evaluate whether their policies produce racially inequitable results when implemented, and to make the necessary changes to ensure underserved communities are properly supported.
- VETS supports DOL's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan through Strategic Goal 1: Build Opportunity and Equity for All, and Strategic Objective 1.1: Advance training, employment, and return-to-work opportunities that connect workers to higher-wage jobs, especially in ways that address systemic inequities.
- Unemployment rate for Blacks has been historically higher than other race groups
- Black Americans are overrepresented in military service.
- Nonveterans overall had higher unemployment rates than veterans, but both Black nonveterans and Black veterans had the highest unemployment rates among the included subgroups.

Black Veterans Research Work Plan

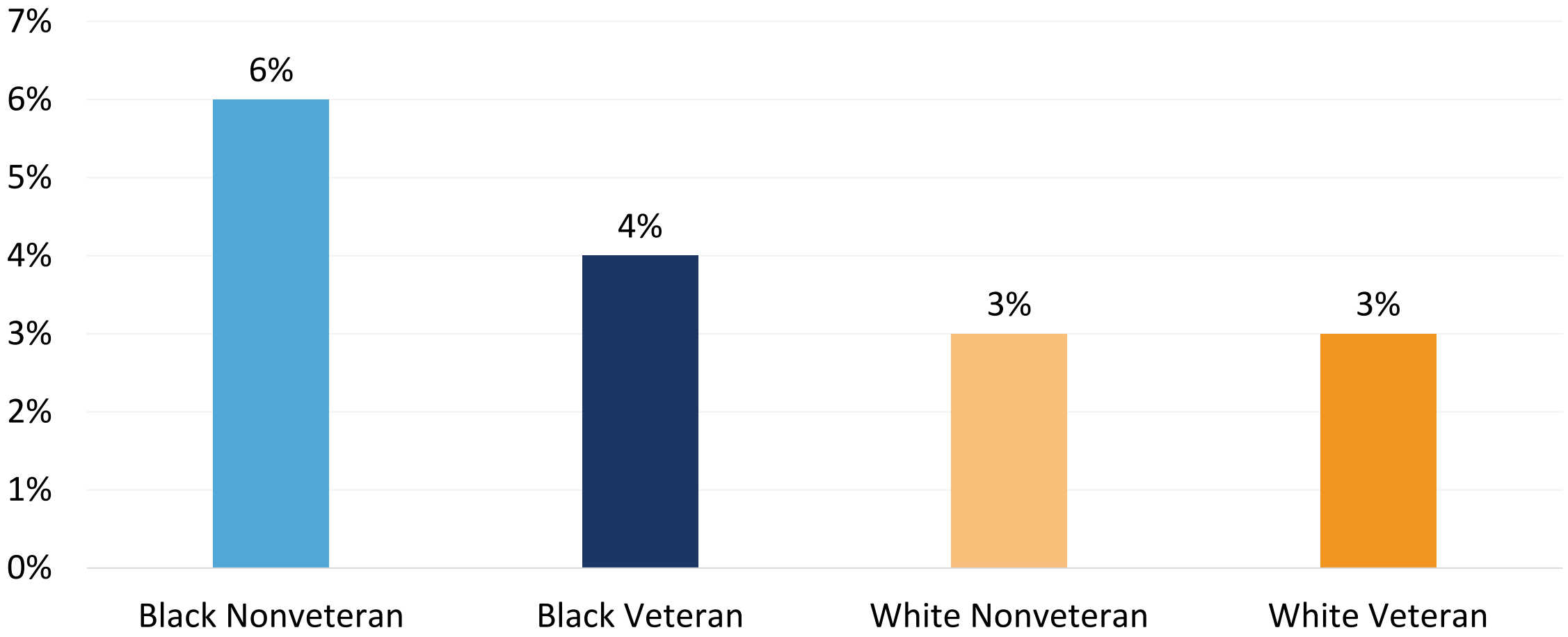
- Literature synthesis on Black veteran labor force participation, unemployment, barriers to employment (including, but not limited to dishonorable DD214 status, homelessness, disability, low representation in officer ranks, and public assistance needs), and Black veteran employment needs.
- Research panel event(s) comprised of subject matter experts who have conducted research on Black veteran transitioning experience, employment outcomes, barriers to employment (including, but not limited to dishonorable DD214 status, homelessness, disability, low representation in officer ranks, and public assistance needs), and employment needs.

Black Veterans Research Roundtables

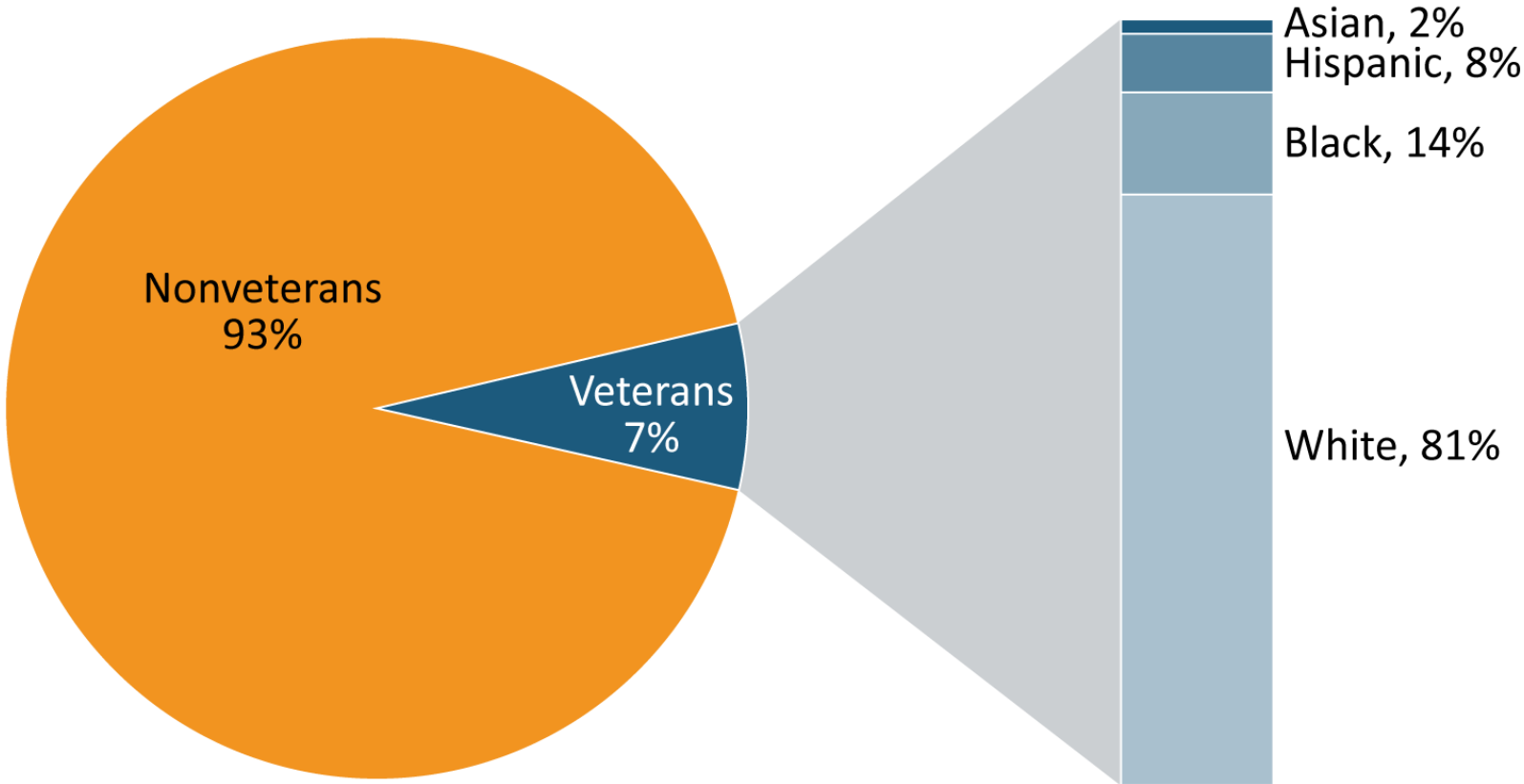
- Session 1 - Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces: Black Veterans and Good Jobs, July 25 – This session honored this historic milestone and highlighted the contributions of Black service members who have helped shape a more diverse and inclusive U.S. military. A panel of veterans and practitioners gathered to engage in a thought-provoking discussion on the significance of the desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces, its impact on civil rights movements, progress made toward equality in the military, and Black veterans’ access to good jobs.
- Session 2: The Current State of Black Veteran Employment, July 27 – This session will explore the latest research, evidence, and data available on this topic, while also identifying gaps in the existing research. A panel of subject matter experts will discuss the current state of research in the field, promising practices, and potential avenues for research to advance our understanding of and capacity to support Black veteran employment success in the civilian career marketplace.
- Session 3: Black Veteran Employment Interventions, July 31, 1-2:30pm – This session will explore the latest research, evidence, and data available on this topic, while also identifying gaps in the existing research. A panel of subject matter experts in this session will discuss the current state of research in the field, promising practices, and potential avenues for research to advance our understanding of and capacity to support Black veteran employment success in the civilian career marketplace.

VETS Research on the Black Veteran Experience

Comparison of Unemployment Rates among Black Nonveterans and Veterans and White Nonveterans and Veterans

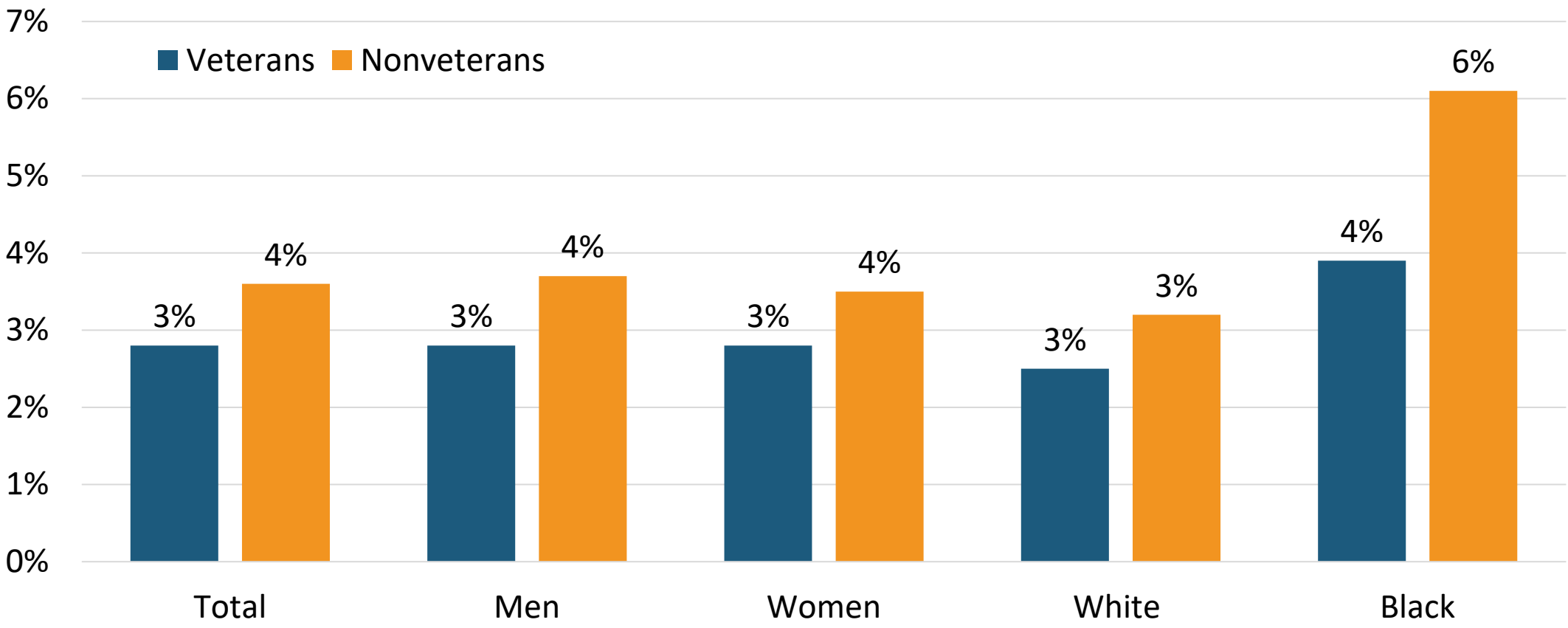


Demographics of the U.S. Veteran Population, 2022 Annual Averages



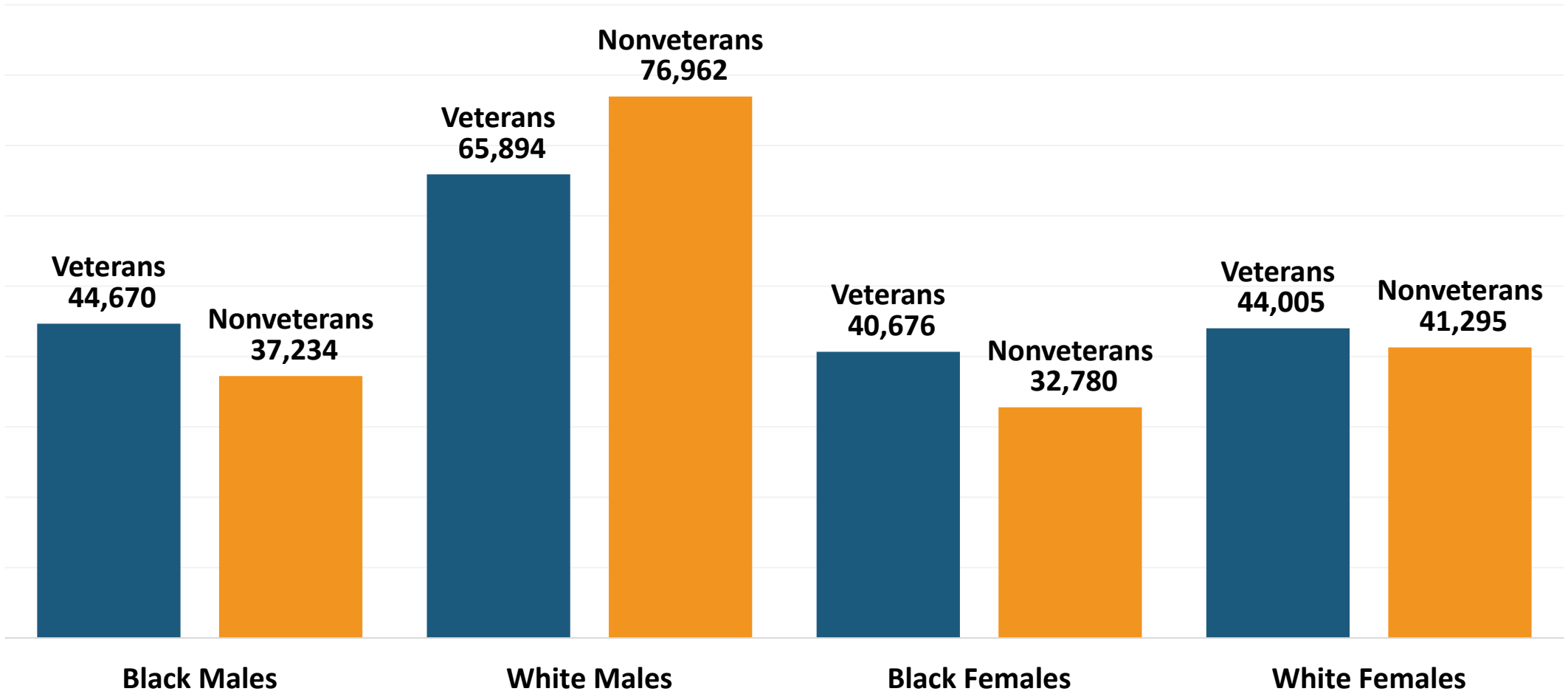
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023, March 21). *Employment situation of Veterans — 2022: Table 1. Employment status of persons 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2022 annual averages.* <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/vet.pdf>

Unemployment Rates by Demographic and Veteran Status, 2022 Annual Averages



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2023, March 21). *Employment situation of Veterans — 2022: Table 1. Employment status of persons 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2022 annual averages.* <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/vet.pdf>

Earnings Comparison by Race and Veteran Status, 2015–2019



Source: RAND analysis of ACS Public Use Microdata Sample data for 2015–2019 (Piquado et al., 2022).

Session Objectives

Framing

Hear directly from researchers and practitioners on their work focused on the state of Black Veteran employment

- What do we know? How do we know it?
- What are gaps in our knowledge?
- What are opportunities to build evidence in the field?

Facilitate a discussion focused on how the practitioner community can utilize research and data

- What additional data and knowledge could be beneficial to community leaders and service providers?

Presentations

Career Pathways of Black Veterans

Meredith Kleykamp, Ph.D.

RAND Corporation and University of Maryland

Frameworks

- Life-course sociology
 1. socio-historical and geographical location;
 2. timing of lives;
 3. heterogeneity or variability;
 4. "linked lives" and social ties to others;
 5. human agency and personal control; and
 6. how the past shapes the future.
- Military as “race-neutral”, but society is not.
 - Black-white gaps reduced during military service, but what about after?
- Selection bias issues: selection in, selection out
- **Employment as a matching process**
 - **Key gatekeepers make decisions about hiring and wages. Their perceptions and action determine Black veterans’ outcomes**

Key points from long literature on Black servicemembers and veterans

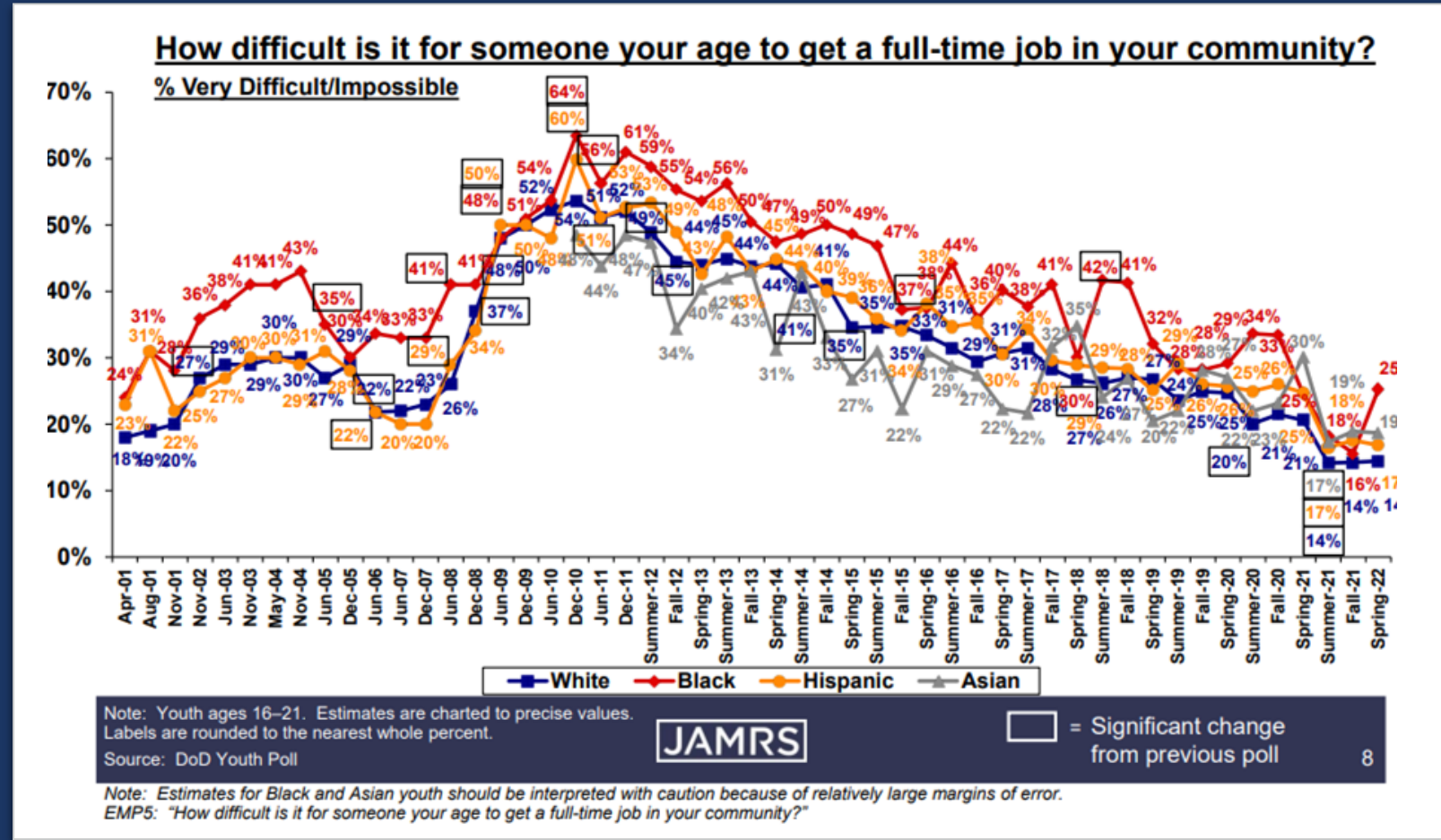
- Black veterans do better than fellow Black nonveterans, but typically not as well as White veterans or nonveterans.
 - Military service seems to offer advantage to Black Americans, while appearing to lead to a penalty among White Americans who serve.
- Black veterans take full advantage of assistance/support programs to help transition
 - Military service as an explicit economic opportunity strategy

Propensity to Serve among Black Youth

Black and Hispanic young adults have and continue to show highest propensity to join the military, perhaps because of perception of challenges obtaining full-time work

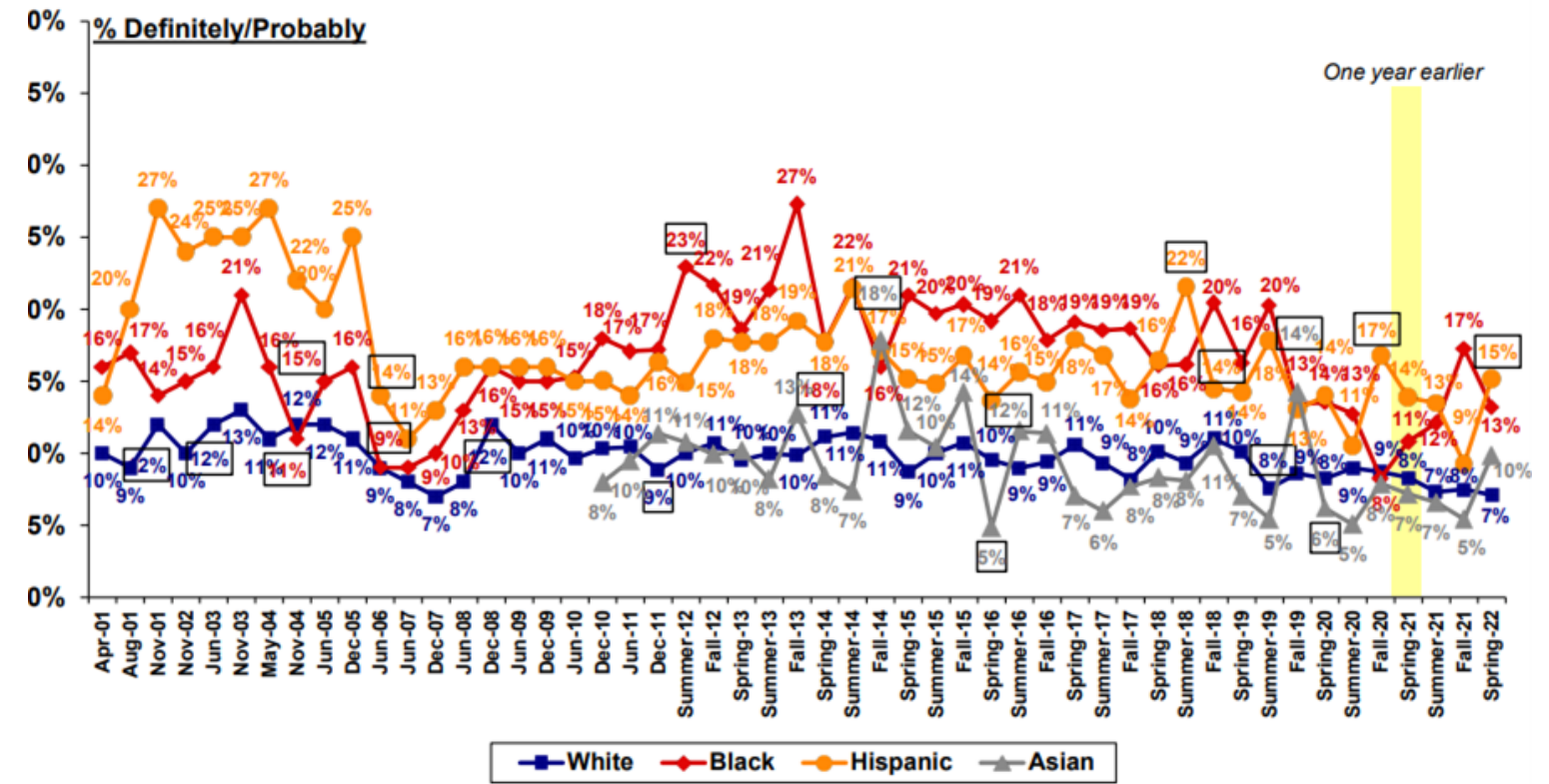
Black youth tend to perceive greatest difficulty in getting a full- time job

Across racial/ethnic groups, youths' perceptions of difficulty finding a full-time job in their community remained stable in Spring 2022 after declining in Summer 2021.



Black and Hispanic youth have higher propensity to join the military than White or Asian youth

FPP9: In the next few years, how likely is it that you will be serving in the Military?
Response options: Definitely, Probably, Probably Not, Definitely Not

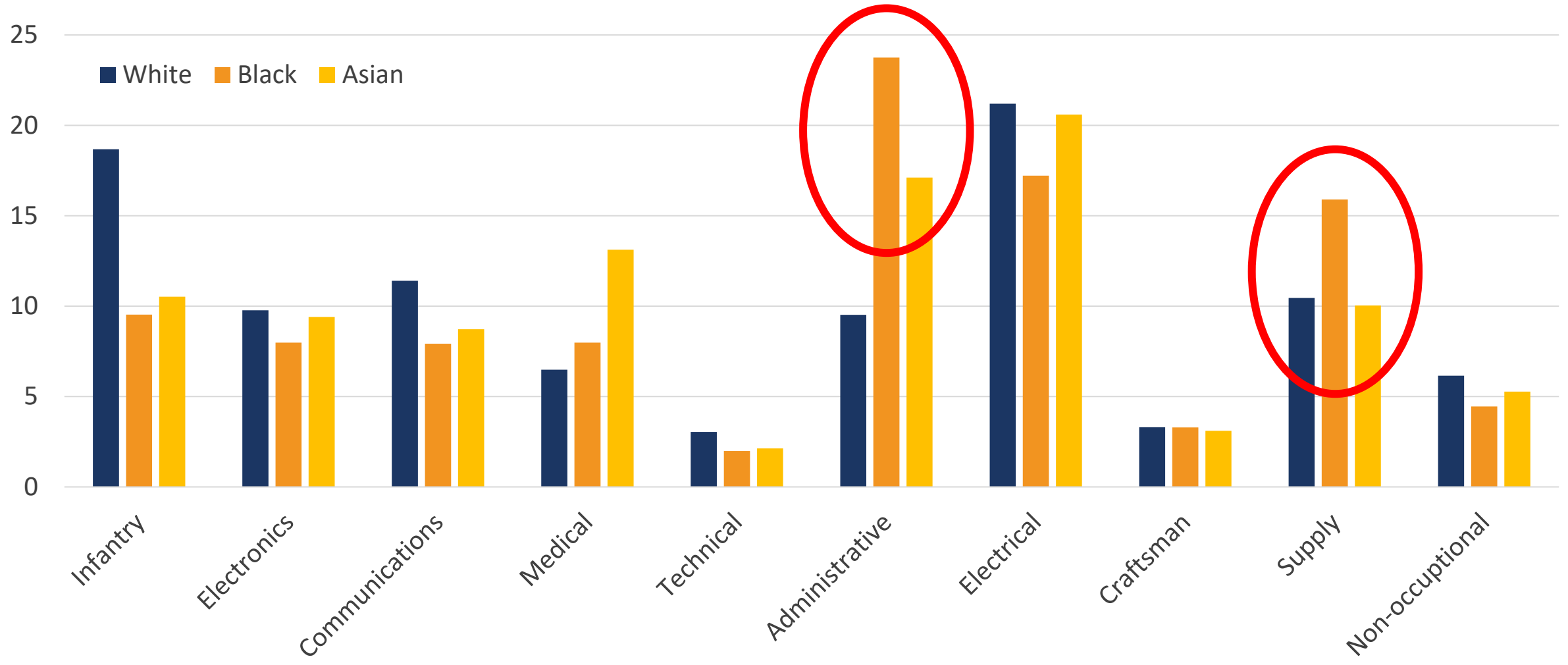


Note: Youth ages 16–21. Estimates are charted to precise values. Labels are rounded to the nearest whole percent.
Source: DoD Youth Poll

JAMRS = Significant change from previous poll

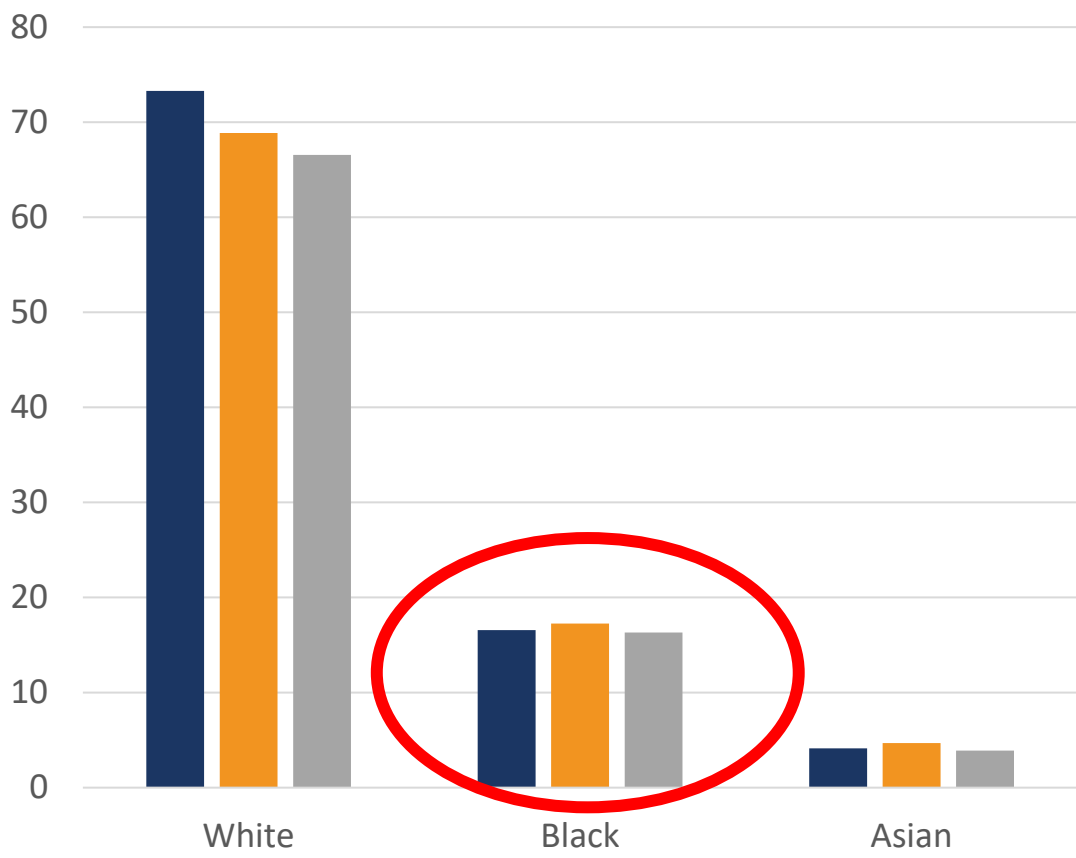
Note: Estimates for Black and Asian youth should be interpreted with caution because of relatively large margins of error.

Black servicemembers over-represented in combat services support occupations

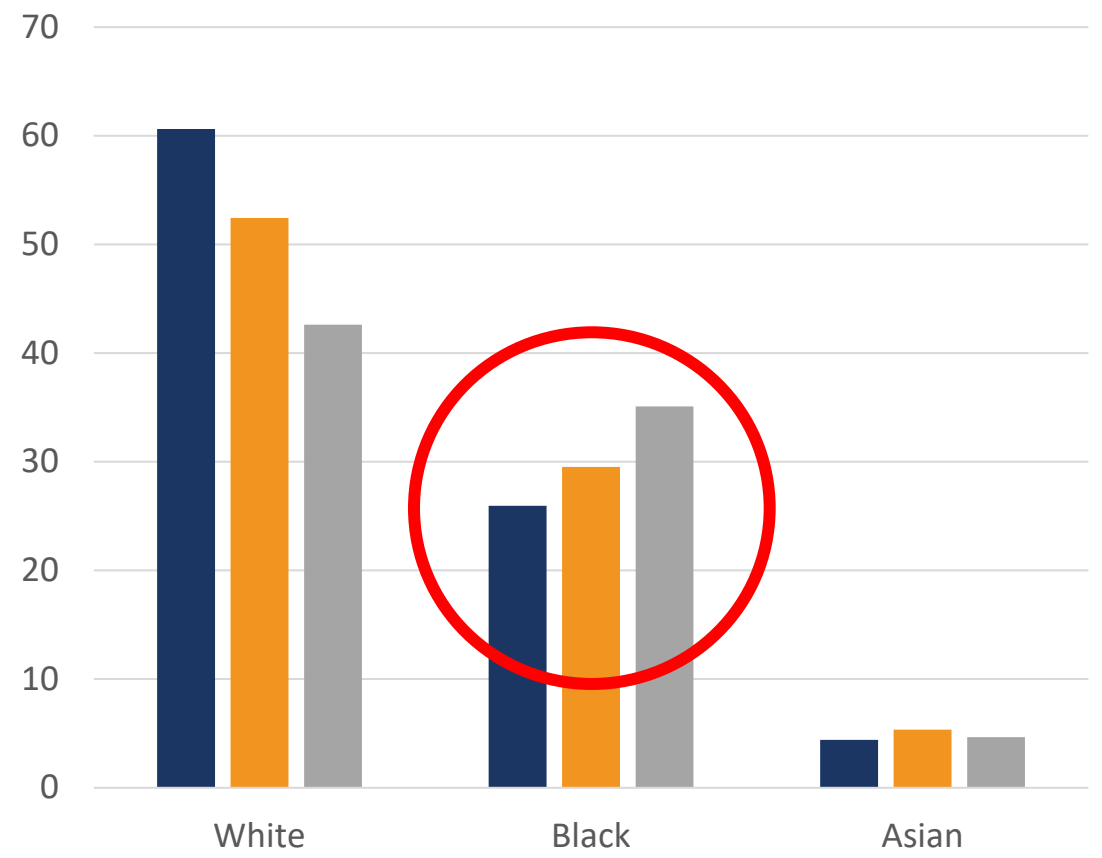


Representation of Black women increases with rank: Black women stay in military longer than other women

Enlisted Men



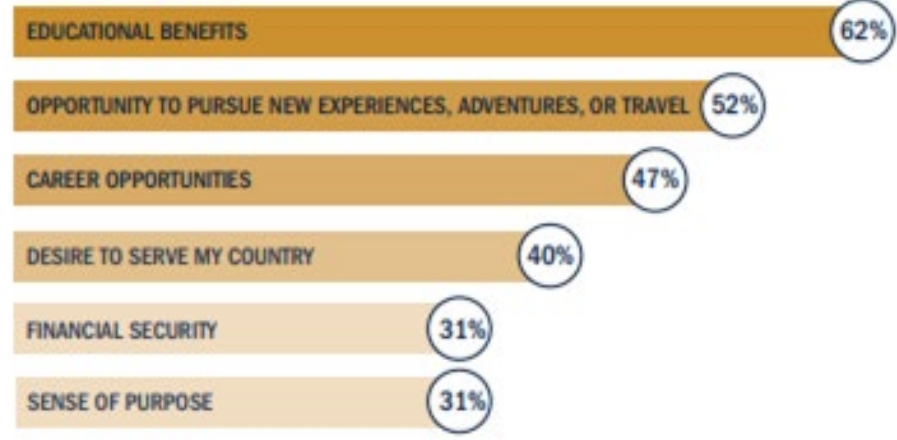
Enlisted Women



Black Veterans motivated to serve for opportunities, gain skills, and are proud of their service



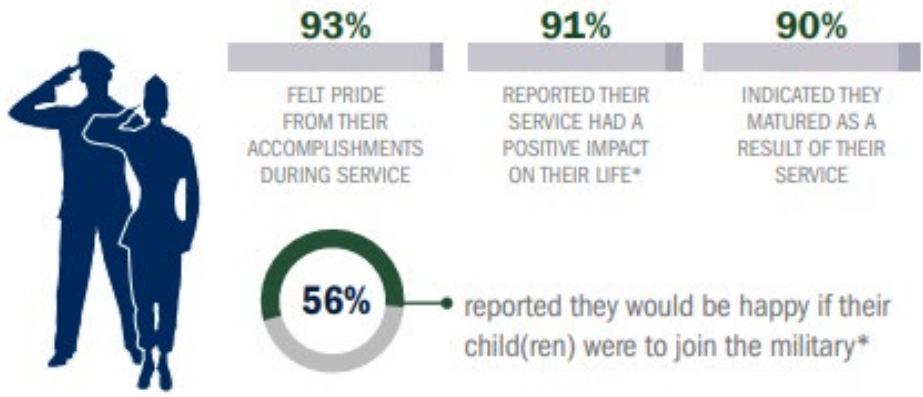
TOP MOTIVATIONS FOR MILITARY SERVICE



TOP SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES STRENGTHENED BY MILITARY SERVICE

- ▶ Teamwork (91%)
- ▶ Work ethic/discipline (89%)
- ▶ Leadership and management skills (83%)
- ▶ Mental toughness (81%)
- ▶ Professionalism (80%)
- ▶ Adaptation to different challenges (80%)
- ▶ Self-Discipline (80%)
- ▶ Ability to get things done (79%)
- ▶ Coping with adversity (78%)
- ▶ Social/Communication skills (78%)
- ▶ Working effectively with supervisors and other authorities (76%)

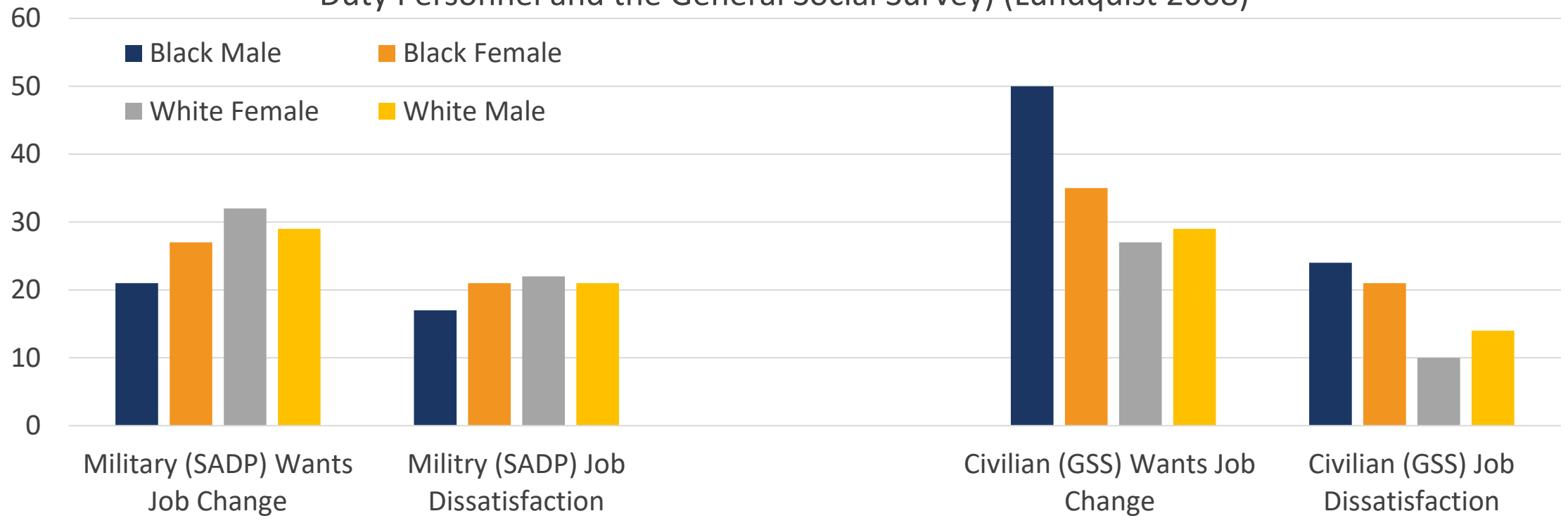
POSITIVE IMPACTS OF SERVICE



Racial patterns of job satisfaction reverse in military vs civilian workforce

Black workers may enlist to find greater equality in the workplace may. Black Veterans must then return to that unequal work context.

Ethnic and Gender Hierarchies in Job Satisfaction and Job Tenure (Survey of Active Duty Personnel and the General Social Survey) (Lundquist 2008)



Top occupations and industries for Black Veterans

Top Five Occupations for Black & African American Veterans

1. Service Occupations (security guards, police officers, correctional officers and jailers, firefighters)
2. Transportation and Material Moving Occupation
3. Management, Business, and Financial Occupation
4. Office and Administrative Support Occupation
5. Educational, Legal, Community Service Arts and Media Occupation



Top occupations and industries for Black Veterans (Continued)

Top Five Industries for Black & African American Veterans

1. Public Administration
2. Health Care and Social Assistance
3. Transportation and Warehousing
4. Manufacturing
5. Retail Trade



Military service as a pathway to a better social and economic future

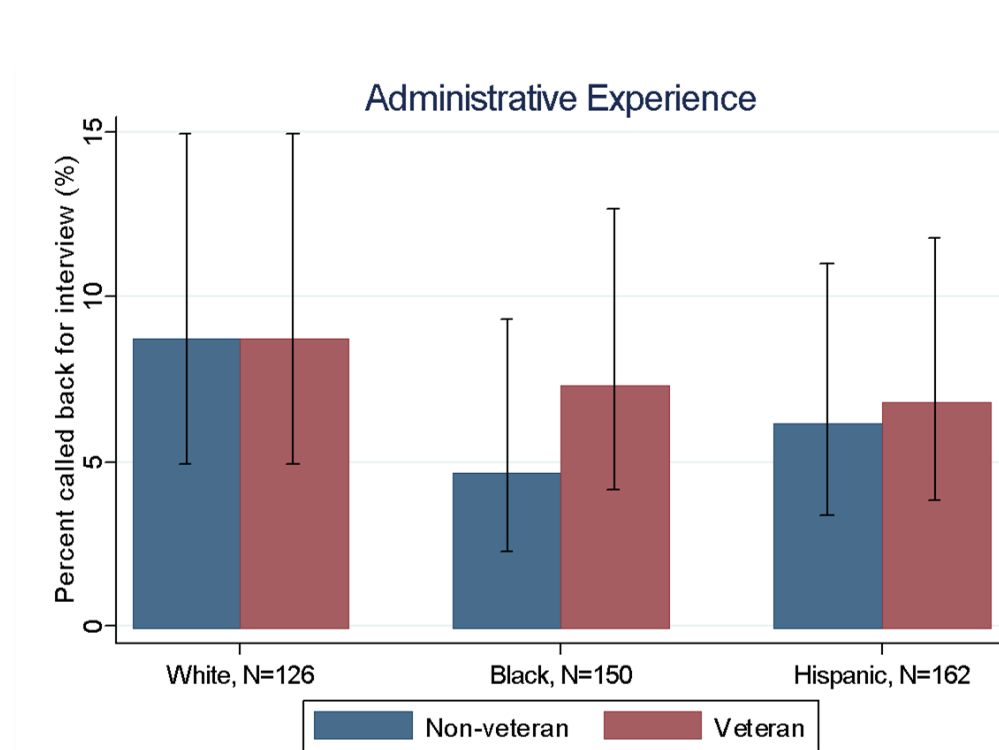
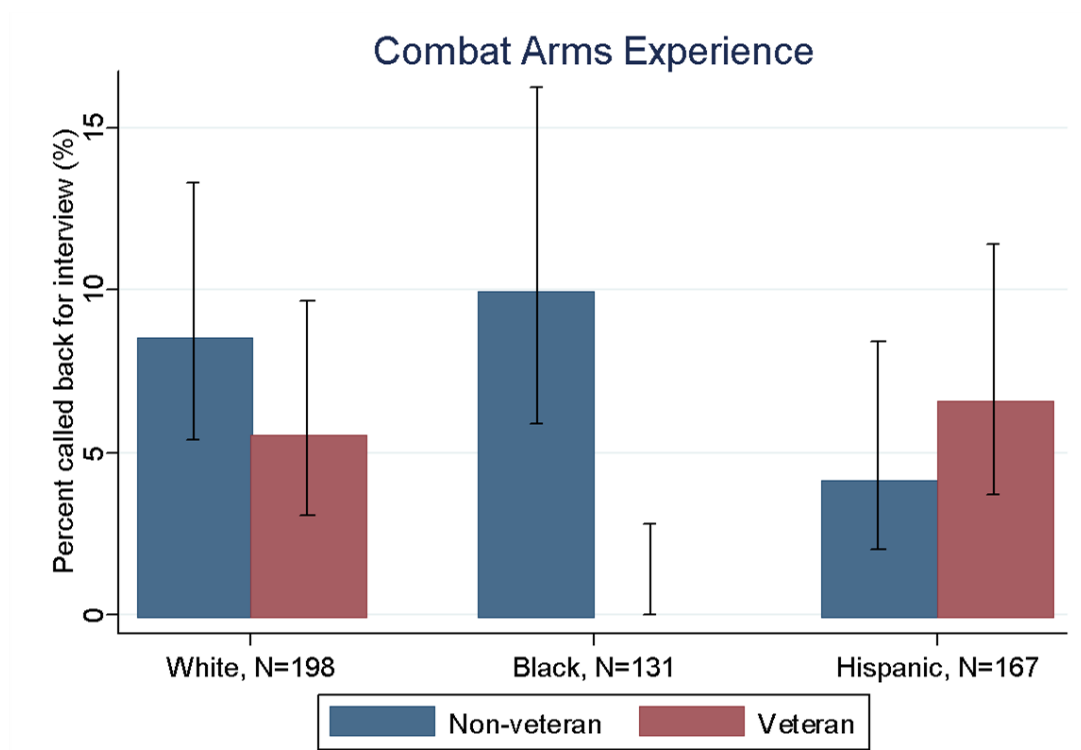
- Join for benefits and opportunities, serve disproportionately at a distance from direct combat roles, make use of benefits, take pride in service, gain soft skills, have high job satisfaction while serving.
- At separation, face more difficulty getting jobs, with poorer average outcomes than White veteran peers.
- Return to a more racialized society?
 - The “return” experience for Black Veterans means passing through the same gatekeepers and social dynamics affecting all Black people in the U.S.

Examples of social “reception” of veterans

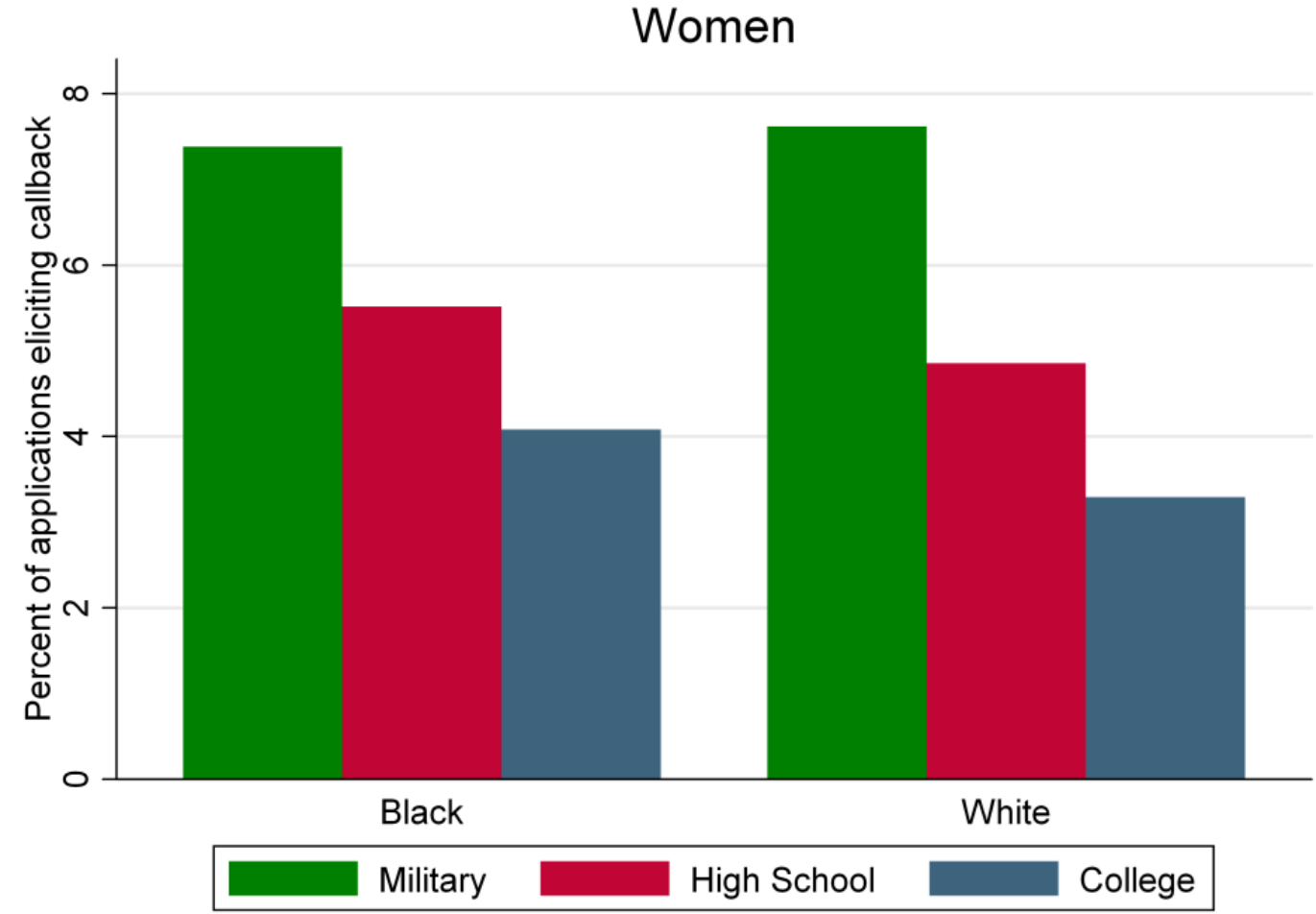
- Audit study of hiring of veterans [race differences]
 - Specific findings
- Survey experiment of deference to veterans [race and gender differences]
 - General idea

Effect of Military Service on Hiring: Male Veterans

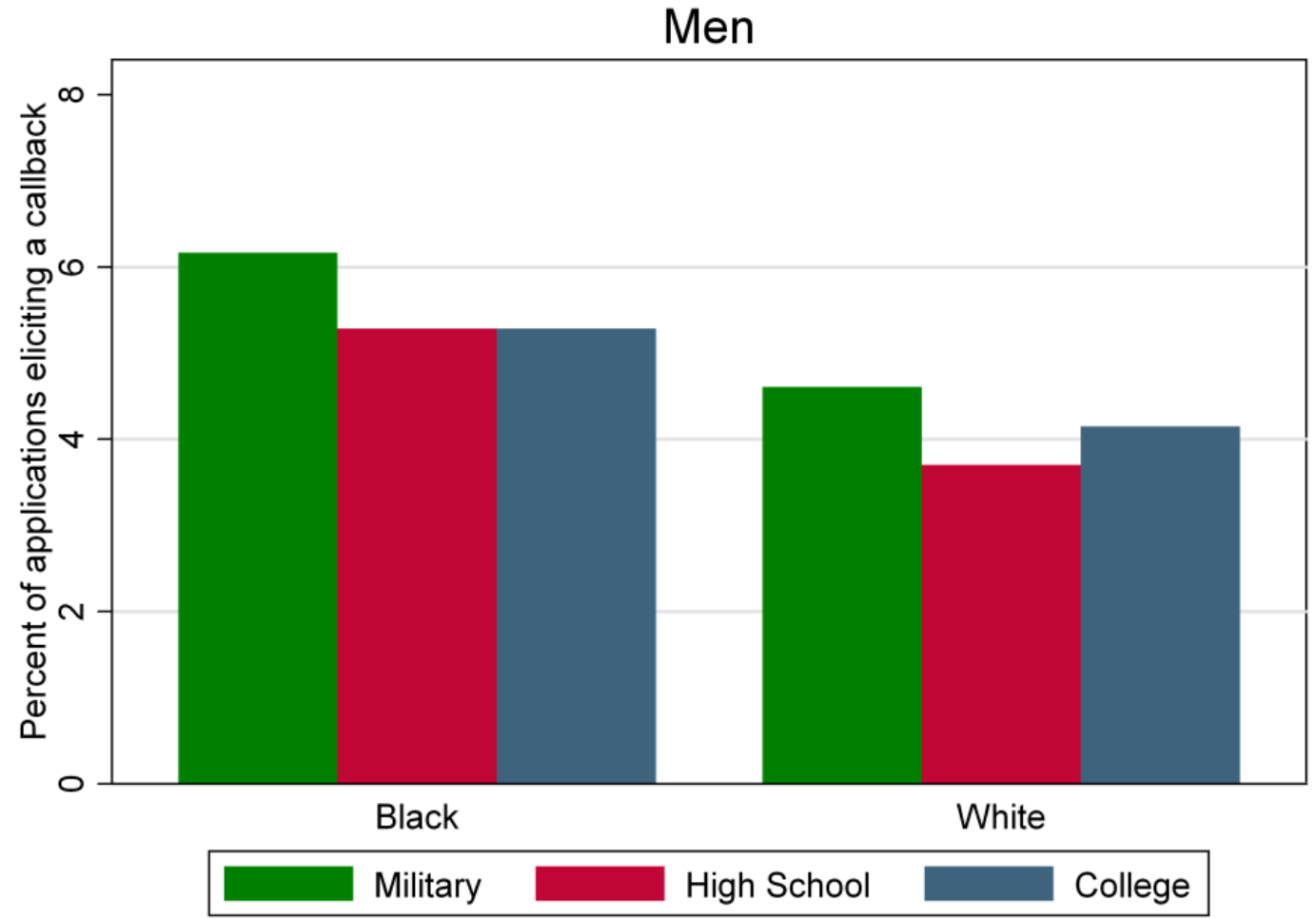
- Treatment of Black male Veteran job applicants differed depending on prior military experience.
- Black male Veterans with administrative experience were advantaged in callbacks, Black male veterans in combat arms, were extremely disadvantaged compared to equivalent civilian peer.



Effect of Military Service on Hiring: Female Veteran Preferred over HS and College Graduate



Effect of Military Service on Hiring: Male Veteran treated same as HS or College Graduate



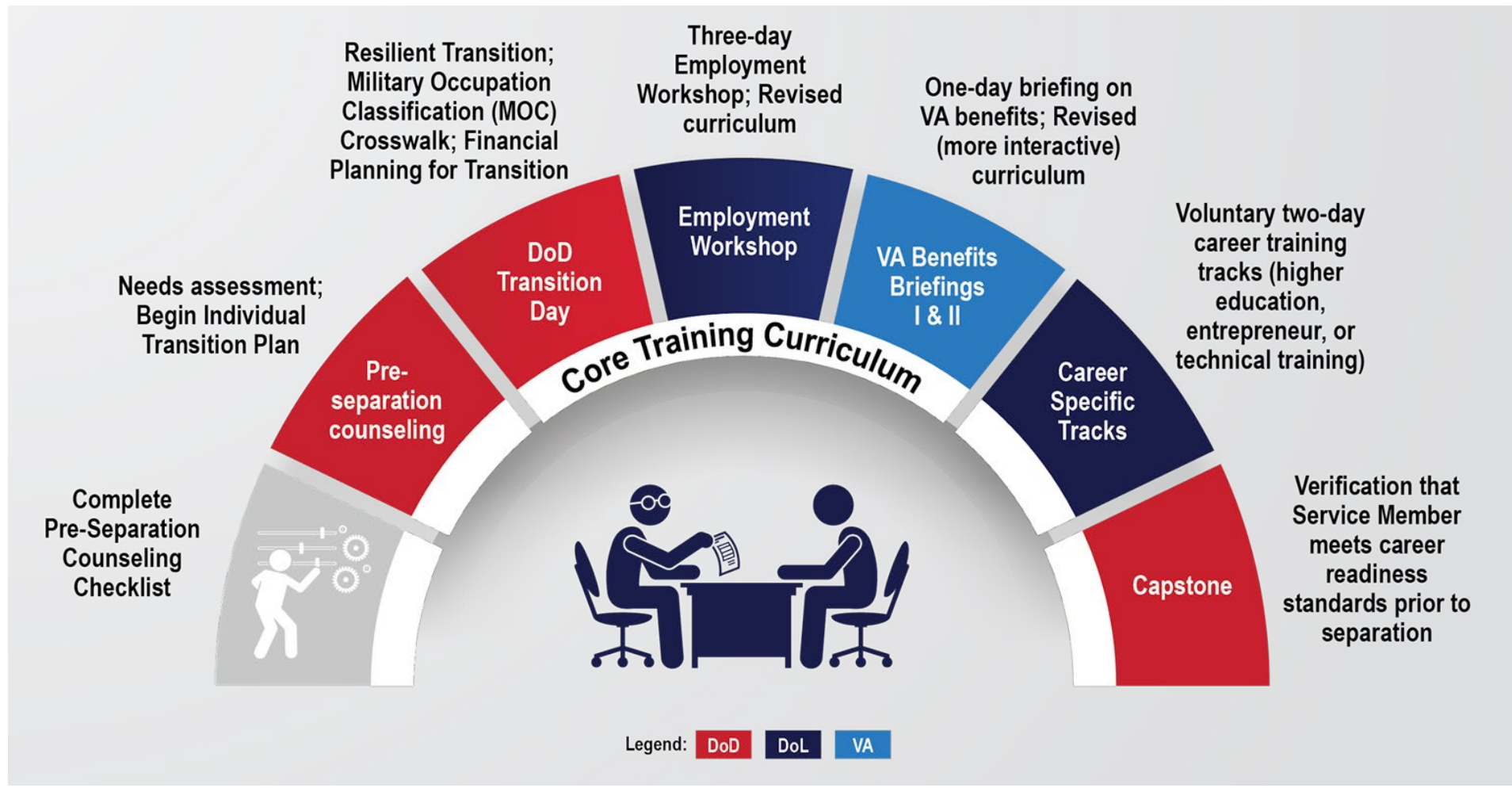
Summing Up

- Black Veterans have spent some time in a **relatively** more racially equitable context during service.
 - But we know there is plenty of racial disparity in treatment and outcomes in the military
- Re-entering civilian society as a Veteran means return to a greater racially inequitable context
- Employment is a matching process
 - How employment gatekeepers perceive and act toward Black Veterans is largely a black box!

Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Impact Study

Rosemarie O'Conner, Ph.D.
Senior Director of Research Science, ICF

Overview of TAP (2014–2019)



Study overview

- Purpose: To understand the impact of TAP on Veteran labor market outcomes
- Comparison of outcomes for Army Veterans who participated in TAP to Army veterans who did not participate
 - TAP participants: TSMs who completed the DOL Workshop between October 1, 2014 and June 30, 2019
 - TAP non-participants: TSMs who did not complete the DOL Workshop during the time period
 - Confirmed employment
 - Confirmed education/training enrollment
 - Participation in the retiring service member (RSM) transition program
 - Retirement with 20 years AFS (Armed Forces Service)
 - Pending unit deployment
 - Prior participation in TAP

The study used rich data on Army TSMs

U.S. Army Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA)

National Directory of New Hires (NDNH)

Demographic Characteristics	Military Career Characteristics	TAP Participation Characteristics	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age at separation • Gender • Race and ethnicity • Marital status • Number of dependents < 18 years of age • Level of education prior to joining military • Disability status at separation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paygrade at separation • Military occupational specialty • Armed Forces Qualification Test Percentile Score (AFQSC) • Base assignment at separation • Deployments • Years of service • Type of discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOL Employment Workshop • Individual Transition Plan (ITP) • Financial Planning Workshop • Veterans Benefits Briefings (I & II) • Post-Service Budget Workshop • MOC Crosswalk • Transition Overview • DOL elective courses • Time between TGPS completion and separation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to employment (by 6 and 12 months) • Wages (6, 12, 24, and 36 months) • Time spent unemployed • Employment retention

Study findings



Black Veterans (men and women) found work faster



Black men spent less time without employment



More Black men were employed at the same job at 12 months post-separation

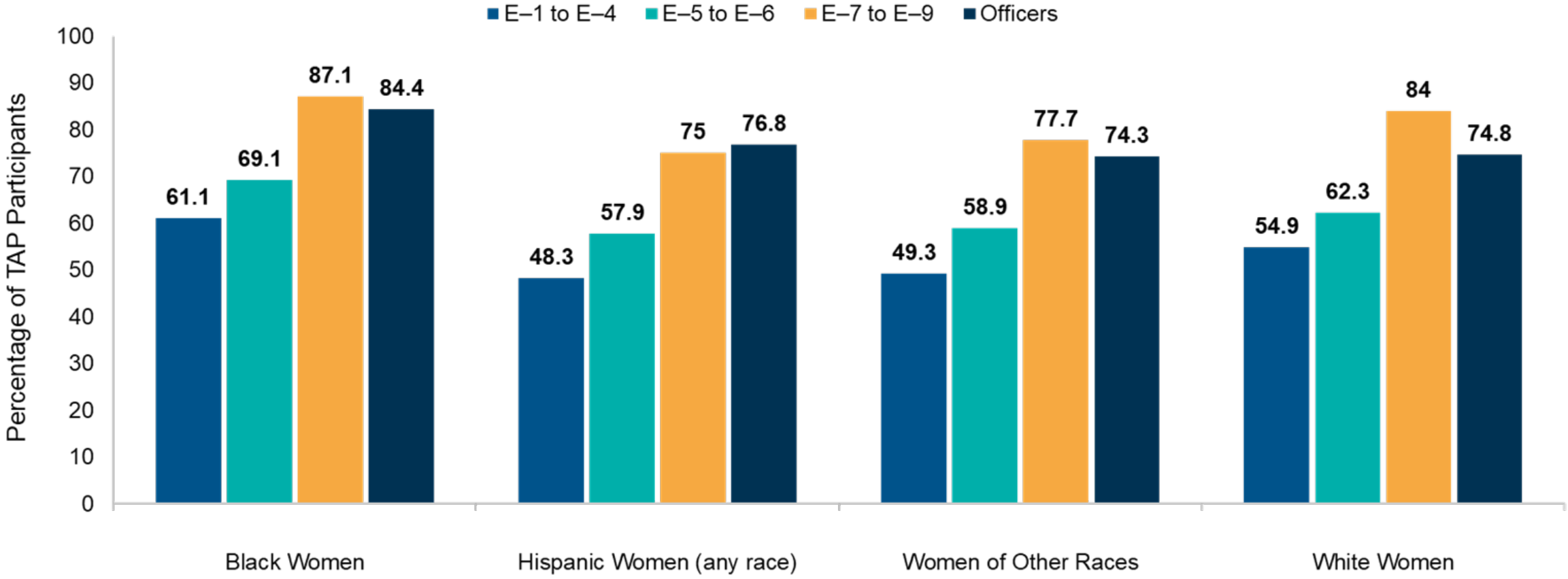


More Black men were employed at 12 months post-separation

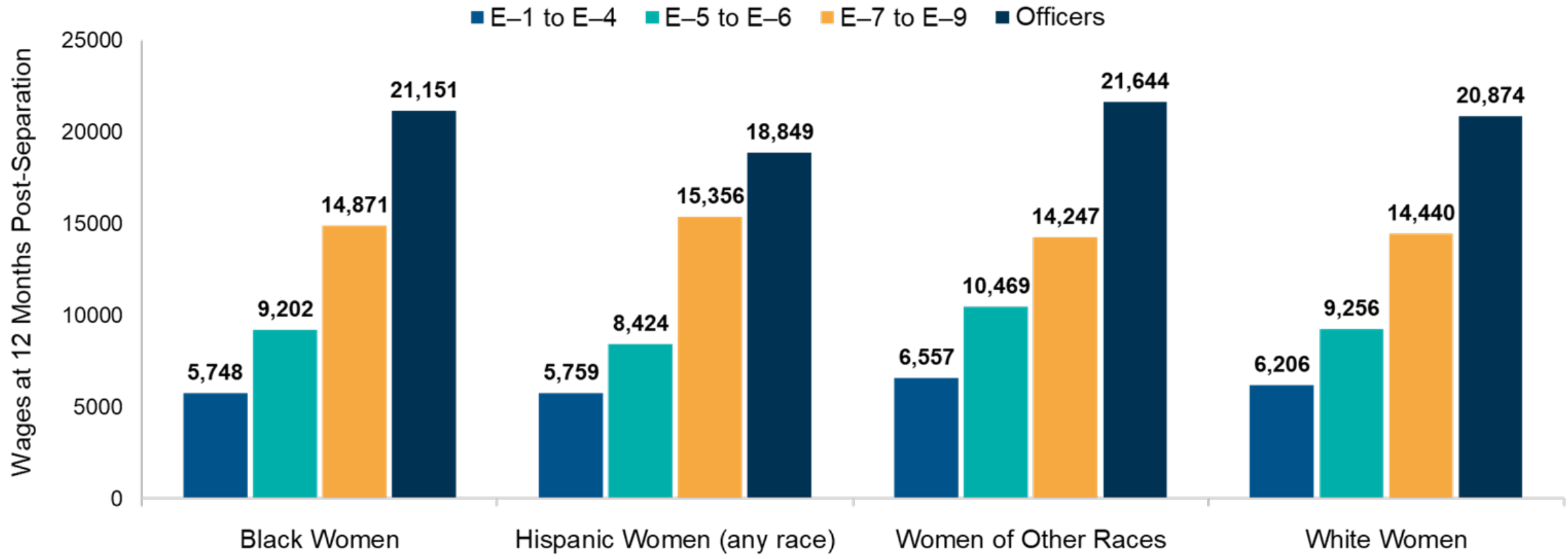


Black Veterans (men and women) earned less

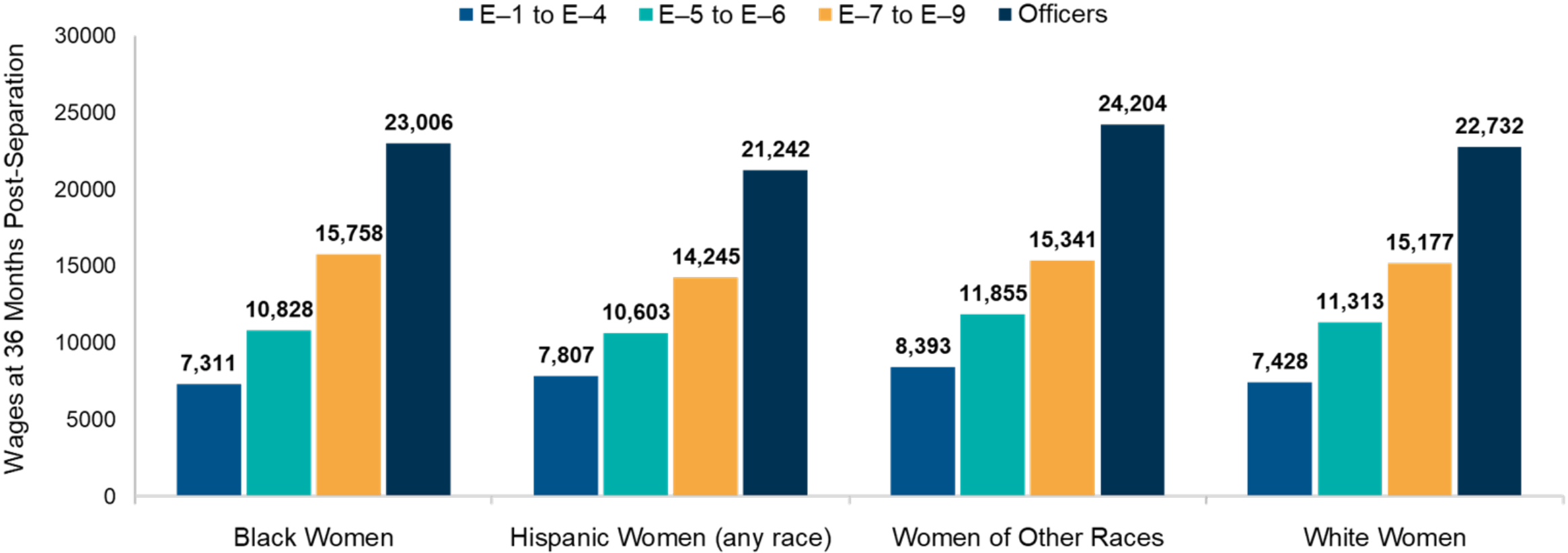
Black women have the highest rates of employment at 12 months post-separation



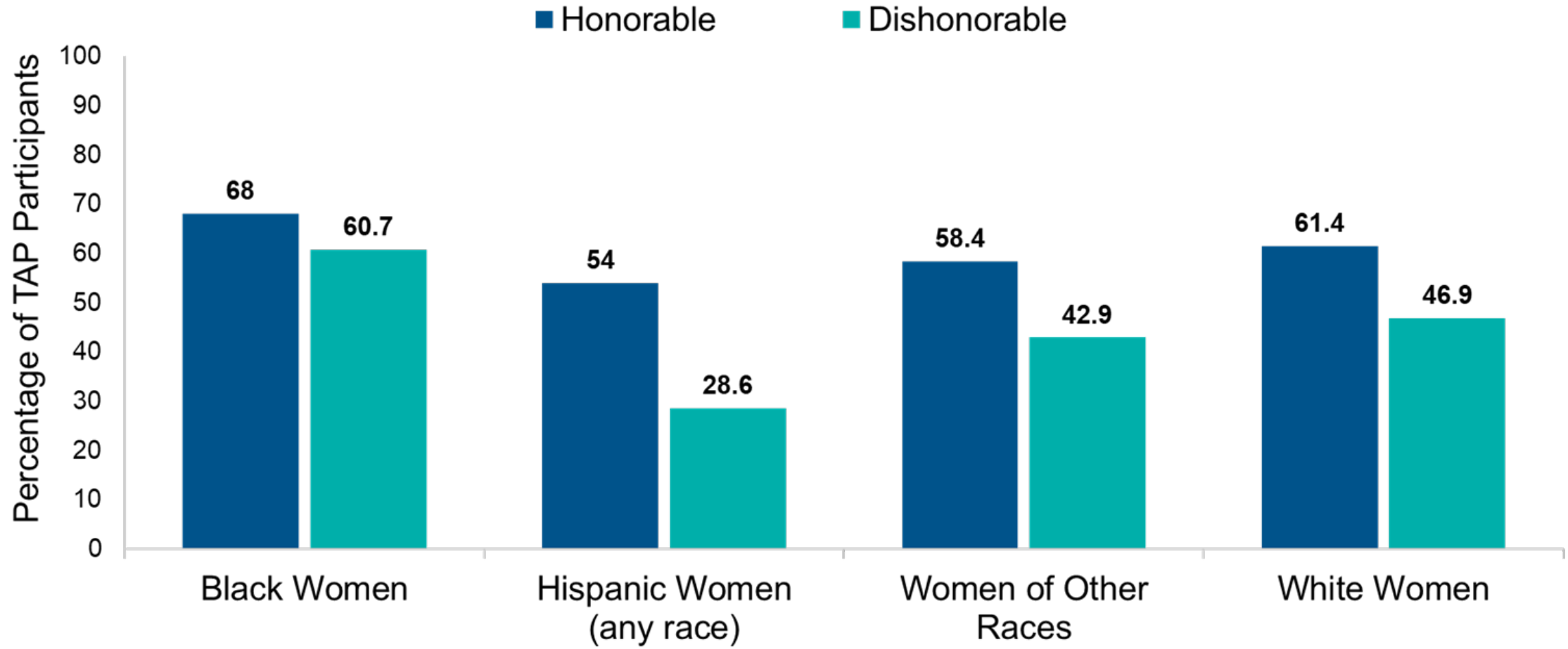
Higher median wages at 12 months post-separation for Officers



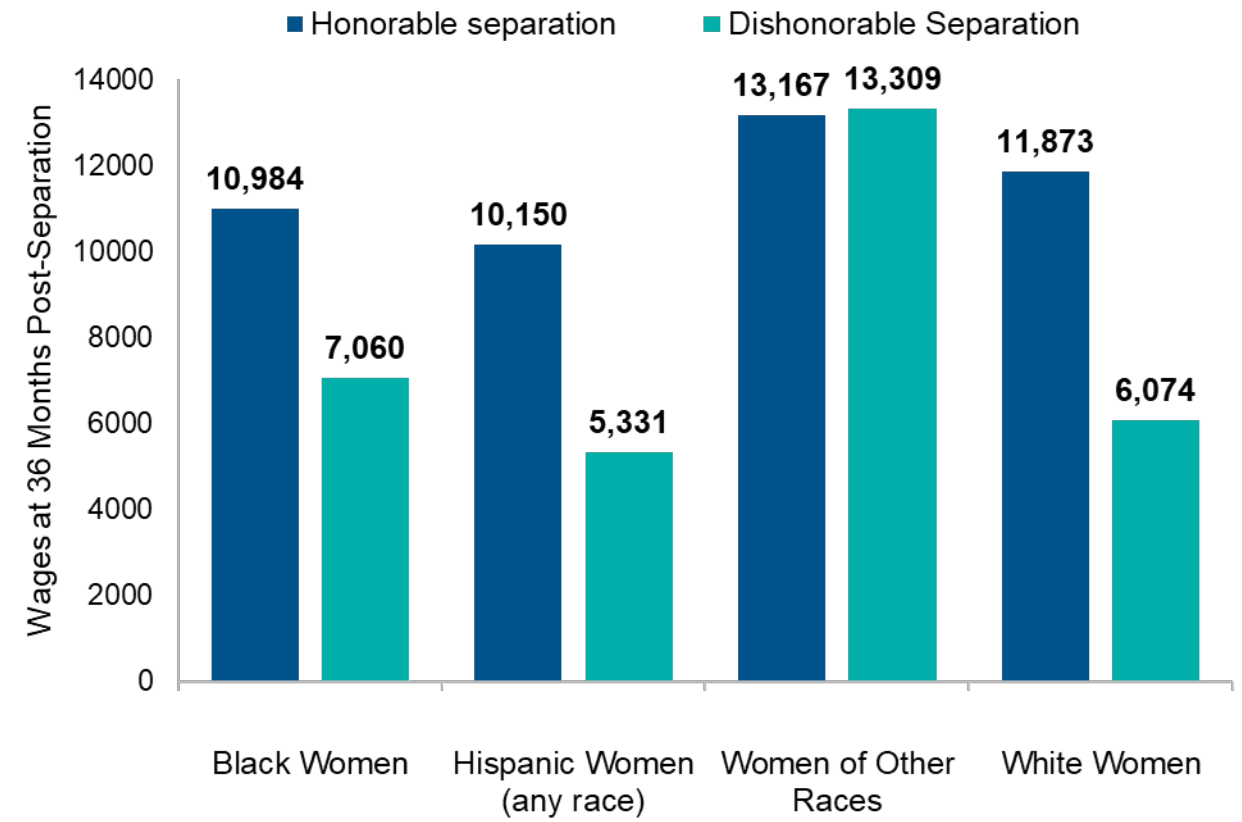
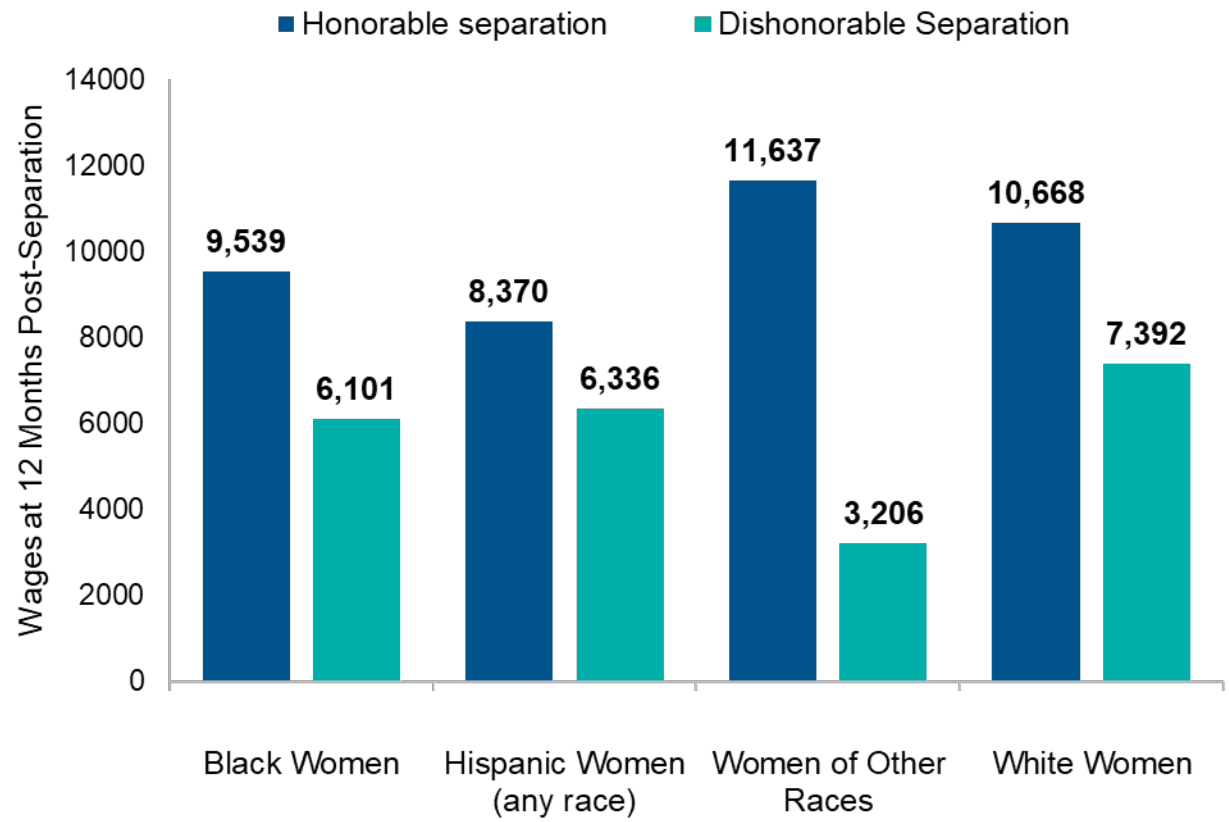
Highest median wages at 36 months post-separation for E-7 to E-9 pay grade



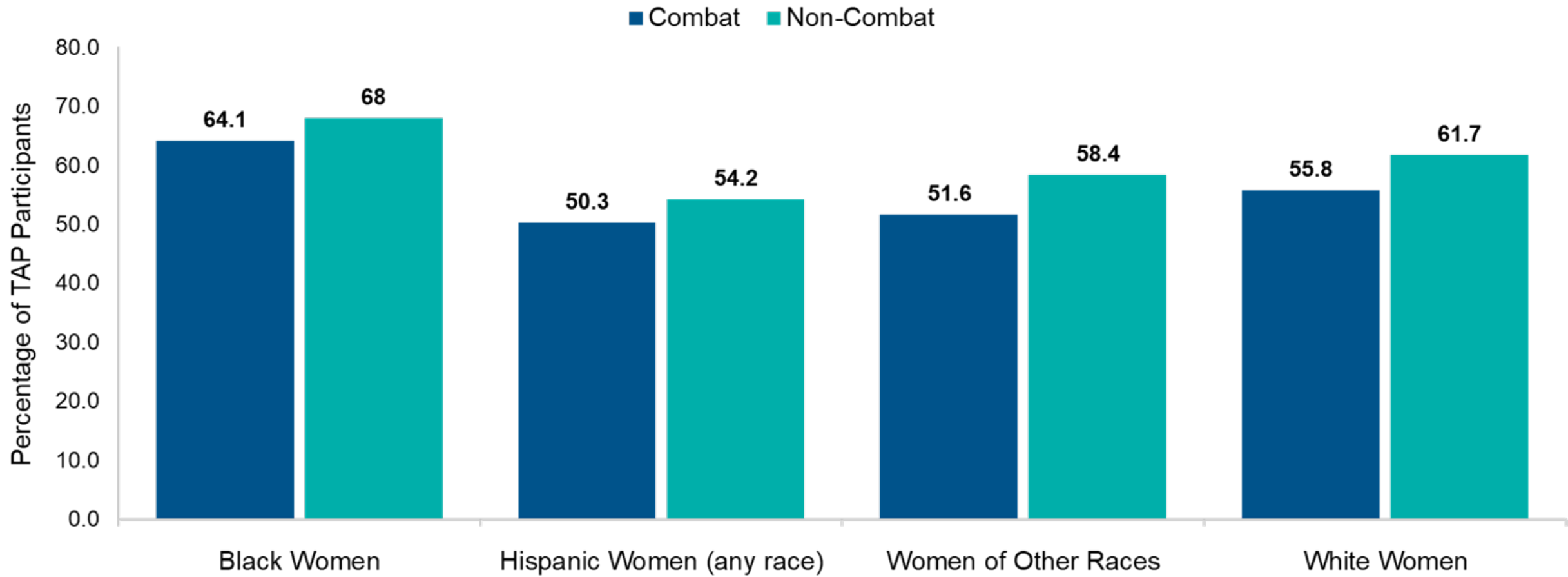
Percent of TAP Participants Employed at 12 Months Post-Separation: Discharge Status



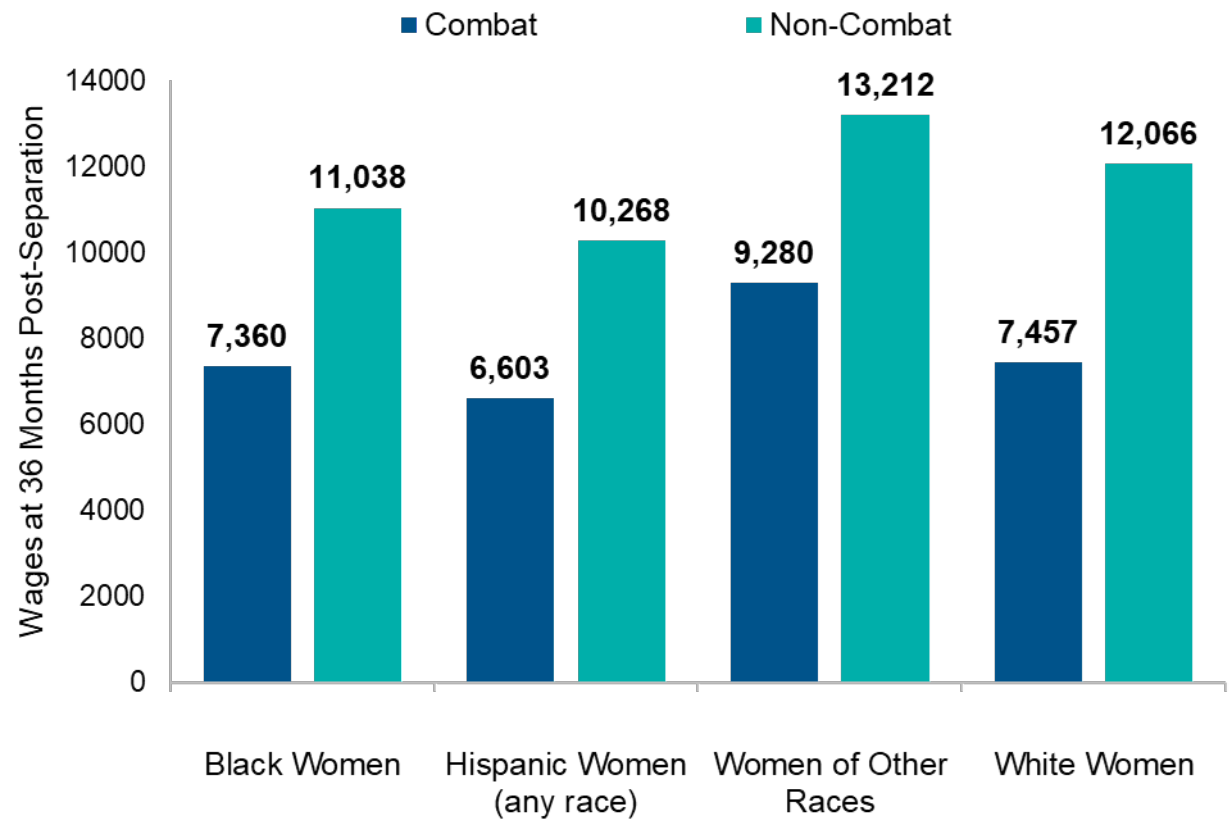
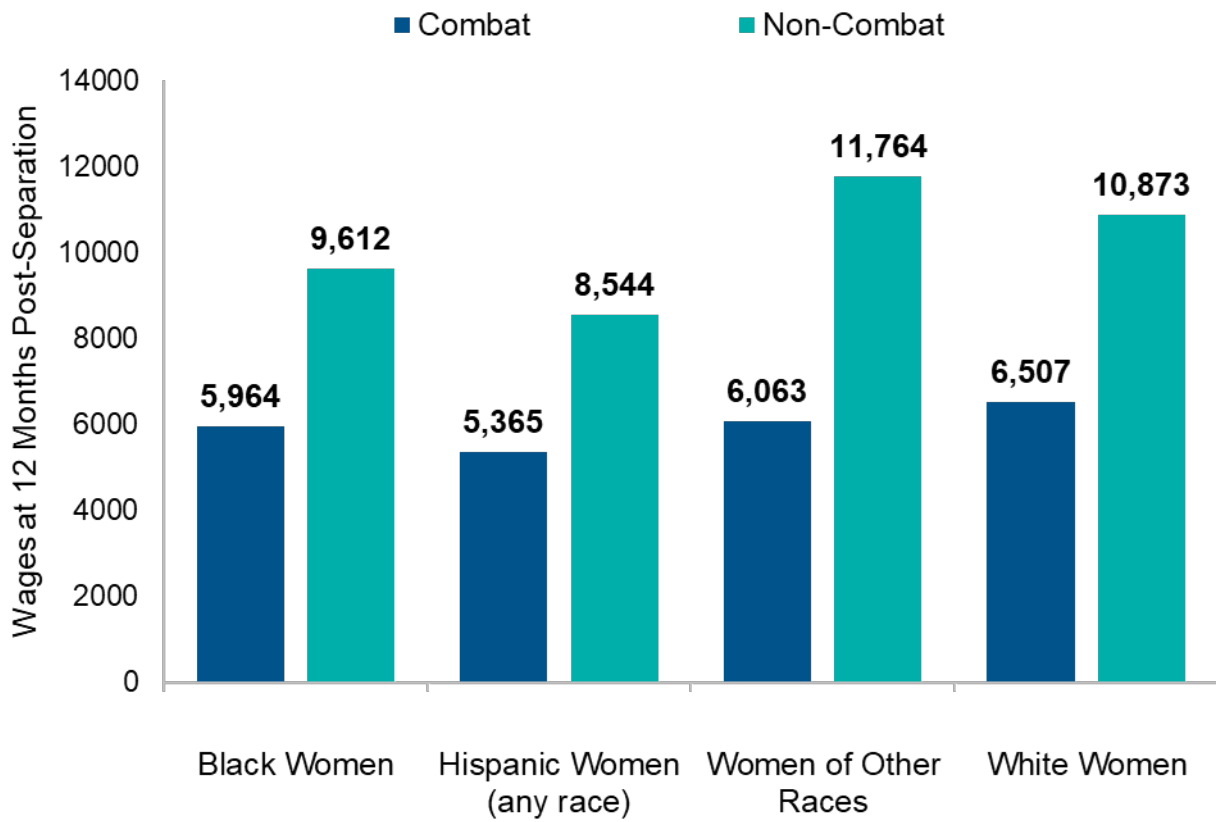
Groups receiving lower median wages at 12 and 36 months post-separation



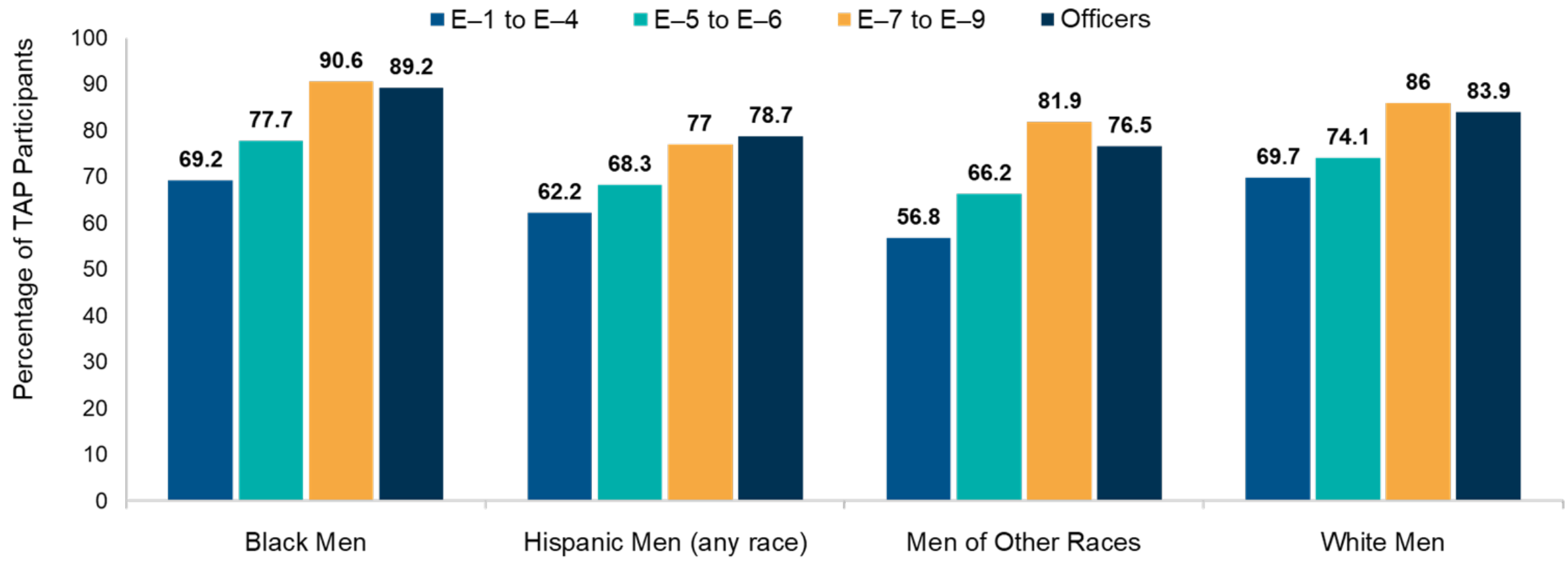
Percent of TAP Participants Employed at 12 Months Post-Separation: Combat vs Noncombat Training



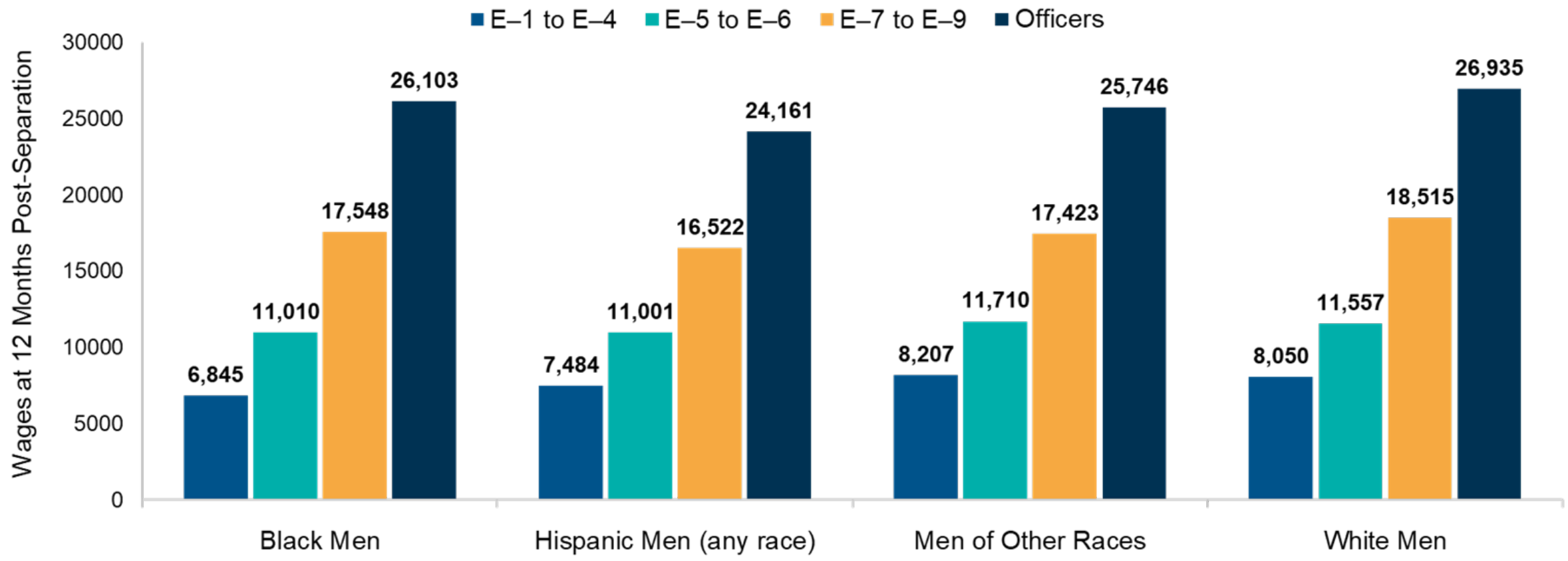
Combat vs Noncombat: Median wages at 12 and 36 months post-separation



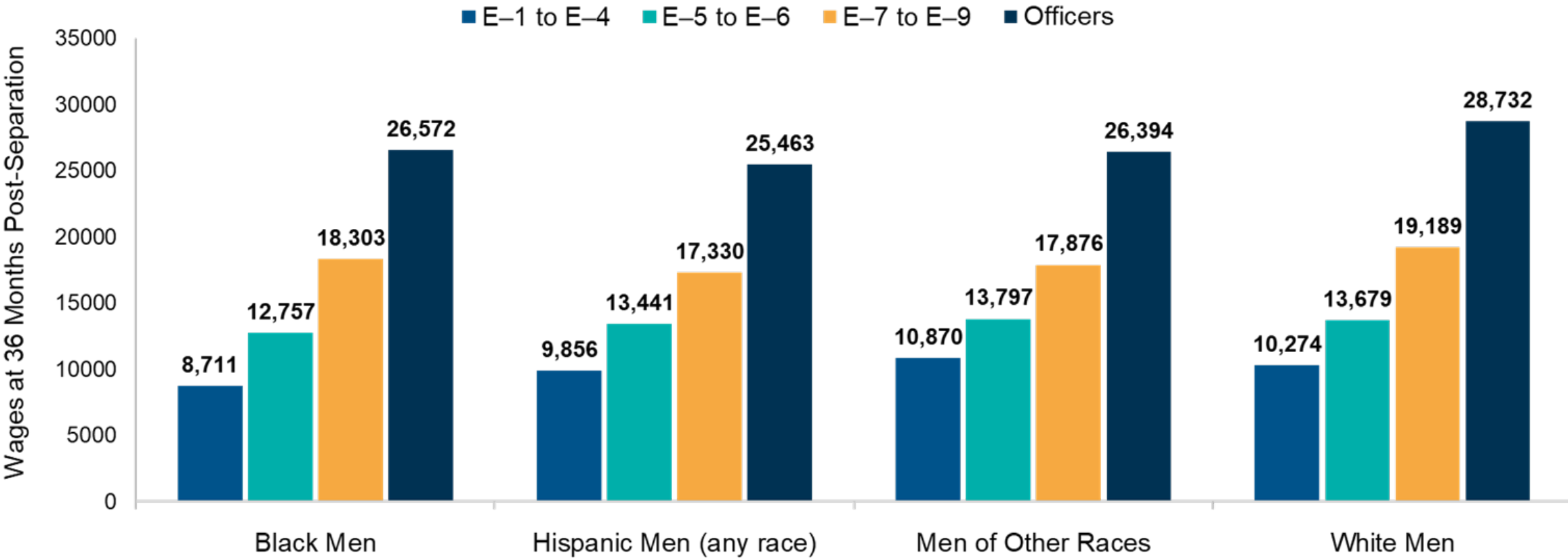
E-7 to E-9 pay grades have higher rates of employment at 12 months post-separation



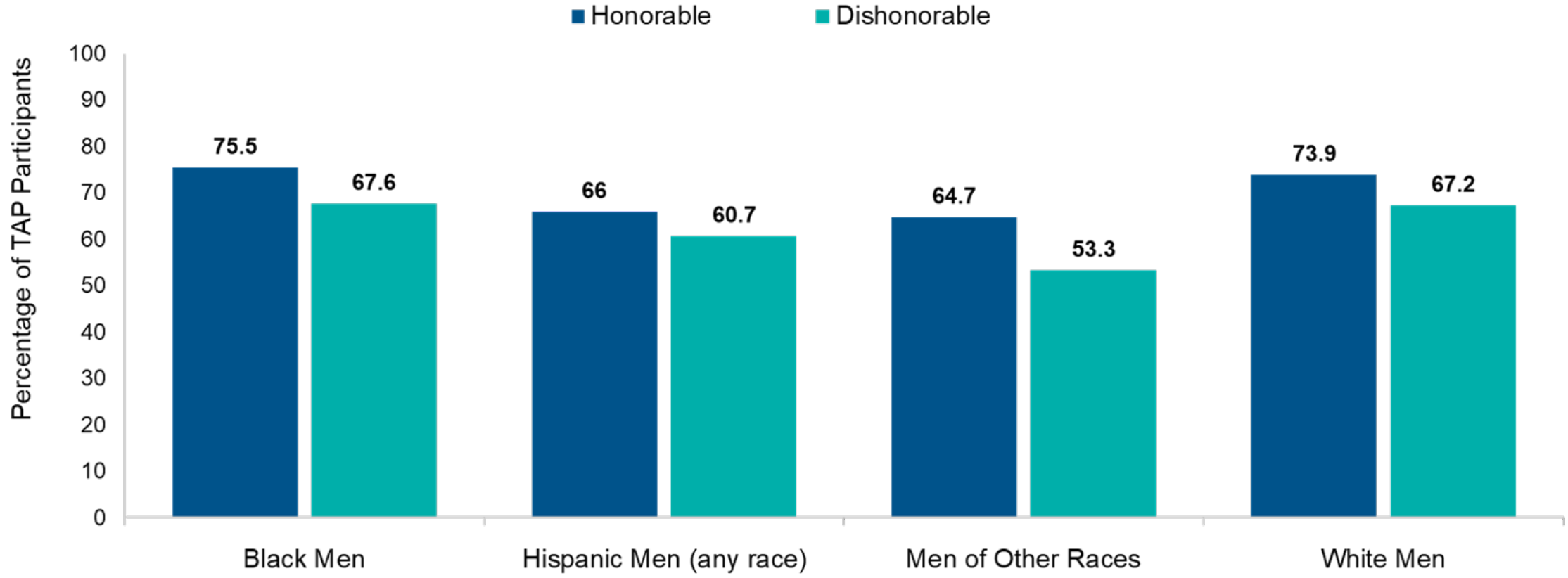
Higher median wages at 12 months post-separation for E-7 to E-9 and Officers



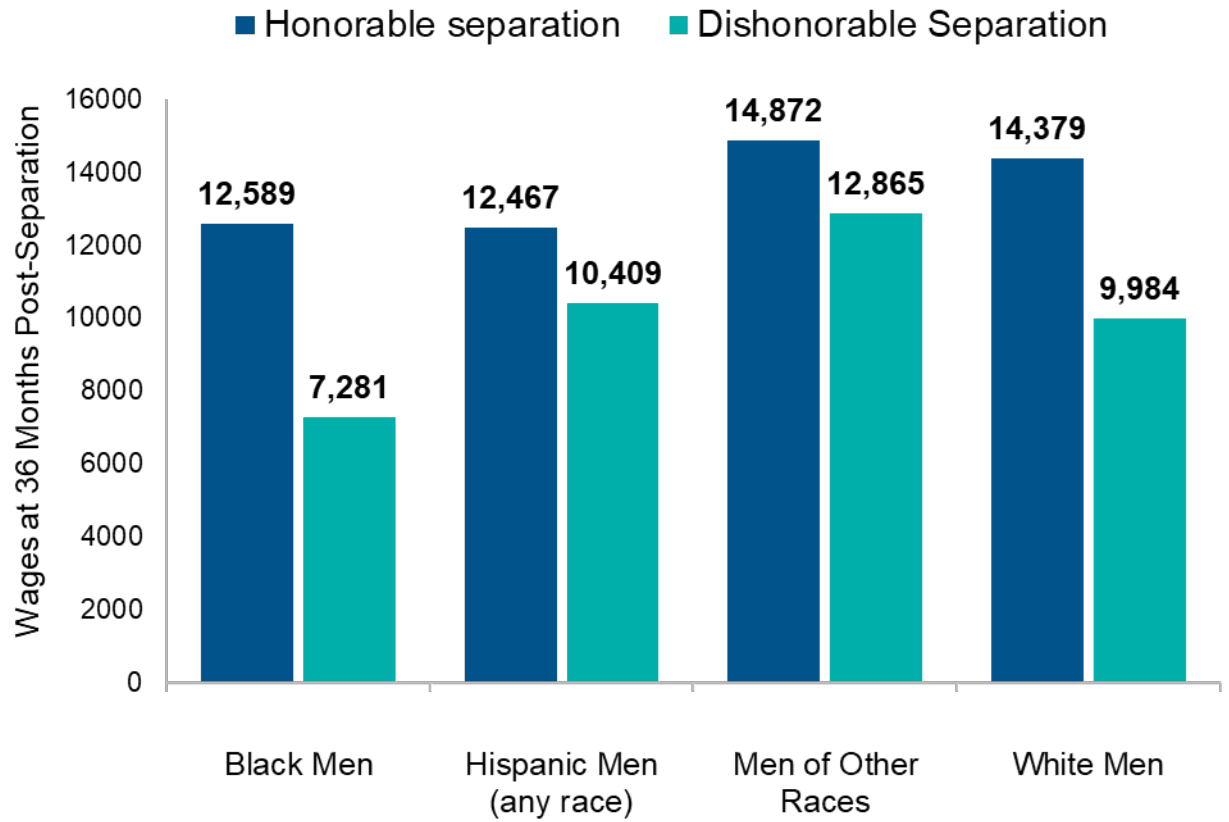
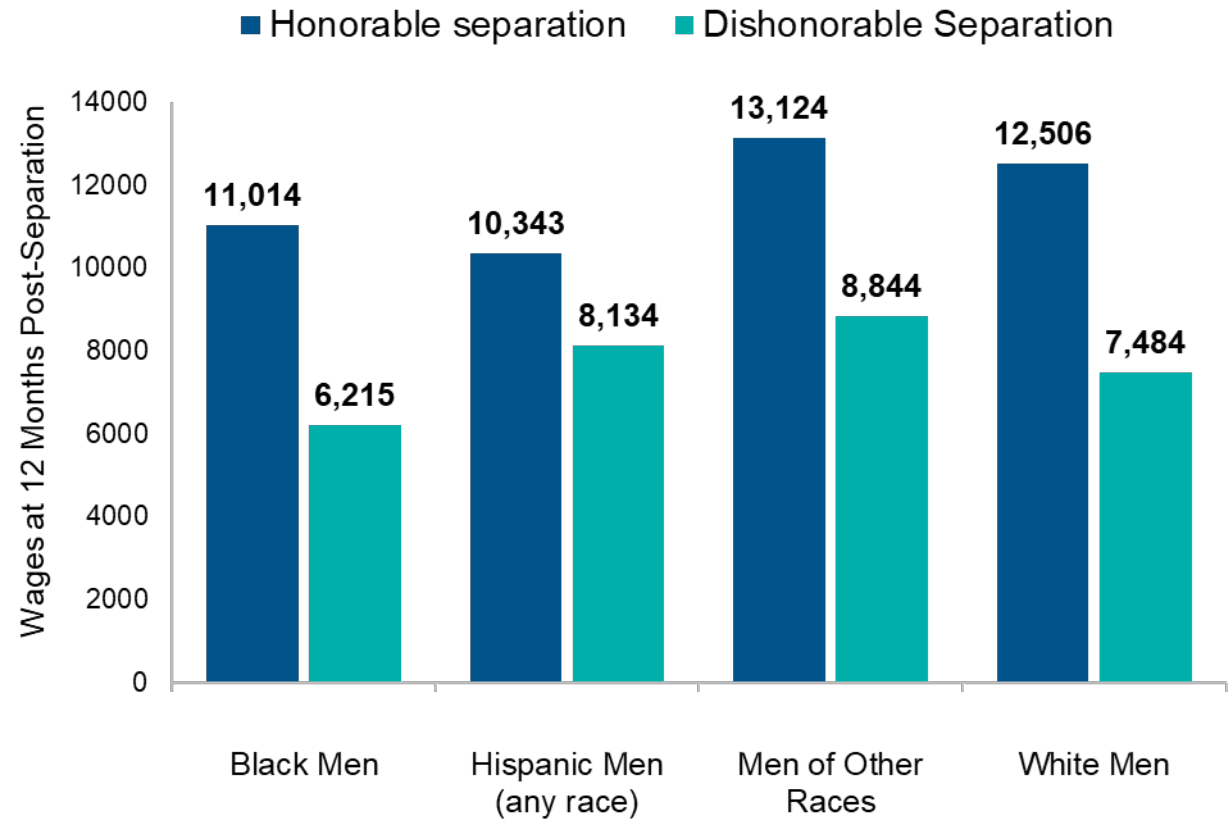
Higher median wages at 36 months post-separation for E-7 to E-9 and Officers



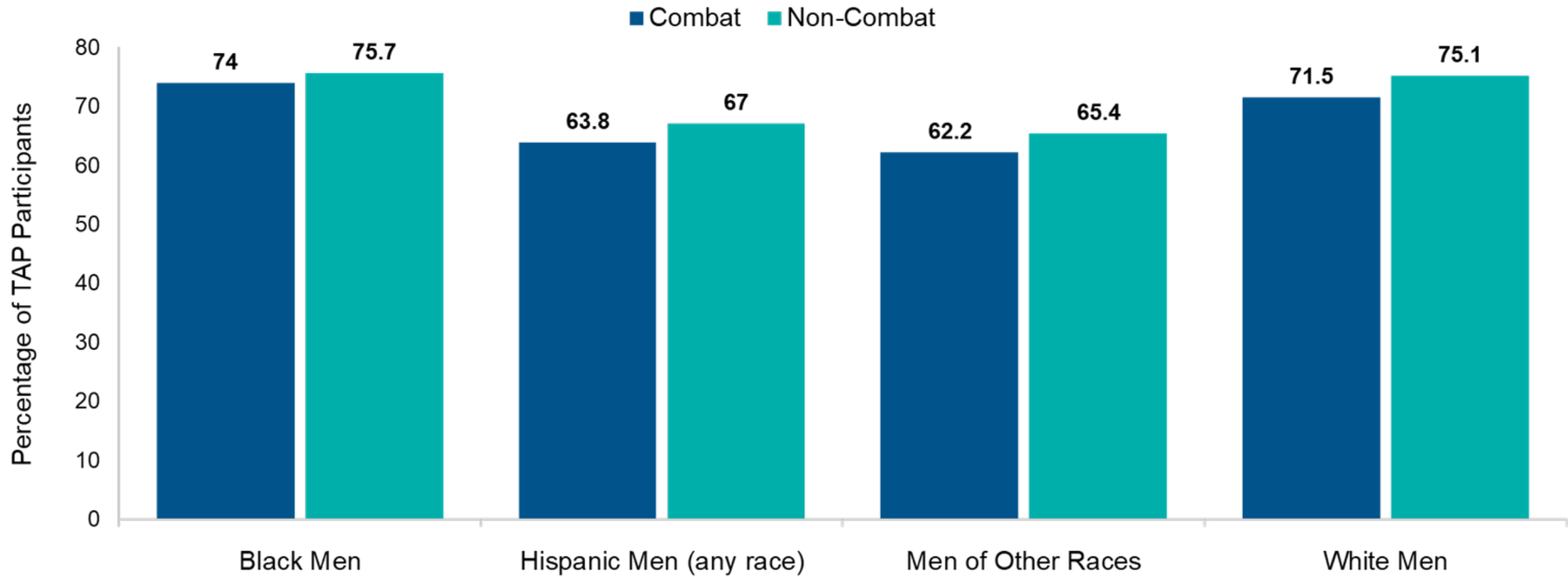
Black men had the highest rate of employment at 12 months post-separation



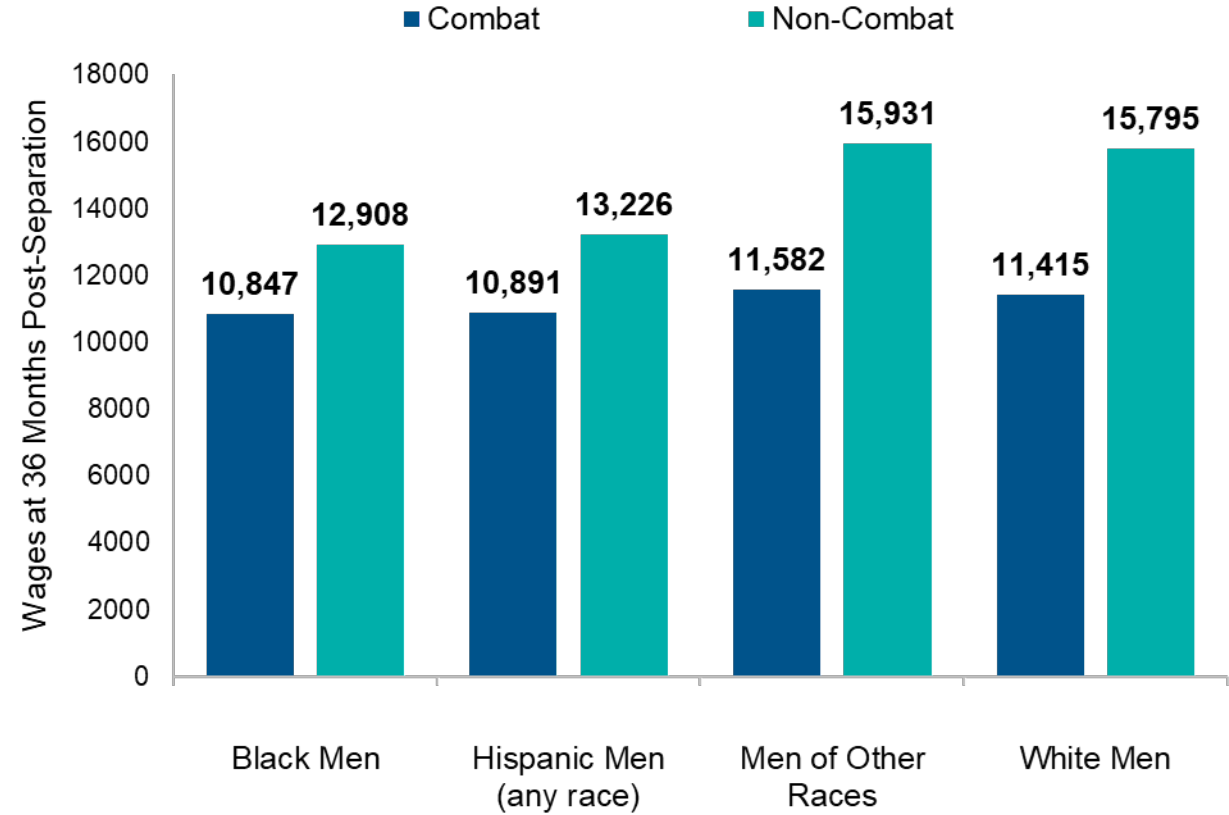
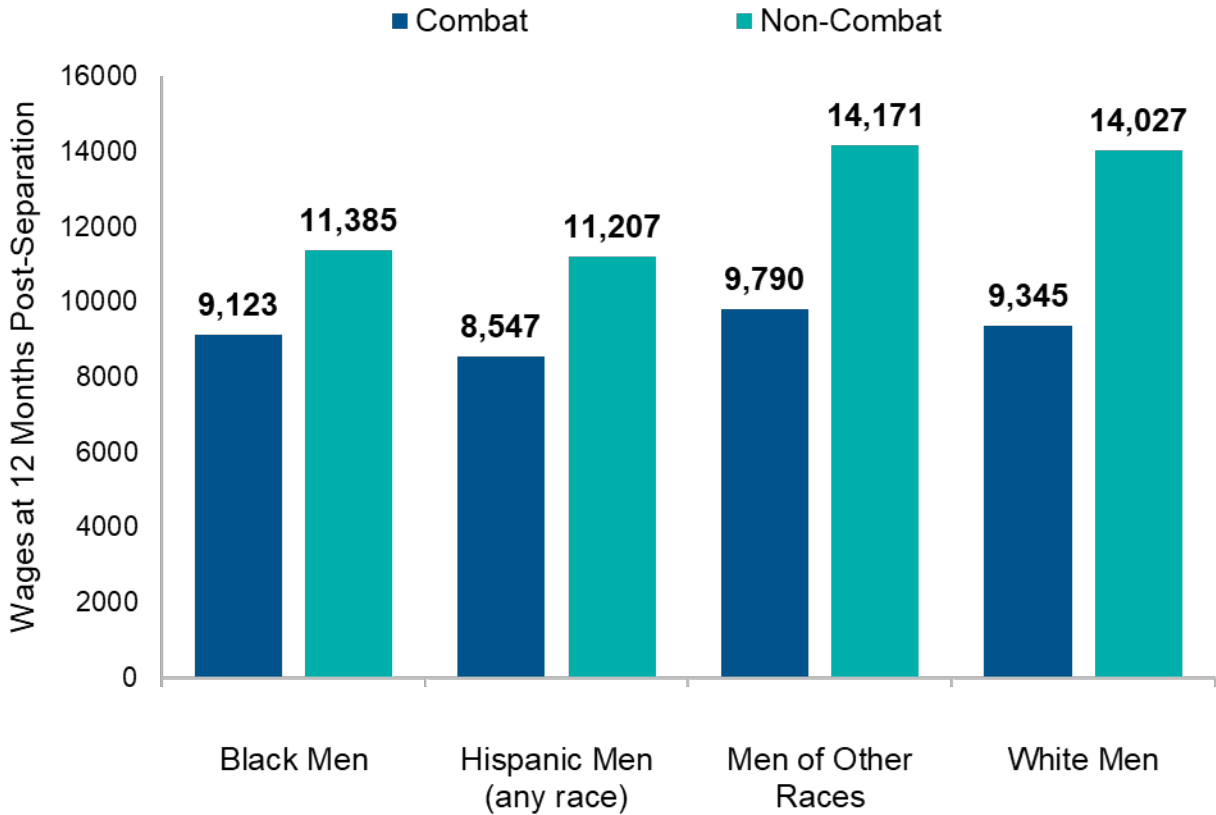
Median wages at 12 and 36 months post-separation by discharge status



Percentage employed at 12 months post separation



Combat-focused Veterans had lower median wages at 12 and 36 months post-separation



Black Veterans and Military Discharge Status

Alden Pinkham, J.D.

Staff Attorney and Policy Analyst, Connecticut Veterans Legal Center

Our Mission and Vision



OUR MISSION

Connecticut Veterans Legal Center’s mission is to provide free legal assistance to veterans who are in recovery from homelessness, mental illness, and substance abuse to help them overcome legal barriers to housing, healthcare, and income.

OUR VISION

Connecticut Veterans Legal Center’s vision is for all military veterans in Connecticut to live with adequate means, safe and secure housing, and affordable health care.

VA Benefits – A Holistic Approach

- Healthcare
- Disability Compensation
- Pension
- Education Benefits
- Home Loans
- Homeless Services
- Veteran Readiness and Employment
- Benefits for Dependents



Military Discharge Status

Administrative Separations

- Honorable
- General (Under Honorable Conditions)
- Other Than Honorable

Punitive Discharges

- Bad Conduct
- Dishonorable

SPECIAL ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (For use by authorized agencies only)		
23. TYPE OF SEPARATION	24. CHARACTER OF SERVICE (Include upgrades)	
25. SEPARATION AUTHORITY	26. SEPARATION CODE	27. REENTRY CODE
28. NARRATIVE REASON FOR SEPARATION		
29. DATES OF TIME LOST DURING THIS PERIOD		30. MEMBER REQUESTS COPY 4 Initials

DD Form 214, NOV 88

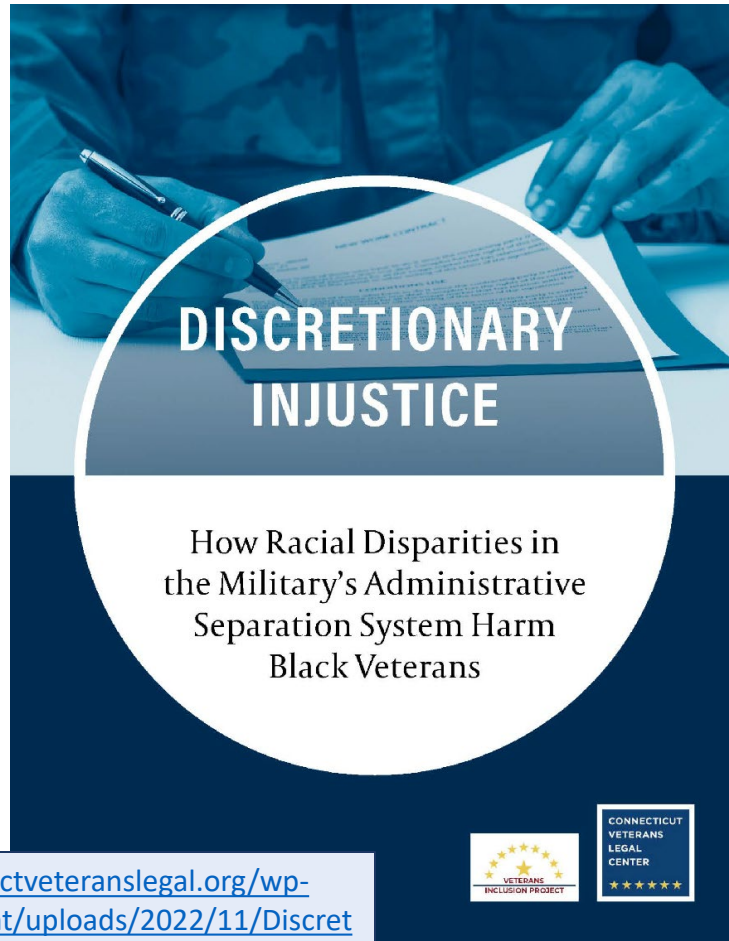
Previous editions are obsolete

Form DD-214 character of service information block

Impact of Discharge Status on Benefits

Discharge / Character of Service	VA Benefits Eligibility
Honorable	Eligible for VA benefits
General (Under Hon. Conditions)	Eligible for most VA benefits Not eligible for GI Bill Education benefits
Other Than Honorable	Presumptively not eligible for benefits VA “character of discharge” review required
Bad Conduct	
Dishonorable	

Study on Race and Discharge Status

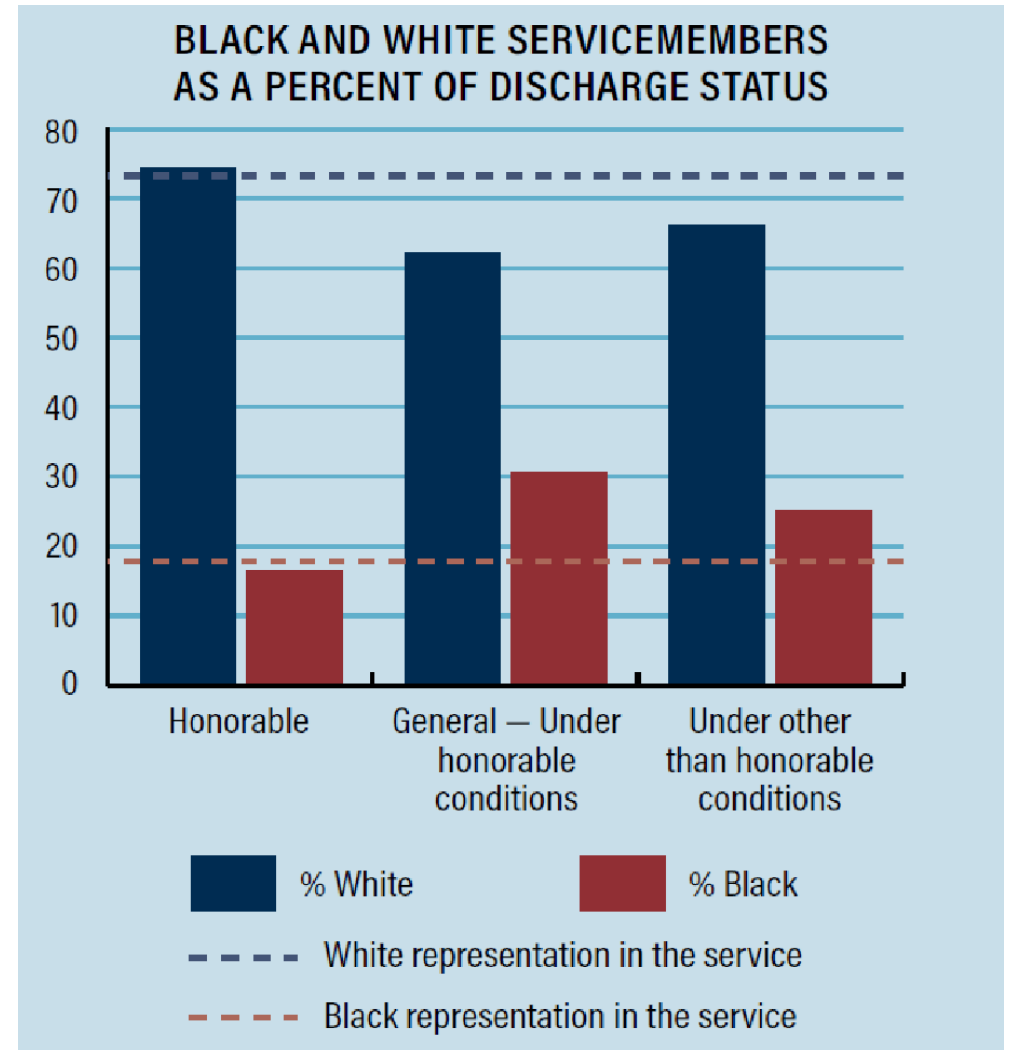


<http://ctveteranslegal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Discretionary-Injustice-Report.pdf>

- Request for data from Army, Navy, Air Force & Marine Corps
- Received data for over 1 million separations from FY 2014-2020
 - Honorable: 89.4%
 - General: 7.8%
 - OTH: 2.3%
 - Punitive (BC & DIS): <1%
- Over 107,000 veterans received General or OTH discharges in time frame

Discharge Study Findings

- Overall, Black SMs 1.5x as likely as White SMs to receive OTH rather than HON discharge, and 2x as likely to receive GEN
- By branch, Black SMs more likely than White SMs to receive less than honorable discharge
 - Army: 1.8x OTH; 2x General
 - Navy: 2.3x OTH; 2x General
 - Air Force: 2x OTH; 2.5x General
 - No improvement over time
- No improvement over time



Areas for Further Research

- Military Occupational Specialty / Job Assignment
- Base Assignment
- Years in Service
- Rank
- Eras prior to 2014
- Intersection with PTSD, TBI, Military Sexual Trauma, LGBTQ+ identity

Military Discharge and Employment



Client April Pearson. Photo by Desirea Photography.

Potential contributing factors to unemployment:

- Lack of mental/physical health treatment
- Lack of substance abuse treatment
- Housing instability/homelessness
- Inability to access education/skills training
- Increased likelihood of criminal justice involvement
- Disparaging info on DD-214 or Honorable discharge requirements

Remedies for Veterans with “Bad Paper”

- VA Character of Discharge proceeding
- Discharge Upgrade through service branch Discharge Review Board or Board for Correction of Military/Naval Records
- Pro-se resources: <https://www.swords-to-plowshares.org/resources/self-help-guides>



Client Carter. Photo by Desirea Photography.

Black Veterans and Military Discharge Status

Wendy McClinton

Black Veterans for Social Justice

The History of Black Veterans for Social Justice (BSVJ)

On April 18th, 1979, a group of veterans from all military branches, representing enlistees from WWII through Vietnam, came together to assist veterans with problems. Some immediate problems faced were racism and racist policies, little or poor medical and rehabilitative services, unemployment and no re-entry preparation. Many soldiers leaving the military did not know their rights or the agencies willing to help them. Some veterans experienced hostile social attitudes and a high percentage suffered from exposure to the lethal toxin “Agent Orange”, and continual readjustment obstacles. BVSJ, Inc. has evolved since its humble beginnings into a community fixture. While a new generation of veterans has served this country, many have the same complications, specifically getting quality medical care, high unemployment and inadequate services for soldiers re-entering into civilian culture. BVSJ Veteran services are always served with “tender loving care and a listening ear.”

Questions

- What employment and retention needs do you see among subpopulations of Black Veterans, such as individuals who have been incarcerated, are female, or identify as LGBTQ?
- What percentage of Black Veterans retain their jobs, or are still employed after six months? What about one year?
- What is the average hourly wage of Black Veterans once they leave the military? How does it vary by MOS or by rank?
- What does your research say about discharge status and the likelihood of a Veteran being homeless?

Moderated Q&A

Please type your question in the chat.



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