

# *Veterans: What does the data say?*

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PennState

# Advancing the Health and Well-being of Military Families

## The Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness at Penn State



Applied  
Research



Program  
Evaluation



Implementation  
Support



Learning Design  
& Curriculum  
Development

<https://militaryfamilies.psu.edu/>

# The Veterans Metrics Initiative (TVMI) Sample



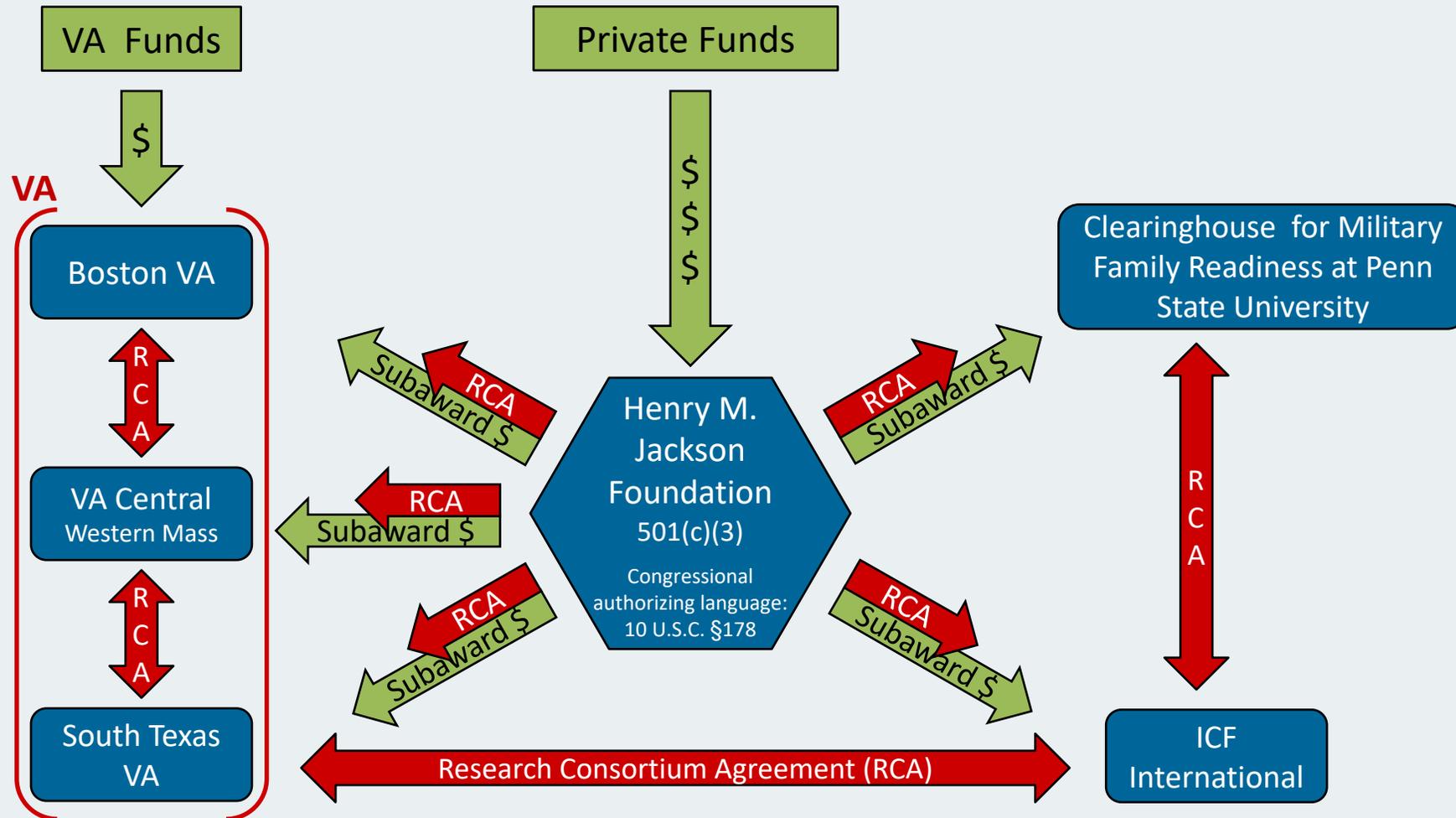
Vogt, D., Perkins D. F., Copeland L. A., Finley, E. P., Jamieson, C. S., Booth, B., Lederer, S., & Gilman, C. L. (2018). The Veterans Metrics Initiative study of US veterans' experiences during their transition from military service. *BMJ Open* 8(6), e020734.

doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2017-020734

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/8/6/e020734>

- 3-year longitudinal study (public dataset will be available in Summer 2021)
  - Coordinated by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine, Inc.
- National sample of 9,566 veterans who completed the survey at Wave 1
  - Participants were recruited in the fall of 2016
  - 23% response rate by newly separated U.S. veterans
- Non-response weights were computed to adjust for gender, rank/paygrade, and branch (full population of 48,695 eligible veterans)

# TVMI: Research Study Structure (2015-2020)



# Sponsorship of TVMI



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture



Marge and Philip Odeen



# Research Aims

## Aim 1:

- Document veteran well-being in 4 key domains – **mental and physical health, vocation, finances, and social relationships** – over the first 3 years of the transition from military service to civilian life
- Identify factors associated with better and worse well-being

## Aim 2:

- **Describe programs used by veterans** as they reintegrate into civilian life and **distill them into their components**, identifying common components across programs

## Aim 3:

- Identify **program components that are associated with changes in well-being** following separation from military service



# VETERANetwork

Veteran Evaluation and Research Applications Network

The VETERANetwork will act as an **applied research and evaluation unit** for philanthropies, foundations, and other veteran-serving non-profit organizations. It will address questions and issues related to **veterans' transitions to civilian lives.**

The network will strive to ensure public and private donations are invested in **effective programs and services that support veterans' and families' well-being.**

# Veteran Evaluation and Research Applications Network

Our TVMI and VETS team at the Clearinghouse includes:

**CLEARINGHOUSE**  
FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS  
A PENN STATE APPLIED RESEARCH CENTER

Dr. Daniel F. Perkins

Dr. Keith R. Aronson

Dr. Nicole R. Morgan

Ms. Kimberly J. McCarthy

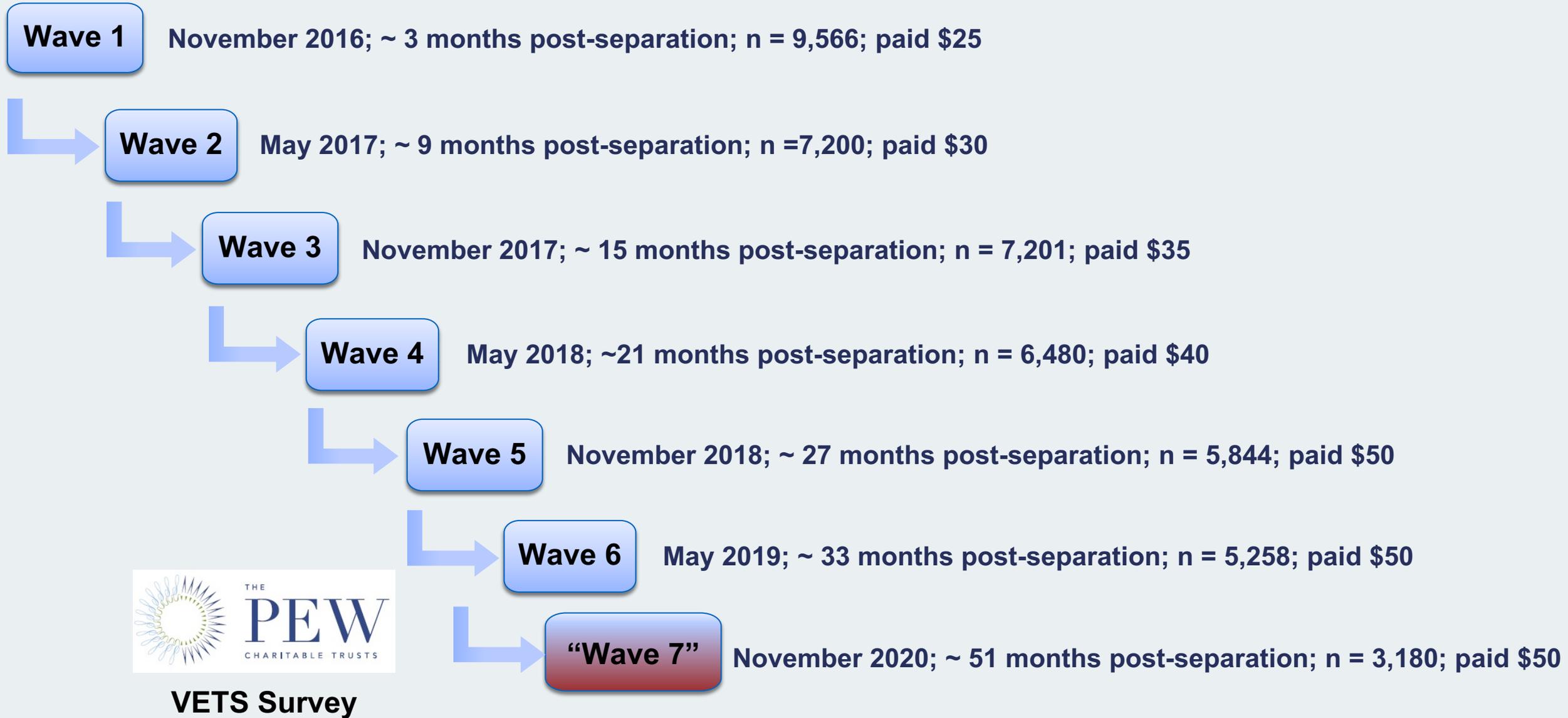
Ms. Julia A. Bleser

Dr. Jessie H. Rudi

Mr. Brandon A. Balotti



# TVMI and VETS Study Data Collection Timeline



# TVMI and VETS Study Participants



	Eligible Population (n=48,965)	TVMI Wave 1 (3 months after discharge) (n=9,566)	VETS (51 months after discharge) (n=3,205)
Male	84.1%	81.8%	80.9%
Female	15.9%	18.2%	19.1%
Army	32.1%	32.9%	32.0%
Navy	18.8%	19.2%	20.0%
Air Force	13.5%	19.0%	19.7%
Marines	17.2%	15.9%	16.2%
National Guard/Reserve	18.4%	12.9%	12.1%
E1-E4 Junior Enlisted	41.4%	27.5%	29.3%
E5-E6 Mid-Grade Enlisted	29.5%	30.0%	30.1%
E7-E9 Senior Enlisted	13.4%	17.9%	16.0%
W1-W5 Warrant Officers	1.1%	1.6%	1.3%
O1-O3 Junior Officers	6.4%	8.4%	9.3%
O4-O10 Senior Officers	8.1%	14.7%	13.9%

*Note: 3,205 VETS participants consented; 3,180 completed the survey.*

# TVMI and VETS Study Participants Continued



	TVMI Wave 1 (3 months after discharge) (n=9,516)	VETS (51 months after discharge) (n=3,191)
White Non-Hispanic	65.0%	70.0%
Black Non-Hispanic	10.8%	8.3%
Hispanic	13.8%	13.0%
Asian Hawaiian Pacific Islander Non-Hispanic	4.4%	2.6%
Other Race Non-Hispanic	6.0%	6.0%

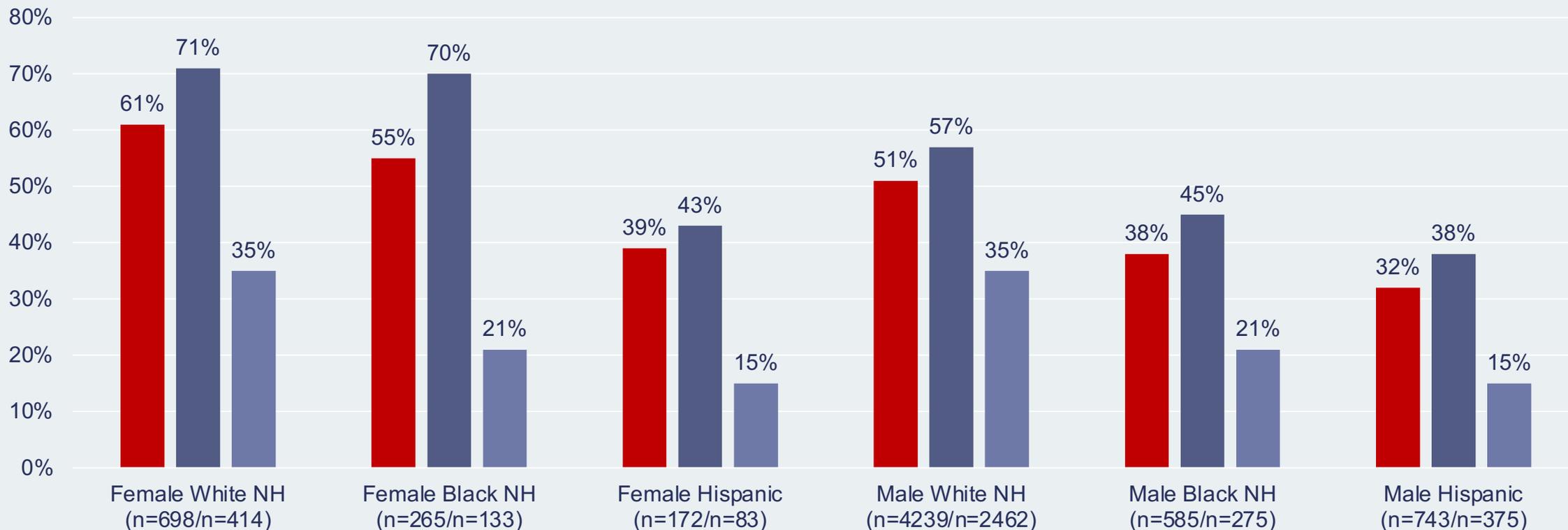
# Major Finding

**The majority of transitioning veterans are resilient and doing well during their civilian reintegration.**

- 43% of the veterans reported that they were not having difficulty adjusting to civilian life.
- 90% of the veterans indicated they were not socially isolated.
- Among veterans who were not full-time students, 56% were working full-time and 26% were looking for work in Wave 1. Forty-eight percent of the veterans found a full-time job in Wave 2 and approximately 70% were working full-time by Wave 6 (3 years out).
- 27% of the veterans reported possessing high resilience.

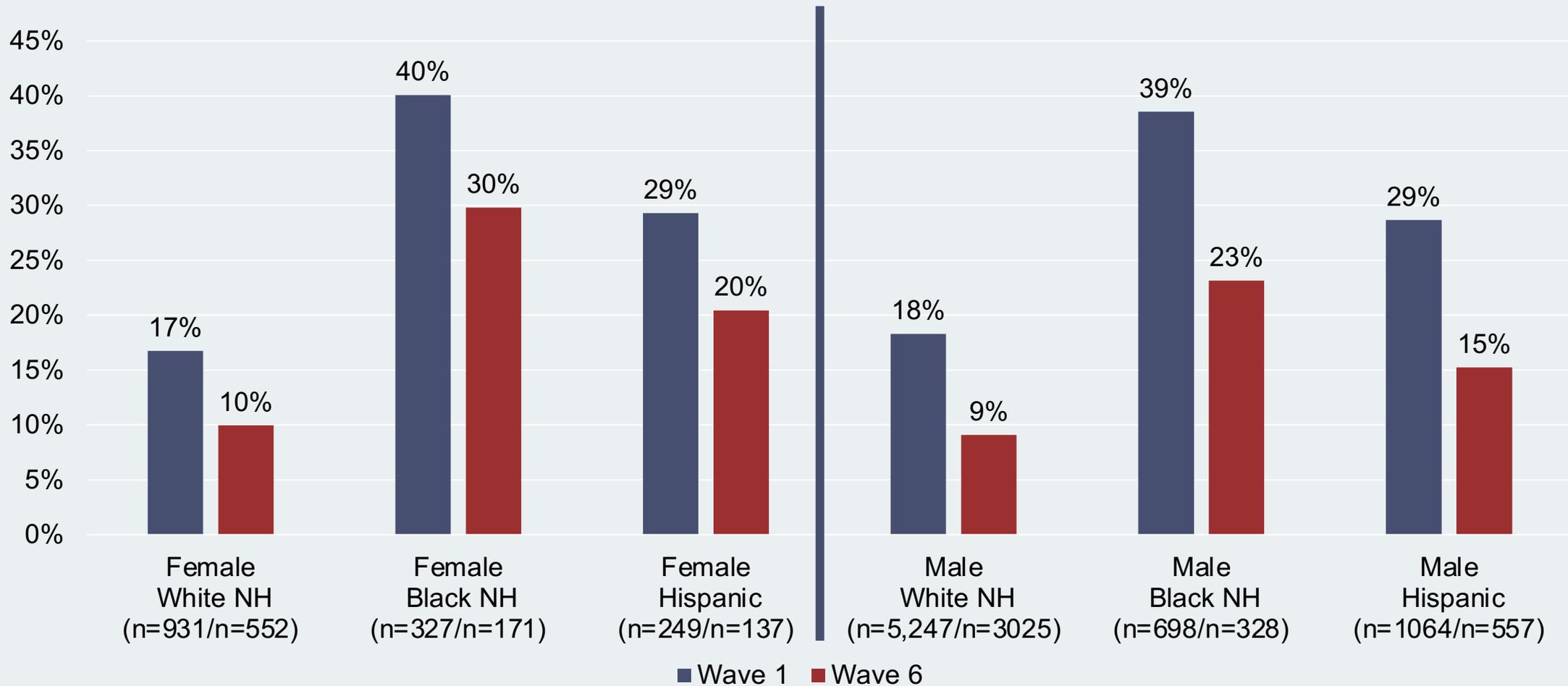
# Educational Completion (Waves 1 and 6)

Comparison of the TVMI Sample with National Center of Education Statistics (NCES)



- TVMI participants age 25+ with a Bachelor's degree or higher at Wave 1 (2016; within 3 months of separation)
- TVMI participants age 25+ with a Bachelor's degree or higher at Wave 6 (2019; 2.5 years after separation)
- NCES statistics for adults age 25+ who completed a Bachelor's degree or higher in 2016 (not by gender)

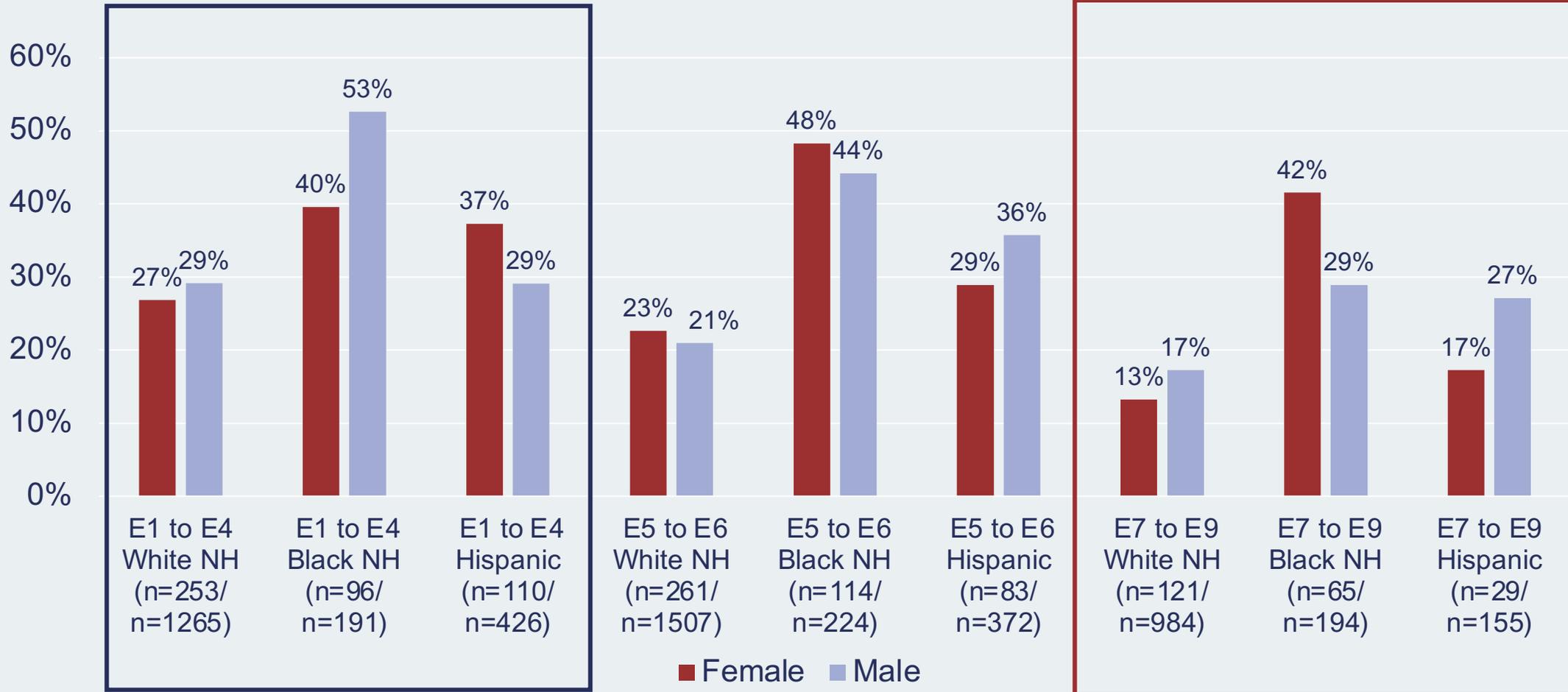
# Problematic Financial Status by Race and Gender



# Problematic Financial Status by Paygrade

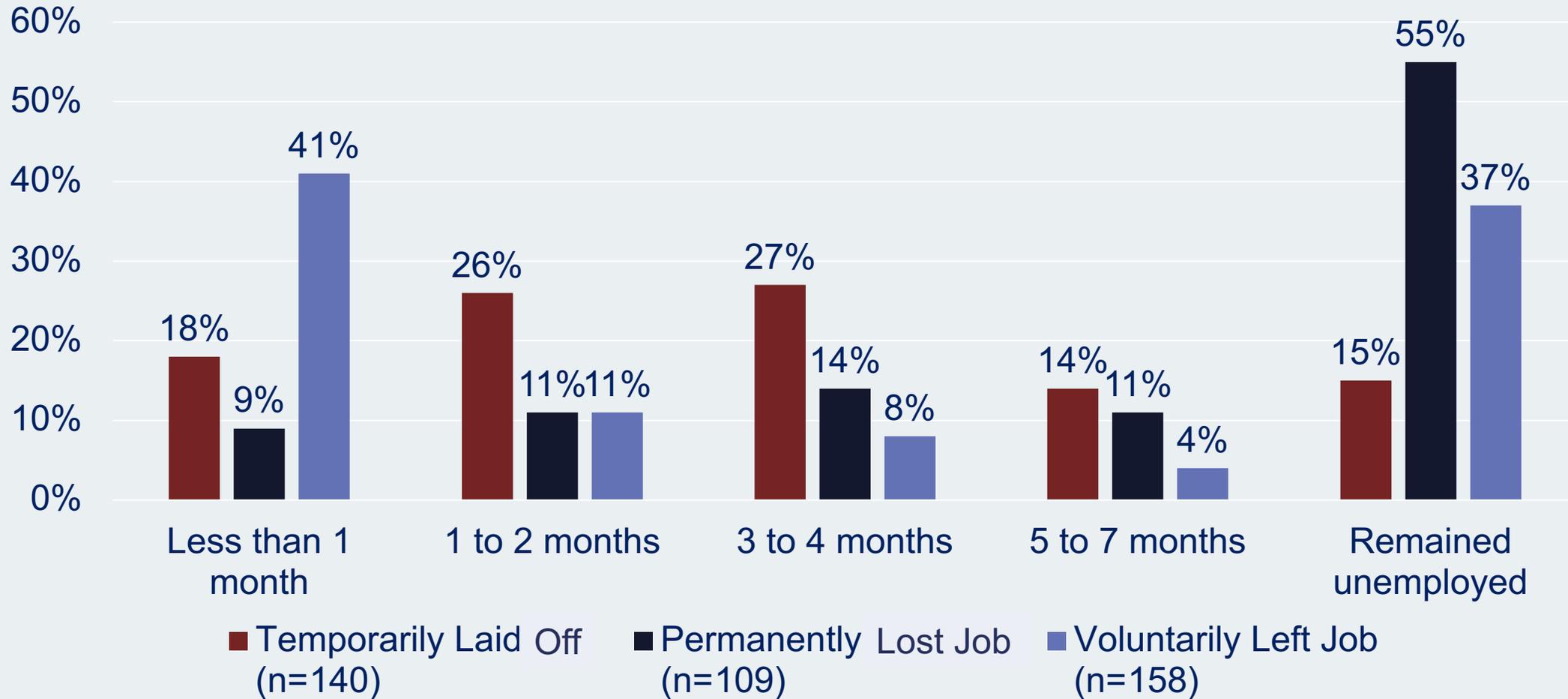
## Junior Enlisted Ranks

## Senior Enlisted Ranks



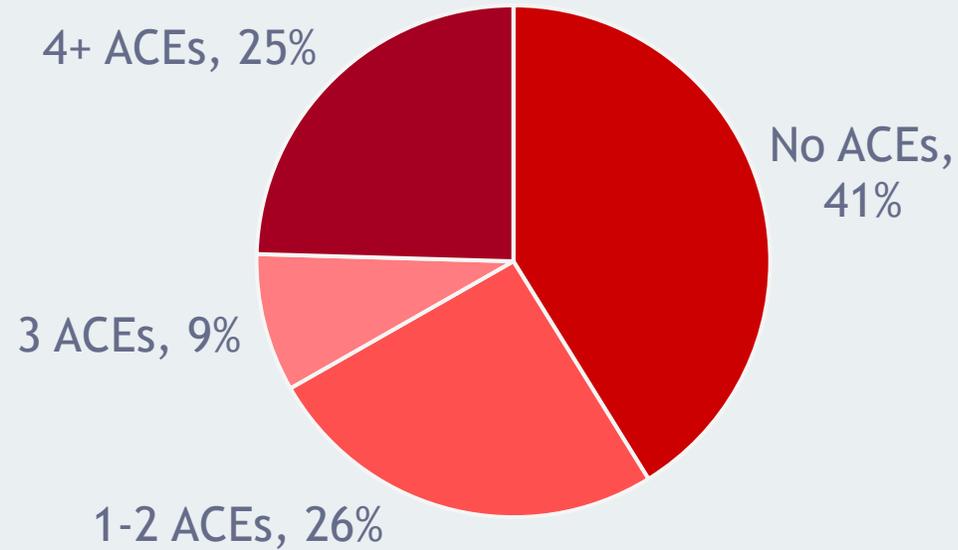
Other significant covariates: general/other than honorable discharge (3.2 times) and mental health symptoms (PTSD [43%], anxiety [78%], depression [56%]), each child (21% for each)

# Time It Took for Veterans to Regain Employment During COVID-19

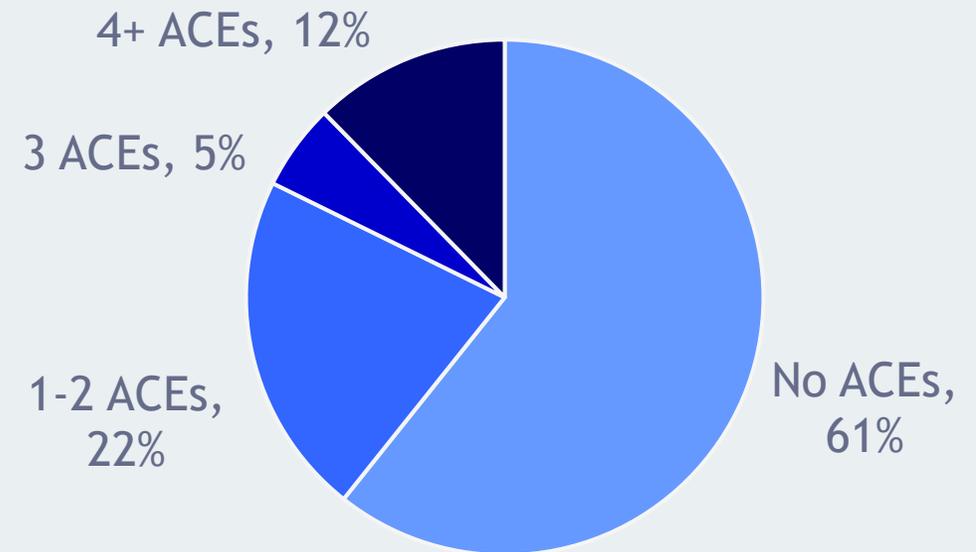


# Number of Reported ACEs

## Females



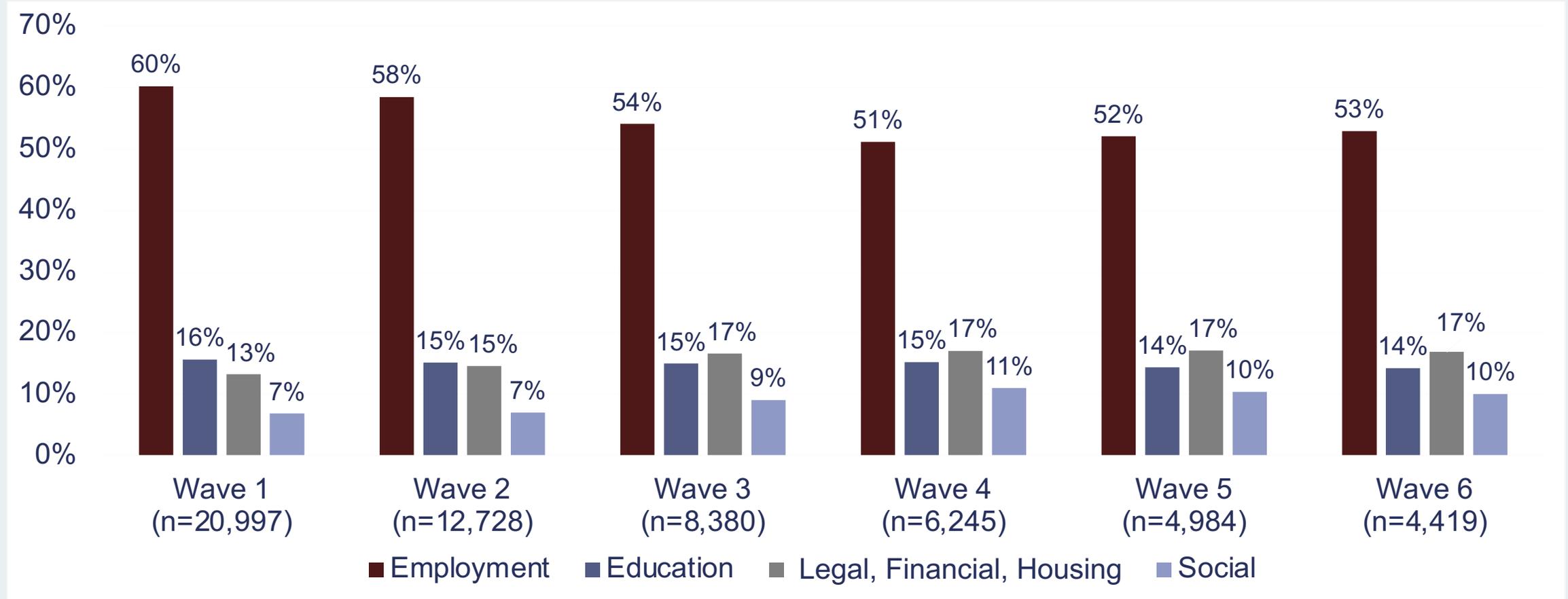
## Males



# Combination of Combat Exposure and ACEs: Predicting *Probable Suicidality*

	Female Veterans	Male Veterans
High resilience	86% less likely	86% less likely
<b>No ACEs, no combat patrol events, no corollaries of combat (reference group)</b>		
1-2 ACEs, no combat patrol or corollaries	3x more likely	2x
3+ ACEs, no combat patrol or corollaries	5x	3x
<b>Only among veterans exposed to corollaries of combat</b>		
No ACES, corollaries of combat	--	Not significant
1-2 ACES, corollaries of combat	--	Not significant
3+ ACES, corollaries of combat	5x	4x
<b>Among veterans who experience both combat patrol events and corollaries of combat</b>		
No ACES, both combat and corollaries of combat	9x	3x
1-2 ACES, both combat and corollaries of combat	9x	2x
3+ ACES, both combat and corollaries of combat	8x	5x

# Number of Nominated Programs at Each Wave by Domain



Note: The “n” in this slide refers to the number of nominated programs. Health programs are excluded.

# Common Components

- **Content**: What does the program teach or what information does it provide?
  - e.g., coping skills, information on how to write a resume, search for available jobs
- **Process**: How does the program convey information or teach skills?
  - Mode of delivery: in-person, online, phone
  - Method of delivery: direct instruction (i.e., lecture), mentor/coach, peer-to-peer interaction
- **Barrier Reduction**: Does the program provide tangible supports or does it reduce barriers to accessing the program?
  - e.g., transportation to the program, reducing stigma
- **Sustainability**: How does the program keep participants engaged once formal programming has ended?
  - e.g., community referrals, alumni groups



# Top Ranked Components for Getting a Job



Wave 1 - Component and Process	Odds in Wave 2	Odds in Wave 3
Interviewing, mentor/coach	--	2.75 times
Resume-writing, mentor/coach	91%	2.28 times
Translating military to civilian work, mentor	--	2.19 times
Translating military to civilian work, direct instruction	73%	--
Networking conference	--	2.06 times
Career planning, exploration, interactive online	47%	--
Virtual seminars		2.0 times



Wave 2 - Component and Process	Odds in Wave 3	Odds in Wave 4
Networking conference	3 times	3 times
Career planning, exploration, interactive online	2 times	88% more likely
Job training and certification, direct instruction	--	98% more likely
Career planning, exploration, mentor/coach	69% more likely	--

# Race/Ethnicity Predicting Finding a Job

- In general, veterans who are Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and “Other” (race) non-Hispanic were less likely to find a job at Wave 3 (15-months post-separation) than White non-Hispanic veterans (among those looking for a job at Wave 1).
- However, when examining only Black non-Hispanic veterans, they were:
  - 3 times more likely to find a job if they used a mentor/coach with interviewing content;
  - 3 times more likely to find a job if they used a mentor/coach with resume writing content; and
  - 2.5 times more likely to find a job if they used direct instruction and mentors for career planning and exploration.

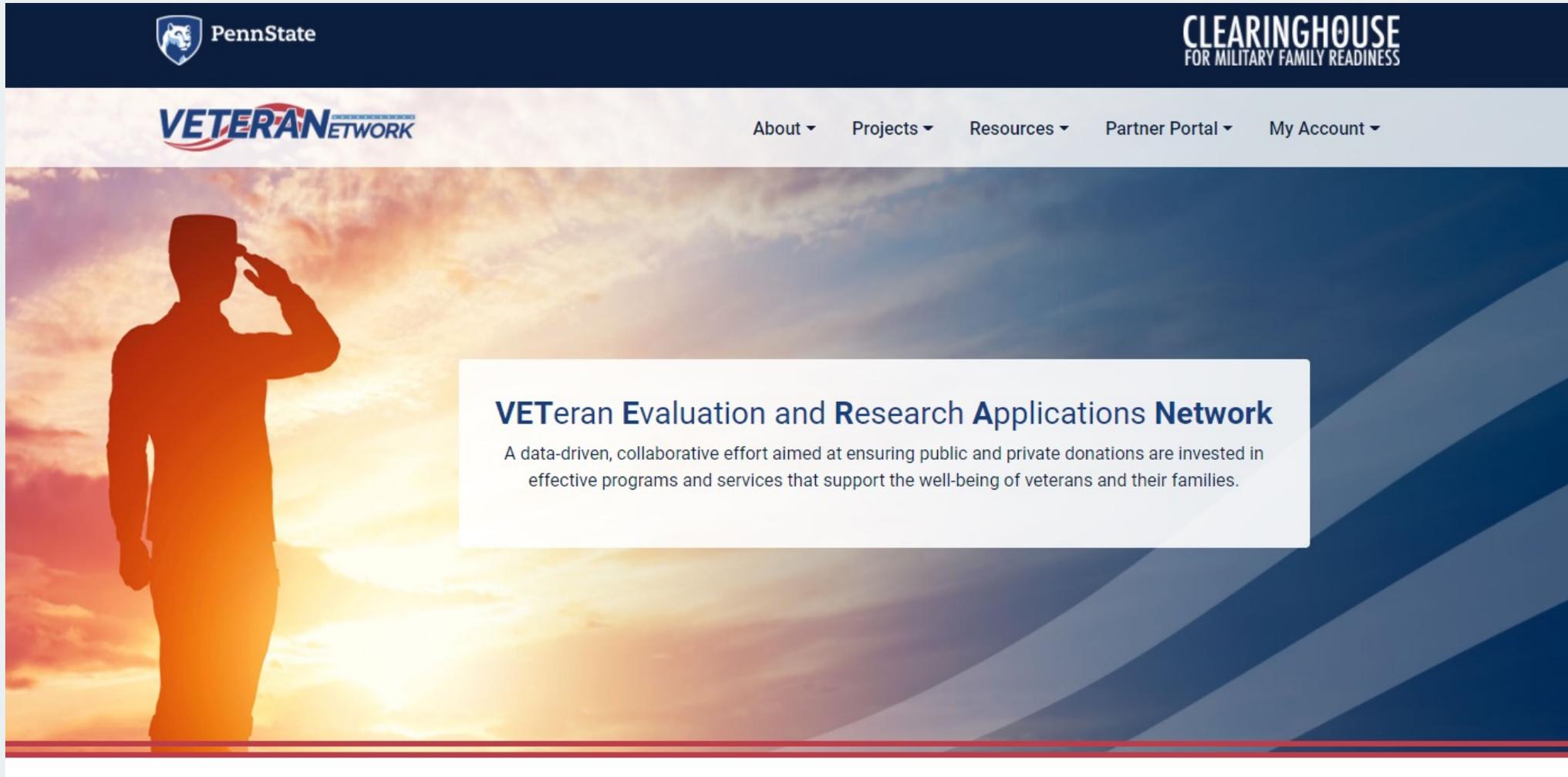
# Top 10 Components: Largest Impacts on Outcomes

Component (Content and Process)	Odds Ratio Across All Employment Outcomes and Waves (Highest to Lowest)	Outcome
Networking conference	3.0 times	Getting a Job
Interviewing, mentor/coach	2.8 times	Getting a Job
Entrepreneurship, direct instruction	2.6 times	Better Job Opportunity
Resume-writing, mentor/coach	2.3 times	Getting a Job
Translating military to civilian work, mentor	2.2 times	Getting a Job
Career planning, exploration, interactive online	2.0 times	Getting a Job
Virtual seminars	2.0 times	Getting a Job
Job training and certification, direct instruction	98%	Getting a Job
Resume-writing, direct instruction	96%	Better Job Opportunity
Resume-writing, interactive online	87%	Better Job Opportunity

# Help Needed, Please!

- Turning the data and findings into action for policymakers and VSOs (screener)
- Funding to continue to follow the TVMI/VETS sample yearly and to include a spouse/partner survey
- Development of a partnership with DoD to link the TVMI sample to pre-separation data
- Other IDEAS?

# Visit Us Online: <https://veteranetwork.psu.edu>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Veteran Network website. At the top left is the Penn State logo. At the top right is the text "CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MILITARY FAMILY READINESS". Below the Penn State logo is the "VETERAN NETWORK" logo. To the right of the logo is a navigation menu with the following items: "About", "Projects", "Resources", "Partner Portal", and "My Account". The main content area features a large background image of a soldier saluting against a sunset sky. Overlaid on this image is a white text box containing the following text:

**VETERAN Evaluation and Research Applications Network**  
A data-driven, collaborative effort aimed at ensuring public and private donations are invested in effective programs and services that support the well-being of veterans and their families.

# Thank You

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## Contact Us:



[militaryfamilies.psu.edu](http://militaryfamilies.psu.edu)  
[veteranetwork.psu.edu](http://veteranetwork.psu.edu)



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