

2023



MILITARY WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM

AMPLIFYING WOMEN'S COMBAT CAPACITY
MARCH 18, 2023



ANOMALY SIX

KADRI



Welcome to the first annual **MILITARY WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM!**

VP has been dedicated to optimizing female tactical athlete performance through woman-centric programming for the last four years. As we expand our mission to educate, advocate, and fund research on behalf of woman service members, we are thrilled to host stakeholders from industry, the US and abroad, and defense and civilian sectors at MWS23!

As we reflect on the ten-year anniversary of the US Combat Exclusion Policy being lifted, there is much to be grateful for. Women have risen to meet the challenge all across America's armed forces by joining the ranks of the infantry, Naval Special Warfare's Boat Teams, becoming Rangers, donning the Green Beret, and much more.

And yet, a decade later, we are still not fully investing in the asset that is the female service member. Education is still lacking on biology optimization for peak performance—not only in new recruits but also during and after motherhood and menopause years. Tactical gear and equipment are still predominantly made for men, reducing functionality and increasing risk for our women. The future of women's role in the US military remains debated in some spaces as strategies and outlooks are developed for the long term.

We hope this symposium educates and inspires individual and leader action and policy change to empower and maintain our most critical weapon system, the service member!

Thank you for supporting our inaugural MWS, and for your support to our women in uniform!

MWS23 



CHAIR
MEG TUCKER



VICE-CHAIR
SHAYE HAVER

AGENDA

0830-0900
0900

Registration Check-in/Morning Reception
Welcome Remarks and Keynote

0930-1030

Panel 1
Optimizing Women's Health and Performance

1030-1040

BREAK

1040-1140

Panel 2
Women's Performance Evolution Throughout the Life Course

1140-1255

Lunch & Networking

1300-1400

Panel 3
Increasing Survivability and Lethality: Women-Specific Gear

1400-1410

BREAK

1410-1510

Panel 4
The Future of Women in the Military

1510-1520

Closing Comments

1520-1530

Sister of Service Presentation

1530-1540

AllTru Presentation: *Guerrera Trailer*

1540-1800

Networking Reception

PANEL 1

Optimizing Women's Health and Performance

The US military is generally viewed as a performance-oriented institution: its purpose is to fight and win wars, and all other efforts are subsidiary to this. In the past, conversations about optimal performance for combat success and survivability may have focused on rigorous yet cost-effective approaches to physical training (PT)—hence the tradition many branches have of centering their unit PT programs around push-ups, sit-ups, running and ruck marching. Now, however, as the fight and our force evolve, so, too, do perspectives on what “optimal performance” means, and how it can be achieved. Now more than ever, investing in the most valuable weapon system—the human being—carries implications for war fighting and associated recruitment and retention. It is this increased need for investment that has borne efforts like Army Holistic Health and Fitness, Special Operations Command Preservation of the Force and Family, the Air Force Human Performance Initiative, and the Navy Operational Fitness and Fueling System. As women join the ranks of combat arms and special operations jobs increasingly more, what blind spots still exist in investing in the weapon and optimizing her performance? What fundamentals of human performance are not being maximized when training woman war fighters?

PANELIST



Stacy Sims, Ph.D., is an exercise physiologist and nutrition scientist. She has directed research programs at Stanford University, AUT University, and the University of Waikato, focusing on female athlete health and performance. She has published over eighty peer-reviewed papers, several books and is a regularly featured speaker at professional and academic conferences. Stacy currently holds a Senior Research Associate position with AUT-SPRINZ and has her own business creating and delivering online learning material focused on women training with their physiology across the lifespan. Her TedTalk, “Women Are Not Small Men: A Paradigm Shift in the Science of Nutrition,” has been viewed over 300k times.



Michael Bann is an accomplished fitness coach who delves into intricate fitness topics. With over fifteen years of experience coaching athletes worldwide and over 50k programs written, Michael's approach is centered around individualized training and nutrition plans based on his clients' specific requirements. He goes beyond traditional methods by incorporating extensive blood work, urine hormone testing, and stool testing to create personalized programs. Michael's expertise in endocrinology, nutrition, bio mechanics, anatomy, physiology, and psychology sets him apart. He has also been sought after by the US Army to train special operations personnel. In his downtime, Michael is an avid martial artist who loves to ride motorcycles and go off-roading in his Jeep.

Moderated by

MEG TUCKER

PANEL 2

Women's Performance Evolution Throughout the Life Course

Women serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines are essential members of our military who serve across a spectrum of occupational specialties and warfare areas. Over the course of the last two decades, women have taken on greater roles in active combat operations, bringing to light significant gaps women face in the education and availability of wellness resources. While the DOD has begun to release policies to aid in women's access to health care, these policies have often been limited to expanding a woman's access to reproductive health care services while failing to address a holistic approach to ensuring women's well-being, at all ages, throughout the course of their time in the military. With retention becoming an increasing issue for all services, and with the positive growth women continue to see in the military, the DOD must continue to normalize, study, and educate our force on how military service, family, external factors, and the life phase of a woman can impact her overall wellness and military performance.

PANELIST



Colonel (Retired) Melissa "Missy" Givens, MD, MPH, earned her BS at the United States Military Academy, her MD at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and her MPH at the University of Texas. She is board certified in Emergency Medicine with sub-specialty training in Clinical Toxicology and Sports Medicine, and is certified as a Strength and Conditioning Specialist. She held various academic and operational assignments throughout her 25+ year Army career and completed several combat tours and deployments with both conventional and Special Operations Forces. Dr. Givens has experience as an entrepreneur in the wellness and healthcare industry and enjoys leadership challenges in crisis situations. Dr. Givens is a proud mother of three daughters and a dog and has a passion for weightlifting and the outdoors.

Colonel Candy Boparai

Colonel Candy Boparai earned her BA degree in History at Pomona College. Following graduation, she enlisted in the Army. Following her initial enlistment, she completed Officer Candidate School and received her commission as a Military Intelligence officer in 2000. She has served in various leadership positions, including Assistant Brigade S2, Company Executive Officer, and Company Commander, serving both CONUS and OCONUS in Korea, USSOUTHCOM, and in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Freedom Sentinel. She is a graduate of the Junior Officer Cryptologic Career Program and is currently a student at the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

Moderated by

CANDACE ESQUIVEL

PANEL 3

Increasing Survivability and Lethality: Woman-Specific Gear

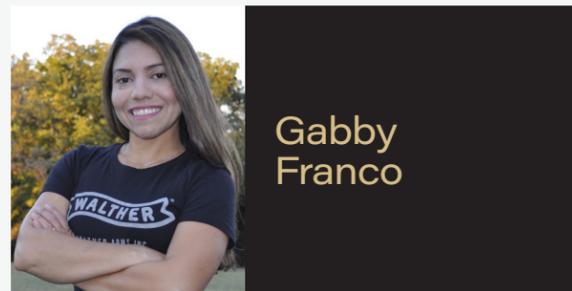
By doctrine, a common function of the Armed Services is to “train and equip” the forces for employment or assignment around the world. Equipping women with functional, properly sized and female-shaped gear and apparel is a basic requirement of DOD leaders. Yet the majority of female service members are still issued apparel and gear designed for the male form. Ill-fitting gear diminishes the end user’s functionality and effectiveness, creating risk to human life and mission success. Moreover, injuries sustained due to poorly-fit apparel and gear have acute and long-term effects on readiness and retention, and impose untold millions of dollars on veteran’s support systems after service. How can we bridge the gap between industry leaders and boots-on-the-ground women to ensure service members have what they need to optimize performance and excel in their occupation?

PANELIST



Luke Buckingham

Luke Buckingham of Mystery Ranch was born and raised in Bozeman, MT. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Connecticut College. He has worked for Mystery Ranch backpacks in a variety of capacities for over twenty years. He has spent much of that time managing Product Development and Special Projects for the Military and Fire Fighting product lines, and currently serves as Mystery Ranch’s Director of Operations.



Gabby Franco

Gabby Franco of Walther Arms is the first female shooter to represent Venezuela in the Olympics. She has over twenty five years of experience in Olympic, tactical, and practical shooting, knowledge she applies as a firearms instructor. Gabby published her first shooting manual, Trouble Shooting: Mastering your pistol marksmanship, in 2013. She participated in two seasons of the History Channel’s TV competition TOP SHOT and is currently finishing her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology.

Moderated by

KATHERYN BASSO

PANEL 4

The Future of Women in the Military

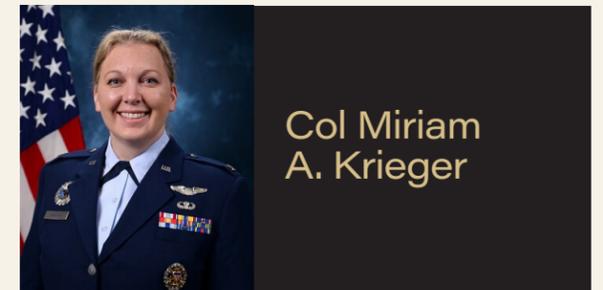
We are celebrating 75 years of women in service. From then until now, many policy changes have increased opportunities for women to volunteer and serve their country; however, women are still less than 20% of uniformed military service members on average. For a demographic that is 50.5% of the population, we must ask ourselves why and at what point this concerns national security. Socially, despite the lifted combat exclusion law and demonstrated ability, there is still reluctance and opposition to women’s increasing participation in all military roles. As the world changes, so should we adapt to meet future challenges, crises, competition, and conflicts with a renewed sense of purpose and responsibility. People are not excluded from tomorrow’s wars; all are needed at home and abroad to help fight and win on the ground, at sea, in the air, in space, in cyberspace, and with the help of remote, AI-enabled, and autonomous technology. This panel will discuss how women are essential now more than ever to national security and how we must invest in their futures.

PANELIST



Lydia Kostopoulos, Ph.D.

Lydia Kostopoulos, Ph.D., is a strategy and innovation advisor working with the military, government and the private sector, and serves as a member of The Valkyrie Project’s board. She continues to work with US Special Operations, presents at NATO events and has worked with the United Nations and the IEEE Standards Body. In the realm of technology ethics, she is an advisor for the Data Ethics Consortium for Security and for Ethical Intelligence Associates. Passionate about spreading awareness on emerging technologies, Dr. Kostopoulos makes art about technology and developed a multilingual, reflective game on emerging technologies called Sapien2.0, which explores the human and machine relationship. She also owns and is head designer of fashion label “Empowering Work wear by Lydia,” designing wearable art installations that tell stories about national security and women’s rights topics.



Col Miriam A. Krieger

Col Miriam A. Krieger serves as Permanent Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science at the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado. Col Krieger, a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Academy, earned Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical Engineering and two Masters Degrees as a George C. Marshall Scholar. She attended Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training and flew F-16s at Homestead ARB, FL as part of the Total Force Integration initiative. Col Krieger previously served as Deputy Group Commander of Cadet Group Three at the United States Air Force Academy and as Special Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. She received her doctorate from the Department of Government at Georgetown University.

Moderated by

SHAYE HAVER

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