



Joining Forces for Women Veterans Talking Points

The Business and Professional Women’s (BPW) Foundation is proudly ***Joining Forces for Women Veterans*** to provide support and resources to women veterans of all eras in their ongoing transition to civilian life at work and at home.

Who is BPW Foundation?

- A nonprofit research and education organization dedicated to improving the workplace through women, family, and veteran-friendly practices.
- [Our origins go back to 1919](#), when the U.S. government officially recognized the need for an organization to identify the available skills and experience of America’s women, and the Women’s War Council (with a grant from the War Department) founded the organization now known as BPW Foundation.
- BPW Foundation identified that America’s women had the skills and experience necessary to provide a workforce to help our nation through that war and has been advancing the cause of women in the workforce ever since.
- Issues researched and advanced include pay equity, work-life balance, workplace diversity, non-traditional jobs for women, and workplace best practices.
- Today, **BPW Foundation engages the public through research, education, policy, and knowledge to create systematic change – change that empowers individuals to transform workplaces for women and their families.**

What makes BPW Foundation unique?

- We are the first foundation to focus its research and programs on **working** women; we have often studied the prevalence of women in non-traditional occupations as well as how to prepare women for those jobs.
- In the 1950s, BPW Foundation was one of the first organizations to begin a [research library](#) devoted to the interests of business and professional women. As early as the 1960s, BPW scholarships and grants targeted important issues such as research on Latino women and the attitudes of disadvantaged African

American girls and their perceptions for future employment. Our [scholarships](#) for working women continue today. From our early history to today, we continue to advance untapped populations such as [women in the green economy](#), [young careerists](#), innovative employers, and now, [women veterans](#).

- In keeping with our groundbreaking tradition, BPW Foundation is the first NGO to [research the needs of woman veterans](#) as they transition from military to civilian lives and to investigate their workplace needs.
- We strive to [redefine today's workplace](#) with groundbreaking [research](#) and in our unique role as a neutral convener of employers and employees.

Why is BPW focusing on women veterans?

BPW has always focused on working women – more specifically, women working in non-traditional occupations. In 2005, BPW Foundation recognized the surge of women veterans returning home from two wars. Being the first foundation to focus research exclusively on working women, we wanted to know how workplaces were receiving these new and uniquely skilled workers and what resources were available to help them move from the military to the civilian workforce. The [Women Joining Forces \(WJF\) Advisory Council](#) was created to provide the expertise and experience needed to accomplish our goals related to supporting military women successfully transition to the civilian world.

What has BPW Foundation done for women veterans?

We asked women veterans what they need. As with all of BPW Foundation's programs, our work with women veterans is evidence-based. In 2007, in the absence of a publicly available database of women veterans, BPW Foundation researchers and supporting partners created a database and conducted an online survey, completed by more than 1,600 women veterans of all ages and from many eras of service. The subsequent in-depth report and analysis, [Women Veterans in Transition](#), was published that year.

We didn't stop with research. We capitalized on our unique role as neutral conveners of policymakers, employers and employees, and in October 2010, BPW conducted a [national summit, *Joining Forces for Women Veterans*](#). We brought together more than 80 business, government, military, and community leaders to hear directly from women veterans from all eras, and seek solutions to the specific challenges women veterans face, including [homelessness](#), [reintegration](#) and [post-military employment issues](#).

We are implementing a course for change. Through our 2007 survey and 2010 summit, we learned that women veterans had a variety of adjustment needs distinct from men, involving children, family expectations, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or military sexual trauma (MST). And yet they have leadership, management, teamwork, and other vital skills based on their military training that make them valuable workers and leaders. Informed by this research, we launched our [Joining Forces for Women Veterans campaign](#) in October 2010.

The Women Joining Forces action agenda includes:

Collaboration

- Through our campaign webpage (www.womenjoiningforces.org), our [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter campaign](#), we are building an online community of women veterans and supporters.
- We are acting on the [recommendations put forth at the 2010 summit](#) and sharing our successes with stakeholders.
- Our summit toolkit and webinar allow regional grassroots organizations to raise awareness and seek solutions to the transition challenges women veterans face in their local communities.
- We are building a network of local public-private partnerships to raise awareness, funds, and support for women veterans to successfully transition from the military into their many new roles in civilian life.
- By encouraging women veterans of all eras to register for the [Memorial Register](#) on the Women Joining Forces for Women Veterans webpage, we are securing their participation in the only national memorial honoring women who have served in our nation's defense.

Knowledge-Sharing

- Our [Women Joining Forces Advisory Council](#) is comprised of veterans of both genders who have served from WWI until today and now have successful careers in the public and private sectors. Their vast array of experiences and firsthand knowledge of the transition experience are invaluable to the female veteran population we are working to serve.
- We offer networking and peer-to-peer learning opportunities through tools like our Joining Forces for Women Veterans Facebook page and our [Dear Jane letter-writing campaign](#) to connect veterans with deployed women.
- We provide research about critical issues affecting women veterans:
 - Our *issue briefs* on homelessness, careers, and employment and reintegration provide an overview of key constraints and potential solutions.
 - Our 2010 [Summit Report](#) shares key findings and recommendations for current and future programs and policies.
 - BPW is supporting a 2011 American Legion *survey* which will gather information from women veterans regarding their experiences at VA hospitals.
 - Women veterans' voices were heard as part of a [BPW Foundation survey](#) on women and their use and knowledge of high-speed internet technology.

Reintegration Assistance

- We show employers that hiring women veterans is smart business. The military has expended extensive resources to train them to be the most skilled, efficient, inventive, disciplined and adaptive employees. Women in the military are leaders, managers, and team members, just like their male counterparts. We help employers leverage this key asset of the U.S. labor force, while supporting women veterans as they transition from military to civilian careers.

JFWV Summit Toolkit
Additional Resources –Talking Points

- We are launching a [mentoring program](#) for women veterans and military wives in conjunction with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as part of the White House's [Joining Forces](#) initiative.
- We advocate for women veterans. As a neutral convener and expert on working-women's' issues, we can convincingly deliver a non-partisan message about the unique needs of women veterans to policymakers, employers, the media, and the public, through legislative hearings, staff briefings, policy recommendations, presentations, and research.
- We offer [scholarships](#) to help women veterans achieve their goals:
 - We are partnering with INOVA's Military to Medicine program to provide scholarships to women veterans to train them for careers in medicine.
 - We are partnering with Ed2Go to provide scholarships for online training.
