



**Overview of U.S. Army Women's Foundation 5th Annual  
Army Women in Transition Symposium**  
*Held Tuesday, March 12, 2013 in the Cannon Caucus Room*

Each year, during Women's History Month, the Army Women's Foundation presents its annual symposium and it awards scholarships to help Army women further prepare for their careers in or out of the military.

In this, our fifth year, the symposium took place on March 12, in the Cannon Caucus Room. We were so pleased that several Members of Congress and staff were able to attend.

While it is tradition that the symposium occurs in March, this year is unique because the Pentagon has lifted its policy that prohibited women from serving in combat roles. Over the next several years, this will present more opportunities for women in the military. At the same time, however, the military will downsize.

Lieutenant General Howard B. Bromberg, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, US Army, delivered the opening remarks at the symposium.

The symposium consisted of two panels that examined the military and civilian opportunities available to women who serve in the Army, and how those women can influence their futures. As one panelist said, "Changes are on the horizon for women in the military. Those with talent ... and drive will only be limited by their enthusiasm."

**Panel 1, "The Choice is Yours ... Or Is It?"** addressed how to adjust to and impact organizational changes.

**Panel 2, "In or Out, Landing On Your Feet,"** addressed how to map and manage a career in the military or in the civilian sector.

Presenters shared common thoughts on several key points:

- ▶ Lifting the policy that excludes women from combat arms will create more career opportunities, but whether or not the change in policy affects each woman will depend on her military occupation. At the same time that more opportunities will emerge for women, the Army will reduce its total number of personnel. The downsizing will be conducted in an organized manner to maintain a quality force. Panelists encouraged soldiers to seek mentors and leadership roles while in the military and when they transition to the civilian workforce.

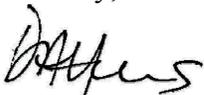
- ▶ Plan! Plan! Plan! At some point, every member of the military will leave service, either through demobilization, separation or retirement. Service members should begin preparing to move to a civilian career long before they anticipate leaving the military. Searching for jobs in companies that share their values, such as teamwork, can lead to success. Service members, however, must be prepared for the possibility of reduced income in civilian jobs when they first join a company. One O-6, for example, earns less as a civilian for performing the same job she had as an Army officer.
- ▶ The VOW Act has been helpful in that it requires the services to better prepare military members to transition to civilian employment. Even soldiers who have committed to a civilian employer still take part in the Army's mandatory transition program. The program helps soldiers write resumes, network, learn to market themselves and build their skills.
- ▶ Many companies want to hire veterans but don't always know how to find the job candidates. There are a number of resources to connect veterans to prospective employers, including DoD's Hero 2 Hired website, (<https://h2h.jobs>), where employers can post job openings on the site.
- ▶ Some companies that have made a strategic effort to hire veterans have Human Resources programs that reflect an understanding of the qualifications of military members and the uniqueness of military service.
- ▶ Successful programs exist to help prepare troops for civilian jobs. One such program is with the American pipefitters union, which offers courses to troops at some military installations to prepare them for jobs as journeymen.

We hope you find this information helpful to you as you work to serve the men and women in the military and your communities. Please consider the Foundation a resource for you on matters related to both active duty servicewomen and women veterans, as well as a resource for your constituents who are transitioning from military to civilian life.

The U.S. Army Women's Foundation is the premier center for educational excellence, the national network for today's Army women, and a dynamic advocate for telling the history of Army women.

Through its programs, research, and scholarships, the Army Women's Foundation honors the service of Army women and supports the U.S. Army Women's Museum. Established in 1969, the Foundation is headquartered in Fort Lee, Virginia. For more information, please visit [www.awfdn.org](http://www.awfdn.org).

Sincerely,



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