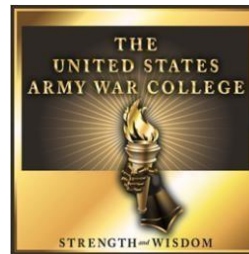# Addressing Diversity of the Force Issues through Army ROTC Programs

by

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Addressing Diversity of the Force Issues through Army ROTC Programs

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Abstract

Diversity of the (military) force is a key strategic issue that needs to be addressed if the Army's desires successful navigation within the strategic environment of the 21st century and beyond. The human dimension as it relates to talent management allows us to leverage diversity in support of Soldiers (and Civilians) as the organization's most valuable resource. The initial step in opening this discussion involves how we define diversity. Is it just through physical characteristics or can we consider the relevance of diversity of thought, also? Venturing into 2025, the Army can better provide national needs if it acts through its Army Reserve Officer Training Corps to address issues concerning diversity. The areas of focus are a declining number of minority commissions, a lack of geographic representation, and a poor representation of students studying Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Advertising the military mission, recruiting the right talent in the form of officer production, and mentoring all play a vital role in developing diverse, strategic leaders of the future.

Addressing Diversity of the Force Issues through Army ROTC Programs

Diversity in the military is linked to Talent Management and is a key strategic issue in the United States Army's ability to navigate beyond the 21st century. Our strategic environment is marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Talent management is a human dimension that is pertinent to demonstrating the military's investment in its most vital resource, its people. It focuses on building leadership qualities, considers talents, skills, intelligence, performance, and overall potential. The Army zeroes in on developing leaders and matching them in positions based on aptitude. "The Army is dependent upon itself to develop leaders as the process of developing a senior uniformed leader begins 20-plus years before the organization's need for the individual."[1]

Lack of diversity is an issue in the military that must be improved. The purpose of this essay is to start with the beginning of the senior leader development process and examine what the Army can do through its Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program to address the diversity of the force issues. First, this essay will examine the definition of diversity, the demographic makeup of the force, and the importance of improving Talent Management into the 21st Century. Then this paper will explore the relevance of advertising, recruiting, and mentoring. Last, this composition will then identify the opportunities available to tackle diversity in the Army ROTC program through the following focus areas: a declining number of minority commissions; a lack of geographic representation; and a poor representation of students studying Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

Diversity as a Key Strategic Issue

Previously published *National Military Strategies* stress the unpredictability of the global and national security environment. Former Army Chiefs of Staff proclaim that "global disorder has significantly increased while some of our comparative military advantage has begun to erode."[2] The challenges we face today are from both state and non-state actors, occur in a simultaneous realm, and most importantly require strategic analysis that can flexibly address a constantly accelerating rate of global instability. The U.S. global interests are threatened by motivated adversaries who amplify the risk our national leaders must assume in keeping our nation safe. A Key Strategic Issues List is published annually and tackles the need to attack our problems from a creative and strategic thinking approach. This list of urgent topics is prioritized to address the Army's high-priority strategic objectives to better equip the Army in its ability to provide its national needs.[3] We need to leverage both military tradition and history to be able to continue to defend our country and provide the security to allow everyone freedom to live toward a better future.

Human Dimension

The *United States Army's Human Dimension Concept* in the Training and Doctrine Command Pamphlet 525-3-7 outlines a vision to optimize the human performance of every Soldier during times when the nation is facing significant strategic uncertainty. This concept proposes the idea of how the Army of today must recruit, nurture, support, and often times reposition Soldiers and Civilians to be in the best position to shape the strategic environment into one of operational stability.[4] The concept is similar to the Army Operating Concept of "Winning in a Complex World." The first step the Army must take to confront its issue is the investment in individuals as an

agile, adaptive, and priceless resource. The question is in figuring out the best way to motivate individual performance through "innovation and investment in education, training, professionalism, leader development, holistic health and total fitness, talent acquisition and precision talent management of human capital."[5] Before the U.S. Army can optimize human performance, we need to start with recruiting the right talent for the right job necessary to make us a formidable opponent to the threats we face "in an environment marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity."[6]

Talent Management

Talent management is associated with prospecting the required collection of qualities an individual possesses to align the right person with the right job. The goal is to optimize performance. Talent management extracts the most productivity and value from an organization's greatest assets. Army talent management integrates people acquisition, development, employment, and retention strategies. It begins with an entry-level employee's talents matched with current and projected demand for those talents. This includes positions at the very top of the Army. "Talent management is more than just assignments management; it positions the Army to compete with the civilian market for talented officers."[7] The Army adopted a past talent acquisition strategy during times of high demand to fill vacancies that sacrificed quality in exchange for quantity. This approach resulted in a high number of Soldiers who serve but were not committed to the organization. Meaning that Soldiers were acquired that had neither the desire nor intention of serving long-term or Soldiers joining who failed to meet quality standards.

Unfortunately, talent management faces a disadvantage when attempting to recruit from a select population of candidates. The Army of tomorrow does not have the best selection of talent from which to choose. There is a shortage amongst the pool of

candidates for military service. The youth of today lack academic excellence and cannot meet the entry standards. Many in the youth population have chronic illnesses or have had minor skirmishes with law enforcement, and possibly exhibit lapses in proper moral/ethically judgment. They do not have an interest in serving in the military as, "currently, only 15% of youth are interested in serving, and less than three in ten are eligible to serve. Carrying this trend forward, the forecasts for 2025 and beyond indicate this small population of eligible and interested youth will continue to decline. In the future, the Army's talent acquisition strategy must focus more on supply--expanding the pool of quality, motivated applicants."[8] Furthermore, "the Army's talent acquisition success is wholly dependent on cooperative and unified efforts across a constellation of organizations and depends on the combined and effective support of these agencies to build the force, one person at a time, every day."[9]

Diversity in the Current Strategic Environment

The *United States National Security Strategy of 2015* describes the strategic environment as "fluid" and that advancing our interests directs U.S actions worldwide. The key is capitalizing on a strategy to combine advantages, seize opportunities, and minimize risk. The current strategic environment is mostly viewed from an international security perspective. "Many of the threats to our security in recent years arose from efforts by authoritarian states that oppose democratic forces."[10] The nature of war remains constant while the character of war is ever-changing and complicated by human nature and variables of gender, language, religion, societal structure, race, culture, and creed; all of which contributes to the complexity and unpredictability.[11] Leaders must possess the aptitude to strategically address a complex operational environment and thwart indeterminate, emergent threats. "The Armed Forces must also

acknowledge that diversity encompasses more than demographics, and they must act to harness the range of knowledge, skills, and backgrounds needed to prevail in the rapidly changing operational environment."[12]

There are differing viewpoints on the definition of diversity. A general definition of diversity is "having a composition of multiple elements." The focus is diversity in the workplace and how organizational culture affects talent acquisition and management. Regardless if it is a Civilian or military environment, there are a couple of facts supporting the benefits of workplace diversity. The first is that diversity fosters creativity and innovation. This leads to enhanced problem solving, which is a necessity for leaders to navigate in today's strategic environment. The second benefit is when organizations have a diverse population in its workforce, it can avoid high turnover rates. This is also applicable to the military services as there is cost to the organization when Soldiers separate due to poor retention efforts and under-utilized talents. There has been a slight increase in the Army's efforts to recognize and value diversity in the organization. Mainly because differing ethnic backgrounds are valuable toward maintaining an "adaptive, culturally astute Army."[13] "The Army's diversity mission is to develop and implement a strategy that contributes to mission readiness while transforming and sustaining the Army as a national leader in diversity."[14]

"Diversity of thought is becoming an important recruiting strategy for today's leading organizations."[15] This must be closely examined and one has to have an open mind to this way of thinking whenever selecting individuals to comprise a team of decision makers. Ordinarily, diversity leads one to first think of an individual's physical attributes but can it represent a way of thinking? No one person visualizes different

thought patterns when presented with the term of diversity. How often does one say when organizing a team that we need a Conservative versus a Liberal, an Analytical Thinker vs. a Creative Thinker, an Outside-the-box Thinker, a Detail-oriented Thinker or a person who sees the big picture? Not often, or not at all! Most individuals think regarding various racial, ethnic, and gender qualities. However, is it better to include diversity's new definition as a way of thinking alike instead of just as trending idea and more so as a creative new way to align U.S. Army goals with diversity initiatives?[16]

Diversity of the (military) force is a key strategic issue because despite the success in its endeavors to not be an exclusive organization, the Army as well as other organizations experiences issues whenever there is a fair balance of racial, ethnic, and gender representation. "Despite undeniable success, however, the Armed Forces have not yet succeeded in developing a continuing stream of leaders who are as diverse as the Nation they serve. Regarding representative percentage of military leadership positions held, racial/ethnic minorities and women still lag behind non-Hispanic White men."[17] Racial representation percentages in the Armed Forces when compared to society, in general, vary by each ethnic group. To use Army demographics as an example, Non-Hispanic Whites in the U.S. is 63.7% while the race profile of the active duty force is 73.9%. Non-Hispanic Blacks percentages (the U.S. vs. the Army) are 12% vs. 22%. Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, Alaskans, Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and women each have a higher U.S. demographic percentage than the respective percentages in the Army.[18] Although racial/ethnic minority percentages may fluctuate and are at times at a higher number in the military versus society, the problem is that overall, "the demographic composition of the officer corps is far from representative of

the American population and that officers are much less demographically diverse than the enlisted troops they lead."[19]

The Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)

ROTC started at 46 schools with a registered combined enrollment of about 40,000. Enrollment grew to 135 institutions by 1919 and to 220 colleges and universities by 1940.[20] It now has 275 programs nationwide, in Puerto Rico, and Guam. Seventy percent of second lieutenants and forty percent of General Officers originate through the Army ROTC. "The program is the largest officer-producing organization with the American military, having commissioned more than half a million second lieutenants since its inception."[21] Diversity of the (military) force is a key issue within Army ROTC as well. In 2014, approximately 6% of ROTC students were of racial/ethnic background. This opinion was reinforced by former Army Secretary, Eric Fanning during his remarks in November 2016 at a Howard University's Senior Leaders Forum:

> The Army is a people-based organization. I've seen how people are the strength of our Army. And the Army's people cannot accomplish their many missions without strong and steady leadership -- which is where each of you comes in. For the Army to accomplish all that the America public expects of it, Army leaders must harness the power of diverse teams. We need experience, critical thinking, and creativity in our force, but most importantly, we need teams of people who think differently from one another and yet are connected through a unity of mission. Multiple studies have demonstrated that teams with a diversity of races, genders, religions and backgrounds perform better and deliver better outcomes. The verdict is in. For the Army of tomorrow to be as strong as the Army of today, we must draw further from one of America's greatest advantages: our diverse population. Historically, senior officers in the Army have risen to their positions through the combat arms branches. That means that a diverse leadership must rely on achieving diversity across all branches, not just in raw numbers within the Army. I want to come here today to challenge some of these cadets to think a little bit more broadly about what branches they might consider and what branches they might enter.[22]

The Applicant Pool is Limited

A problem with the applicant pool rests in the fact that the choices are limited as the Army as a profession is converting more as a family business in which successive generations serve. "Fifty-nine percent of Army recruits come from a family where at least one parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle, sibling or cousin has worn the nation's uniform; being born into a military family has become a much more important marker of a future in the U.S. armed forces."[23] Unfortunately, "marked changes in the demographic makeup of the United States will throw existing disparities into sharp relief, creating a recruiting pool that looks very different from the pool of 30-40 years ago, from which today's leaders were drawn."[24] The Pentagon struggled with efforts to meet President Obama's demands for resolving the problem by increasing diversity in officer's ranks. However, "as it meets the diversity recruiting challenges of the future, the Army must continue to ensure that it remains a values-based organization. It cannot compromise its ethics or lower its standards to meet a recruiting goal. Future Soldiers, as well as future Army Civilians, must continue to be men and women of character who adopt the Army Values."[25]

The Current Minority Challenge

Encyclopedia Britannica defines the term "minority" in the social sciences as "a culturally, ethnically, or racially distinct group that coexists with but is subordinate to a more dominant group."[26] For the purpose of this paper, minorities will refer to Non-Whites who are "Black or African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders, Multiracial, or Other/Unknown."[27] A minority group is defined as having less than thirty percent representation. Underrepresentation of select ethnic groups is the premise of why we see issues within

the force concerning the lack of diversity. In an Army where black soldiers make up 23%

of the enlisted ranks, but only 12% of the commissioned officers' corps—compared with

75% white officers and 58% white enlisted—officials see a need for change.

Advertising and Recruiting

While the military has in the past had high ratings when it comes to public

opinion, few demonstrate an interest in serving or seeing their sons or daughters do so.

The opinion of the military worsened when the wars in the Middle East resulted in a high

number of casualties. There is a misperception that extends deep into the family

thought processes and cultural beliefs that certain career fields in the Army (Combat

Arms, particularly) are dangerous and that serving during any time of war equates to a

death sentence.[28] Additionally, the decline in overall youth interest to serve has had a

detrimental effect on recruiting efforts. The Department of Defense (DOD) is the nation's

largest employer and has always invested in advertising. "Military advertising may be

the most audible voice in society conveying information about careers and life in the

military."[29] The DOD has identified the need to "engage with and educate key audiences

on the value and benefits of military service to both the individual and the Nation."[30]

As it pertains to recruiting and meeting manning needs, the DOD should engage

in recruiting activities that include discussing the features and benefits of military

service; members of the youth population and their parents are included. Recruiters

benefit by identifying best practices for building relationships with potential recruits,

sharing the results with other recruiters, expanding recruiting messages to wide

audiences, and implementing recruiter training to effectively engage racial/ethnic

minorities and females. United States Army recruiters should seek to understand how

the recruiting culture and how best practices assist other services in recruiting

underrepresented ethnicities and build those best practices into a broad, research-based recruiting strategy. There also needs to be extra effort placed on enhancing military recruiter access to top performing high school students.

Recruiters will benefit from accessing technology-based recruiting tools such as the DOD's "Joint Advertising Market Research and Studies Recruiting Database Program (JAMRS)" or the "Diversity Outreach and Recruiting Event Site Selection (DORESS)" software. The software is useful for those involved in recruiting of officer candidates from diversity-related events. It can allow increased access to information to identify better candidates amongst an enhanced talent pool or build information databases to categorize variables that influence or determine recruiting success. "Research and study initiatives provide valuable insight for recruiting professionals. These projects explore the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes of American youth, their likelihood to join the military, their awareness of and reactions to military outreach efforts and advertising, and other variables that may be related to military recruiting. Understanding these factors is critical to the success of sustaining an All-Volunteer Force and helps ensure the Services' recruiting efforts are directed in the most efficient and beneficial manner."[31] Each will be discussed later in more detail.

Mentoring

Army leadership defines mentoring as, "the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect."[32] Mentoring happens anytime when an individual or leader of greater age, experience, or rank provides someone their junior with purpose, motivation, and direction. The goal of this advice and counsel is to foster both personal and professional development. Unfortunately, "mentorship in the military

is one of those concepts that everyone agrees with, but almost no one does. It helps the Army maintain a highly competent set of leaders. Protégés carefully consider assessment, feedback, and guidance; these become valuable for growth to occur."[33] As a principal argument in support of the relevance of mentoring, Lieutenant Colonel Remo Butler (now Retired Brigadier General) graduated as a member of the U.S. Army War College class of 1996 who wrote, *Why Black Officers Fail.* His essay, published in *Parameters*, looked at "how young black officers are acquired and nurtured by the Army. Because there are relatively few senior black officers, there are fewer role models for young black officers to emulate, and few black mentors to show them the ropes."[34] Twenty-one years later, the trend continues. The Army has emphasized the efforts of mentoring, but many junior black officers receive little to no mentorship apart from receiving their Officer Evaluation Report. This is a critical flaw when young black officers are left to find a quality mentorship on their own.[35] Unfortunately, the scientific saying of "like attracts like" seeps into the picture.

<div align="center">Army ROTC Must Increase Minority Commissions</div>

A current initiative of Army ROTC focuses on expanding the number of parents and prospective Cadets who would explore ROTC as an option, eventually serve in the military as an officer, or use the program to finance an undergraduate education. Right now, the knowledge level of students at schools where ROTC is (currently at 275 host schools and universities) declines every year. The ROTC Cadet Command at Fort Knox, Kentucky, consistently finds that 12-14% of students on campuses say they would have considered ROTC had they known more about it. That is a sufficient quantity to drive up quality significantly. It would also positively impact the diversity of academics and ethnic diversity. If students are unaware of Army ROTC program options

ahead of time or early in the education planning process, it is difficult for them to make the decision to join their program in enough time before committing to other financial arrangements to pay for school. Parents often do not have the information either.

A recommended option is rooted in returning to an inventive idea that helped to recruit in the past. This method can potentially enhance the quality and quantity of minority commissions. In the past, the Cadet Command increased enrollment into the Army ROTC program and enhanced the trend of producing future officer production with Battalion Command emphasis on recruiting and the use of a method they called the "Five Chances to Say Yes" initiative.[36] Under this plan, the University makes the first student-ROTC contact via ROTC marketing materials included in application packages. The second chance to say yes is a joint university-ROTC venture made when a student has been accepted. The acceptance letter includes the university president endorsing the ROTC program along with financial incentives available through the ROTC program. Chance three occurs while the incoming freshman is preparing to attend the University. A ROTC Basic Course brochure is inserted in welcome packets. The fourth exposure to the ROTC program occurs during new student orientation with special presentations (to both students and parents), on-campus direct mailings, and specially staged publicity events. The parent presentations emphasize the availability of ROTC scholarships. The final chance to say yes is made throughout the drop/add period with on-campus telephone and direct mail efforts.[37] This initiative increased Military Science first year student enrollment by twenty-three percent! Coupling the "Five Chances to Say Yes" with social media methods will surely allow Army ROTC cadre and school administration achieve increased enrollment goals.

A second recruiting recommendation is labeled as the "Diversity Triad." The first point of the triad is the Army ROTC Professors of Military Science (PMS). The PMS' have the most impact on assessing and developing leadership. Recently, the minimum baccalaureate grade point average requirement to compete on the PMS board was lowered. The hope is if more combat arms officers are selected as PMSs, more cadets may follow their footsteps and select combat arms as their branch of choice. PMSs must also make it an essential task to enlist the aid of their local school administration to help with ROTC recruiting and retention efforts. The second point of the triad is the Congressional Black Caucus and its 48 members. The premise here is to offer four-year Army ROTC scholarships to students not selected for Congressional nominations to the U.S. Army Military Academy. The current goal is 100 scholarships, but in the future, it has potential to grow to five times more. The final point of the diversity-focused triad consists of fraternities and sororities. These organizations have quality students in their ranks, promote a set of values and structure, and have an influence on campus and alumni who can help recruit and retain quality, diverse cadets. Other few other recommendations include marketing and recruiting in high schools, so students and parents are knowledgeable about Army ROTC incentives and the benefit of the program as a college course that leads to a commission. It teaches leadership and life skills that lead to an above-average paying job. Lastly, use Soldier for Life Veterans as additional recruiters and those who were commissioned through the Army ROTC program to reach back to their high school to recruit students in their hometowns.

Recruiting for quantity and quality minority commissions should start with the use of technology-based recruiting research tools. The first is the Joint Advertising Market

Research and Studies Recruiting Database Program "provides centralized list procurement within the DOD used by the Services to educate potential prospects on the benefits of military service. Having a centralized database provides numerous Information Assurances and physical security measures which safeguard the information at the highest possible levels. Redundancy is eliminated as singular control of the database aids the Services in removing individuals from mailing lists who do not want to receive information from the military."[38]

The second technology-based tool is the "Diversity Outreach and Recruiting Event Site Selection (DORESS)" used by the Air Force, but the U.S. Army recruiters can take notice. "It is a piece of software created by the RAND Corporation in identifying diversity outreach and recruiting event sites. By combining user preferences with information on student populations, DORESS helps users find sites at which to locate potential candidates from colleges and other selective schools; students majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields at schools with U.S. News and World Report-ranked STEM programs; and public high school students from highly ranked high schools."[39]

<center>The Current Geographic Representation Challenge</center>

There is a direct correlation between geography and potential minority recruits. If you define minority as anyone who is not white, the greatest population of minorities are in California. Not surprisingly, but the depth of the diversity is astounding. California has 14,000,000 Hispanics, more than the total population of all neighboring states of Nevada, Arizona, and Oregon, combined of any ethnicity. You can throw in everyone in Washington State as well and still equal the numbers of Hispanics alone in California. Only four states have more African Americans than California, and the population of

Asian Americans is five times greater than the next most populous state in Asian Americans. There are only twelve universities in California that have ROTC programs. That may sound like a lot, but it is the third most of any state. Alabama has ten, despite having 1/9th the population and 1/14th the college enrolled population of California. There are at least eight states that are over-subscribed; this poses a problem for the Army ROTC Cadet Command. Although the logical method of solving that problem would be to close programs in those oversubscribed states and move the resources to California, this will not work. The National Defense Authorization Act specifically prohibits closing programs.[40]

Any retreat of Army ROTC programs from big cities has hurt recruiting efforts. "In the past few decades, the Army pulled its ROTC programs out of the Northeast-a big, ethnically diverse urban center. Instead, it chose to concentrate on campuses in the South and Midwest that seemed to produce more officers."[41] The result was the Army ROTC program missing out on recruiting students with diverse backgrounds who may be first generation immigrants eager to serve.[42] Immigrants who likely still speak their native languages live in largely populated urban areas, but university ROTC programs have a scarce presence in those cities. The programs were closed once fewer officers were commissioned semester after semester. "Despite the command getting close to $175 million for scholarships to bring in more cadets, it struggles to get additional officers and expand programs to more campuses in urban markets. It is likely that for this reason, the Cadet Command comes up short of its goals in commissioning second lieutenants each year."[43]

Army ROTC Can Enhance the Quality and Quantity of Geographic Representation

One recommendation is to have Congress allow programs in each school to close and mandate that the footprint of ROTC reflect the population of America, without further Congressional or political oversight. Give Army ROTC a massive increase in resources to maintain existing schools and still open programs in California and other undersubscribed states. This resource increase will come from shifting funds from lagging programs and reallocation the resources to the performing markets. To make it equivalent, 17 additional programs would have to be opened in California, as well as 9 in New York, 2 in Illinois, 2 in Colorado, and 1 in Nevada, at a minimum.[44] It is essential to reopen schools in urban areas, enhance exposure to the military through advertising and recruiting efforts and find cost effective methods to contract students into the Army ROTC programs. "This will help produce an officer corps that is fully reflective of the rich ethnicity and cultural diversity reflective of the country."[45] With a possible funding request from Congress to open regionally aligned programs in urban areas, New York can be the test bed for this pilot. Just like any other university in the country, students will be drawn to the Army program to pay for their college education.

The Challenge of Encouraging Innovative Thinking via STEM Studies

The United States has developed as a global leader, in large part, through the genius and hard work of its scientists, engineers, and innovators. In a world that's becoming increasingly complex, where success is driven not only by what you know but by what you can do with what you know, it is more important than ever for our youth to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to solve tough problems, gather and evaluate evidence, and make sense of information. These are the types of skills that students learn by studying science, technology, engineering, and math—subjects collectively known as STEM.[46]

The U.S. Army advertises STEM careers available on its *Go Army website*. Military career choices for STEM majors include, but are not limited to, Healthcare,

Cyber, Engineering, and Military Intelligence.[47] The U.S. ARMY ROTC Cadet Command has identified that the overwhelmingly highest numbers of engineering majors and all other STEM are in California.[48]

Army ROTC Can Improve Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Majors

The recommendations for the Army ROTC program to enhance the quality and quantity of STEM majors jump starts the recruiting effort with the use of the RAND Corporation developed DORESS software. It will search for STEM majors at universities and colleges with U.S. News and World Report STEM programs. The Army ROTC Cadet command should create a STEM Outreach office where ROTC programs at universities can service their respective surrounding communities through fostering development, improvement, coordination, and assessment of an Army K-12 STEM outreach program. Once relationships are developed with high school students, expand minority youth recruitment for STEM majors and ROTC, via funded visits for select high school seniors to elite STEM schools with ROTC programs. In addition to this, allow student visitors to experience an ordinary day in the life of a STEM major who is also a ROTC scholarship cadet, by shadowing a ROTC cadet/student at the school.[49]

Conclusion

Leadership must make a commitment to diversity, embrace the talents of individuals, and create an inclusive environment. It is imperative to research and recruit America's best but also to develop tools to integrate backgrounds and experiences into the mission. This fosters independent decision making and inspires above average performance. Former Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter announced the "Force of the Future" initiative to improve talent management for the military officer corps. Diversity enhancing initiatives are essential to the Army's talent management of human capital.

Taking a business approach to matching people into the right job fit, will place the Army in an advantageous position to transform itself into a flexible, agile force. Leaders having the know-how to respond to the 21st century's strategic environment is crucial. "Soldiers must have a cultural understanding of the populations in which they are deployed, but also a better grasp of the many characteristics and backgrounds in our formations."[50] "A diverse force is a talented force. It's important that we achieve and maintain a force that is representative of America. Simply put, diversity in the military is good for the nation."[51] The Army ROTC program is the gateway to developing this much-needed leadership for the 21st century by enhancing the number of minority commissions; improving geographic representation; fostering a better representation of students studying Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

Endnotes

[1] U.S. Army, *U.S. Army Leader Development Strategy 2013* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, 2013), http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/documents/cal/ALDS5June%202013Record.pdf (accessed May 1, 2017).

[2] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America 2015* (Washington, DC: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, June 2015), http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/National_Military_Strategy_2015. pdf (accessed July 12, 2016).

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