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**UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF HISPANIC-AMERICANS
IN THE U.S. ARMY'S OFFICER CORPS
A STUDY OF AN INVERSE DYNAMIC**

BY

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Joint Center for Political & Economic Studies

**Under-representation of Hispanic-Americans in the U.S. Army's officer corps:
A study of an inverse dynamic.**

Colonel Hector E. Topete

May 1999

Military Fellow
Research Report

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: COL Hector E. Topete

TITLE: Under-representation of Hispanic-Americans in the U.S. Army's officer corps: A study of an inverse dynamic

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 14 May 99

PAGES: 52

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

Our U.S. Army places high priority and commitment to achieving true diversity within its ranks. Hispanic-Americans are now the fastest growing group in the United States. According to Census Bureau projections, they will constitute the largest minority group in the Nation by 2005. (They would be the largest group today if the population of Puerto Rico were included). Hispanic-American youth, ages 18 and below, are already the largest minority group in the country in that age category. By 2035, one in five Americans will be Hispanic-American.

Hispanic-Americans are drastically under-represented in the Army's officer corps. Documented data reveal that while Hispanic-Americans comprise about 11.4% (12.8% if Puerto Rico is included) of the country's population--and growing more rapidly than any other group--the Army's Hispanic-American officer content is only at 3.5%. This severe under-representation--coupled with factual indicators that Hispanic-Americans have the potential, desire, and history of serving with distinction-- presents an "inverse dynamic."

The purpose of this research project was to identify the primary reasons underlying this under-representation and, more importantly, to provide concrete, practical recommendations on how to "fix" it. Several recommendations, if implemented, will have policy and program implications. They will have significant, wide reaching, and long term impact.

Based on the research methodology and analysis of the data, numerous findings and recommendations emerged. For simplicity, they were categorized into four areas: Exposure to the military; Educational attainment; Cultural issues; and, Outreach and mentorship by the military and Hispanic community. This document discusses the components of each in detail.

Author's Acknowledgements

This product would not have been possible without the absolute support of various individuals and agencies. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the U.S. Army for allowing me this great opportunity. Conducting this study gave me a chance to put something back into the organization that has given me so much.

I want to express my appreciation to Mr. Eddie N. Williams and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. I received nothing but positive support from this most kind and brilliant group. An especially heartfelt thank-you to my fellowship adviser, Dr. Margaret C. Simms. Her continuous mentorship and advice were the main reasons this product came to fruition. I attribute the successful completion of this study to this most generous and brilliant lady.

The study would not have gained such positive momentum without the guidance and continuous support of my senior leadership. Their vision, advice, and leadership gave me the azimuth to point me in the right direction. I specifically want to thank Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera, the Honorable P.T. Henry, Major General Alfred A. Valenzuela, Major General Stewart W. Wallace, and many other influential and caring leaders.

The research phase of this study would not have been possible without the "can do" support of many of our professional and hard-working people out in the field. I specifically want to thank the ROTC Cadet Command, the West Point Admissions Office, and the ROTC cadres at the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Texas at El Paso, San Diego State University, and the University of California at Davis.

Lastly, I want to thank Staff Sergeant Kevin Barney, our Fellowship Program's administrative Non-Commissioned Officer and one of the best NCOs I have known in my Army career. SSG Barney is clear proof that our Army cannot function without the outstanding work of our professional NCOs. Throughout this entire year, SSG Barney's support went without a hitch. He sought resolution to challenges and requests that often would require resolution at higher levels—and always with a cheerful, "can do" attitude.

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SUMMARY

"The future ain't what it used to be!"

-Yogi Berra

Hispanic-Americans are now the fastest growing group in the United States. According to Census projections, they will constitute the largest minority group in the nation in less than a decade. Hispanic youths, ages 18 and under, already make up the largest minority in that age group.

Leaders within the Department of Defense (DoD) have voiced the military's goal of "looking" like the nation it defends. Our U.S. Army also places high priority on and commitment to achieving true diversity within its ranks. It is widely acknowledged that diversity is important to the military—it directly relates to readiness and morale. *Yet Hispanic-Americans are critically underrepresented in the U.S. Army's officer corps.*

While Hispanic-Americans make up about 11.4 percent of the country's population (12.8 percent if Puerto Rico is included), the Army's Hispanic-American officer content is only at 3.5 percent. This severe underrepresentation, coupled with factual evidence that Hispanic-Americans have the potential and desire to serve with distinction, reveals a dual-pronged "inverse dynamic":

Inverse dynamic #1: Although the Hispanic-American population is growing, and about to become the largest minority group in the country, Hispanic-Americans in the U. S. Army's officer corps are critically underrepresented.

Inverse dynamic #2: Although Hispanic-Americans demonstrate the highest propensity (expressed willingness) for military service, have the highest proportion of Medal of Honor recipients, have some of the highest retention rates in the Army and represent 28

percent of all the names on the Vietnam Memorial – they are conspicuously absent from the Army’s officer corps.

The purpose of this study was to identify the primary reasons for this underrepresentation, and more importantly, to provide concrete, practical recommendations on how to fix it. As of this writing, the Army has no strategic document, such as a plan, timeline, or glide path, to improve Hispanic-American representation in its officer ranks. Such a document would clearly demonstrate the Army’s priority and intent to bring this group up to parity with other groups.

It is very encouraging to note that as of the final writing of this study, several of the recommendations contained here have already been considered or initiated by various commands in the Army. These are discussed in the body of this report.

Methodology: Two methodologies were used to complete this study: individual interviews and focus groups. Interviews were conducted with 24 national-level senior leaders, both civilian and military. Eighteen focus groups were conducted with Hispanic-Americans ranging in age and experience from high school students to Army officers at various grades. (See Appendices A, B, and C.)

Findings and Recommendations

Exposure to the Military

This category contains the study’s most salient findings. With regard to becoming officers in the Army, in very basic terms, Hispanic-American youth *do not know about it* and they *do not see themselves in it*.

1. Hispanic-American youth know very little about "officer stuff," namely ROTC and West Point.

Recommendation: "Beef up" the advertising and information flow about officer/college programs (ROTC and West Point), particularly in California and Texas.

2. There is a significant shortage of Hispanic-American senior officer role models.

Recommendation: Develop a plan and glide path that seeks to increase the number of Hispanic-American senior officer role models, including timetables, such as doubling the percentage of Hispanic-American officers in the Army within 10 years.

3. There is a shortage of Hispanic-American officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in the ROTC cadres.

Recommendation: Increase the number of Hispanic-American officers and NCOs in the ROTC cadres in the areas of Hispanic concentrations, such as California and Texas. Continue to emphasize the Hispanic-American sector of the ROTC Gold Bar recruiter program.

4. Hispanic-American youth do not have a clear "image" of the Army.

Recommendation: Target recruiting and accessions of Hispanic-American youth to "elite/tough" areas of the Army, including Airborne, Ranger, Green Berets, and Special Forces.

5. Hispanic-American youth see a "disconnect" between USAREC and ROTC recruiters.

Recommendation: Initiate a collaborative program between USAREC recruiters and ROTC recruiters. Give enlisted recruiters full "credit" for steering candidates to ROTC or West Point.

6. There are few veterans in Hispanic-American families.

Recommendation: Give Hispanic-American veterans exposure in areas of Hispanic concentration, such as California and Texas.

Educational Attainment

There are three routes to the Army officer corps. The majority of the Army's officers (over 70 percent) come from ROTC. The remainder come from West Point (about 20 percent) and Officer Candidate School (over 9 percent). The findings in this category relate to the motivation and ability of Hispanic-American youth to enter college and get access to college scholarships (whether through ROTC or West Point) which would allow them to be commissioned as officers.

1. *The affiliation between the U.S. Army (and its ROTC program) and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) is insufficient.*

Recommendation: The U.S. Army should develop the affiliation between HACU and the ROTC program. Specifically, allocate resources (ROTC scholarship money) accordingly. Seek to parallel the successes of the ROTC program for historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

2. *Most Hispanic-American college-bound youth are in two-year and state colleges.*

Recommendation: Continue to offer two-year ROTC scholarships, and continue to expand the ROTC program into the junior college market.

3. *Hispanic-Americans are underrepresented as cadets in the Army's ROTC program and at West Point.*

Recommendation: ROTC Cadet Command and West Point should continue to pursue Hispanic-American recruiting and admission goals that more closely reflect the demographic mix of the national population or reach parity with our sister services.

4. *The West Point admissions goal for Hispanic-Americans needs to be "re-looked."* Currently, West Point's goal is set at 4 to 6 percent. This goal is partly based on the current officer content/percentage in the Army.

Recommendation: Direct West Point to increase its admissions goal for Hispanic-Americans. Employ a methodology that looks more at national demographics or parity with the admissions goals of other minority populations.

5. Hispanic-American members of Congress are not making full use of their allocated nominations to West Point.

Recommendation: Solicit the support of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. Likewise, continue to solicit the support of the CHC for the Army's ROTC program.

Cultural Issues

The focus groups in the study strongly suggested that there are some areas of Hispanic culture that help—and others that hinder—our ability to bring Hispanic-Americans into the officer corps.

1. Hispanic-Americans have a tendency to stay near home.

Recommendation: Offer/guarantee Reserve and National Guard commissions to Hispanic-American ROTC cadets.

2. Hispanic-American teens start work early.

Recommendation: Advertise how much an officer makes over time, and provide high school students with more information on the value of ROTC scholarships and a West Point “full ride.”

3. Hispanic-American parents do not like the idea of women going into the Army.

Recommendation: Conduct additional research into this phenomenon. In the interim, advertise officer producing programs (ROTC and West Point) in Spanish, for the sake of the parents. Target and highlight some of our currently successful female cadets and officers .

4. *Patriotism is a valued quality in the Hispanic-American culture.*

Recommendation: Continue to target patriotism in advertising, recruiting, and accession efforts—it complements Hispanic-American culture.

Outreach and Mentorship

This final category focuses on research findings concerning the lack of programs that could provide outreach and mentorship to Hispanic-American youth and visibility to Hispanic-American issues that impact on successful careers as officers in the Army.

1. *There is no outreach or mentoring program targeting Hispanic-American youth, officers, and ROTC programs.*

Recommendation: The Army should form a task force to assist in the development of an outreach and mentoring program targeting Hispanic-American youth. Examples of currently working programs are the ROCKS in the African American Army community and the Association of Naval Service Officers (ANSO) in the Navy.

2. *There is no Senior Service College (SSC) Fellowship position with one of the premier Hispanic-American think tanks.*

Recommendation: Establish such a position with one of the premier Hispanic-American think-tanks, commencing AY 2000. Use the same documentation that authorized the current position at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies in Washington, D.C. Two recommended think tanks are the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute in California and the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) in Washington, D.C.

3. *There is potential for support from local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.*

Recommendation: Direct our ROTC and West Point leadership to establish working relationships with their local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

4. *The Troops to Teachers Program is not being fully used to address the Hispanic-American role model problem.*

Recommendation: Encourage retiring Hispanic-American military members to use the “Troops to Teachers” Program. Stress the importance of their influence as role models in areas where Hispanic-Americans are concentrated.

Conclusion

Time is clearly of the essence in solving this dilemma. Questions raised during the course of this research by interviewees and focus group participants—such as “How did the Army let itself get in this hole?” or “What are you going to do about it now, looks like it’s not going away!”—attest to this fact.

The Army must develop a written intent, priority, and specific plan to fix the drastic underrepresentation of Hispanic-American officers. Recommended examples include establishing a glide path over 10 years that aspires to double the current percentage of Hispanic-American officers in the Army; and bringing the Hispanic-American officer content to parity with the national population within 15 years.

On a positive note, however, I believe the glass is on its way to becoming “half full.” Members of our Army leadership are now voicing their concern for and commitment to this issue—and in many cases allocating resources to it. The Marines, Navy, and Air Force are experiencing success in bringing in more Hispanic-American cadets and officers into their ranks. If it’s working for them, why reinvent the wheel?

The underrepresentation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army’s officer corps is *not* an insurmountable problem. We now know how to fix it. We have the talent and resources to fix it. We just have to demonstrate the *will* to fix it. Based on all the positive support I received during the course of this research project, I truly believe it can be done.

I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this research project was to identify the primary reasons underlying Hispanic-American underrepresentation in the U.S. Army officer corps and to provide recommendations to remedy the situation.

Our Department of Defense (DoD) aspires to maintain a military force structure that looks like the nation it defends—that reflects true diversity. The Hispanic-American population, according to current Census Bureau projections, will become the largest minority group in America in the next six years. Among youth (ages 18 and under), it is already the largest minority. Nevertheless, while Hispanic-Americans represent 11.4 percent of the U.S. population (12.8 percent if the population of Puerto Rico is included), they only represent 3.5 percent of the Army officer corps. (See graph, next page.)

Documented data show that Hispanic-Americans have demonstrated a great potential for continuing their history of distinguished service. They make up the largest percentage of Medal of Honor recipients, proportionately, of any group. It is of interest to note that 28 percent of the names on the Vietnam Memorial are Hispanic-American. Within the Army, Hispanic-Americans have demonstrated some of the highest retention rates. Current youth surveys also show that this group has the highest propensity (expressed willingness) for military service.

A study of the “disconnect” between Hispanic-Americans’ potential to serve and their underrepresentation in the officer corps is, therefore, timely and relevant. Recommendations for resolving the problem are also of immediate relevance—indeed, they are urgently needed if the problem is not to grow worse. Fortunately, the impact of the impending demographic growth, as well as how we can best manage and leverage diversity in the U.S. Army’s officer corps, are matters that our senior leadership regard with high priority.

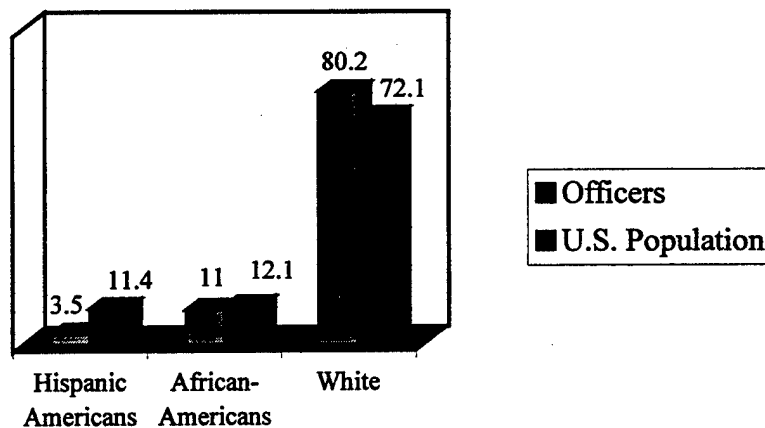
The Problem

The underrepresentation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army's officer corps manifests itself as a dual-pronged "inverse dynamic."

Inverse dynamic #1: The Hispanic-American population is growing, and is about to become the largest minority group in the country—yet Hispanic-Americans in the U.S. Army's officer corps are critically underrepresented. *Why?*

Inverse dynamic #2: Hispanic-Americans have demonstrated great potential for distinguished service: they show the highest propensity (expressed willingness) for military service; have the most Medal of Honor recipients, proportionately, of any group; have some of the highest retention rates in the Army; and comprise 28 percent of all the names on the Vietnam Memorial—yet they are conspicuously absent in the Army's officer corps. *Why?*

Race/Ethnic Representation: Army Officers vs. U.S. Population
(Percent)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Web: www.census.gov/population/estimates/national, accessed 28 Dec 98; and Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Patrick Air Force base, FL, March 99.

There are other readily visible indicators of the problem. There is a drastic void of Hispanic-American senior officer role models—a dilemma that impacts negatively on our ability to influence young Hispanic-Americans into pursuing careers as Army officers. There are only three active-component Hispanic-American general officers in the Army—one two-star General and two one-stars. For comparison, there are currently 28 African-American and 275 white general officers, ranging from one-star to four-stars. The problem is exacerbated when considering the result of recent Army selection boards, specifically those selecting officers for promotion to Major through Colonel, and for command at the Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel levels. These boards have resulted in Hispanic-American selection rates significantly lower than the overall board average. (See Tables 1 and 2 at the end of this section.)

Other Ongoing Studies and Initiatives

Heightened awareness of the Hispanic population's growth rate has resulted in greater attention to Hispanic-American underrepresentation issues. The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) recently concluded part one of a study on the entire DoD work force, entitled *A Force Overlooked: Achieving Full Representation of Hispanics in the Department of Defense Workforce*. Among other findings, their report notes that Hispanics continue to be underrepresented in virtually all of the U.S. military's active and reserve components, as well as in the civilian DoD work force. It also finds that the Marine Corps and the Navy have generally been more successful in this area than the other services. Most pertinent, the La Raza study finds that the accession rate of Latino officers in the active component failed to keep pace with the potential pool of college graduates.

All federal government agencies, including the military, are now assessing this problem within their respective work forces. Various actions, studies, and research projects have been launched with regard to Hispanic-American representation in the Department of Defense. However, most of these efforts are focused on the underrepresentation of Hispanics in the enlisted force. Parallel efforts to examine the *officer side* have not followed suit, even though, ironically, it is there that

Hispanic-American underrepresentation is most severe. This study is designed to begin to remedy that gap.

Currently, the Army is engaged in several ongoing efforts to remedy the broad problem of Hispanic participation in the Army, at both the officer and the enlisted levels. Several of these deserve mention here.

The U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) has initiated several programs to remedy Hispanic-American underrepresentation in the enlisted force. In January 1999, it sponsored a national-level Hispanic Leadership Summit Conference in San Antonio, Texas—with plans for a follow-up conference in Los Angeles in the June 1999 time frame. These Summits are an expansion of its Hispanic Influencer Alliance Program, which was initiated in 1997. Within this program, recruiters form alliances with Hispanic-American community leaders and serve as role models and mentors to at-risk Hispanic-American youth. Additionally, USAREC is working with several Hispanic organizations, such as the League of Unified Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the American GI Forum, to promote military service opportunities.

The U.S. Army ROTC Cadet Command is launching several programs to remedy Hispanic-American underrepresentation in the officer corps. These include targeted recruiting and advertising, raising the number of ROTC scholarships for Hispanic-Americans, expanding into the junior college market, emphasizing National Guard and Reserve commissions, selecting Hispanic ROTC cadres where Hispanic populations are high, and increasing Gold Bar recruiting efforts among Hispanics (using recently commissioned ROTC Lieutenants to recruit candidates). ROTC Cadet Command is also working with various Hispanic organizations, such as the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and the Heroes & Heritage program, to increase Hispanic-American awareness and enrollment in the Army's ROTC college programs.

The West Point Minority Admissions Office has a highly successful Funded Visitation Program. This program is funded by the Association of Graduates (AOG). It brings highly qualified high

school students to West Point for a visit, which culminates in an offer to apply for admission. Since the program began, 85 percent of the students who visit have accepted offers of admission. Starting this year, West Point has also started bringing Hispanic-American students as a group.

The Army National Guard (ARNG) has initiated a program called the Youth Challenge Program. This program gives Hispanic-American high school dropouts a chance to get their GEDs. Thus far, 17 states in the U.S. have the program.

In short, Hispanic-American underrepresentation is now a highly visible issue that is being addressed by several ongoing government initiatives, including efforts by the U.S. Army. This study contributes in an area not fully explored by other studies, examining the views and attitudes of today's Hispanic-American youth, as well as those of senior leadership regarding the Army and officer careers within it. The findings here add another vital layer to the growing documentation of underrepresentation and what can be done about it.

Table 1: 1998 Selection Board Results

(Percent Selected)

	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel Cmd/CA	Colonel	Colonel Cmd/CA
Hispanic-American	65.0	47.6	8.0	42.1	0
African-American	66.5	62.9	8.6	36.2	14.2
White	80.1	69.0	12.1	43.3	12.1
Board Average	77.0	67.8	11.6	42.3	11.8

Source: U.S. Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Human Resources Directorate

Table 2: 1997 Selection Board Results

(Percent Selected)

	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel Cmd/CA	Colonel	Colonel Cmd/CA
Hispanic-American	66.3	53.6	3.9	35.0	20.0
African-American	65.1	46.4	8.8	19.1	10.0
White	77.2	63.0	10.4	41.6	9.3
Board Average	74.3	59.9	9.9	39.0	9.4

Source: U.S. Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Human Resources Directorate

II. METHODOLOGY

This report summarizes the findings of a nine-month study that focused on the underrepresentation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army's officer corps. In simple terms, the study looked into underlying reasons Hispanic-American youth are not coming in as officers, though not necessarily at what happens after they come in. The latter subject, which covers areas such as officer development and equal opportunity, could present a topic for further study. This research was designed to answer questions such as: "Why don't Hispanic-Americans follow the Army officer path?" and "Do they know about this career path and, if they do, do they have a favorable view of it?" The ensuing methodology sought to answer these questions by first soliciting views and input from senior leadership which, together with readings from the available literature, drove the development of a list of hypotheses. The hypotheses were then tested through a rigorous review of focus group discussions, meetings, and follow-up interviews.

The Army's officers are accessed from three sources: the ROTC program, West Point, and Officers Candidate School (OCS). The great majority (more than 70 percent) come from ROTC. The remainder come from West Point (almost 20 percent) and OCS (about 9 percent). This research, in terms of the time and effort expended, paralleled these proportions. Most of the focus groups and time were, therefore, allocated to the ROTC program. Because of the small number of officers derived from OCS and the limited research time available, OCS was not researched.

The majority (53 percent), of Hispanic-Americans in the U.S. live in California and Texas. Given the time and resources available to conduct this study, rather than attempt to research populations across the country, these two states were targeted. Two college ROTC sites were selected within each state. The cadres within each of the four ROTC sites assisted in the planning and coordinating of focus groups, meetings, and interviews. The targeted population included Hispanic-American high school and college students, high school and college ROTC cadres, vocational counselors, principals, and other relevant participants.

Hence, the methodology that followed:

Phase I: Interviews and Meetings With Senior Leadership

The interviews and meetings included such national leaders as the Secretary of the Army, members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, presidents and CEOs of major think tanks and Hispanic-American organizations, national leaders and advocates in the Hispanic-American community, general officers in the Army, mid-grade and junior officers in the Army, and various other key leaders. These face-to-face interviews were conducted in the first phase of the study in order to solicit insights from participants with many years of experience and hindsight on the subject. This phase resulted in a list of hypotheses regarding why more Hispanic-Americans are not pursuing careers as officers. It also provided a road map as to how and where to proceed with the remainder of the research. (See Appendix A for a list of actual interviews and meetings.)

Phase II: Hypothesis Review

As a starting point, after completing initial interviews and a literature review, certain hypotheses were drawn up. Although they were not conceived according to categories, the list of hypotheses can be grouped under the four major headings of this report, as follows.

Hypotheses Relating to Exposure to the Military

Failure to consider careers as Army officers stems from (1) the ineffectiveness of the Army's advertising and recruiting efforts targeted toward Hispanic-Americans, which are less successful than the Marines' efforts; (2) the fact that few Hispanic senior officers/generals are available to serve as role models, causing a vicious cycle in which the void of officers as role models perpetuates itself; (3) the fact that few Hispanic parents or family members are Army veterans themselves, so that Hispanic youths have that much less basic knowledge about the military than

other youth; and (4) decreased exposure to the Army caused by base closings, particularly in California.

Hypotheses Relating to Educational Attainment

Failure to apply to or enter ROTC programs or West Point stems from (1) the absence of a formal affiliation between the Army, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACUs), and the ROTC program; (2) the lack of a ROCKS-type mentoring program or other outreach effort; (3) the relatively low high school graduation rates among Hispanic-Americans, who therefore are less likely than others to attend college, a requirement for officer careers; (4) the fact that most Hispanic students who do attend college go to two-year colleges where ROTC scholarships are unavailable; (5) the small number of ROTC programs in California and Texas, the states where Hispanics are most concentrated; (6) competition with the military from non-ROTC colleges, universities, and the corporate sector to recruit highly qualified Hispanics with full ride scholarships; and (7) the failure of many members of Congress in Hispanic districts to fully use their nominations to West Point.

Hypotheses Relating to Cultural Issues

Failure to consider careers as Army officers also stems from (1) the matrilineal emphasis in Hispanic culture, which encourages strong family ties through residence close to one's parental home; (2) the tendency among Hispanic-Americans to start earning wages early, in the teenage years, which also increases the risk of high school drop-out.

Hypothesis Relating to Outreach

Underrepresentation also can be attributed in part to the Army's failure to give high priority to achieving parity levels of representation for Hispanic-Americans in the officer corps.

Phase III: Focus Groups

Phase three of the research project consisted primarily of conducting and analyzing the results of 18 focus groups. These focus groups provided direct insights and views from the actual population we are trying to attract to the officer corps. The end product of these focus groups was a current and meaningful record "right from the horses' mouths." A myriad of common views and validating data emerged, from which it was possible to develop the findings and recommendations outlined in this report. Common areas across all groups, certain target groups, and differences within different groups will be discussed in detail further into this document.

In general, the focus groups were assembled in such a way as to guarantee a range of ages, educational levels, and differing commitment levels of the military. Participants ranged from high school students to officers already in the military (from the very junior to more senior officers), and included key figures in the educational hierarchy, such as admissions officers and high school vocational counselors. The following were the three sources of the 18 focus groups. (1) ROTCs, colleges, and high schools in California and Texas, where the preponderance of Hispanic-Americans reside. These included the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Texas at El Paso, San Diego State University, the University of California at Davis, and various high schools. (2) West Point, where participants included admissions officers, cadets, and high school candidates. (3) Army officers in the Washington, D.C., area and at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.

This was the profile of focus group participants, listed from least committed to most committed to a military career: (1) High school students (not in JROTC); (2) high school students (in JROTC); (3) college students (not in ROTC); (4) college students (in ROTC); (5) Army officers, Lieutenants and Captains; (6) Army officers, Majors and Lieutenant Colonels; and (7) Army officers, Colonels, and Generals.

III. FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS

The key findings that emerged from the study are described in this section. Each finding is followed by a recommended solution. In essence, the findings and recommendations can be categorized into four areas: exposure to the military, educational attainment, cultural issues, and outreach and mentoring. Many of the recommendations will have significant, wide reaching, and long-term impact on Hispanic representation in the Army's officer corps. Some of the recommendations have policy and program implications.

Time is of the essence if we are to make progress before the underrepresentation problem grows even worse. The good news is that, as of the final writing of this study, several of these recommendations have already been considered or initiated by various commands in the Army. (These are discussed in this section of the report.) I strongly urge our U.S. Army leadership to expedite the implementation of these recommended actions.

Exposure to the Military

A clear consensus of views emerged from virtually all 18 focus groups concerning the problem of inadequate exposure to the military. This makes this problem one of the study's most salient findings. With regard to becoming an officer in the Army, in very basic terms, Hispanic-American youth simply *do not know about it* and they *do not see themselves in it*. These two phenomena are key barriers preventing many of them from pursuing careers as Army officers. As a Hispanic-American college junior at the University of Texas at Austin said, "My friend was in the top of our class in high school. We couldn't understand why she went in the military—she was doing so well!"

1. Hispanic-American youth know very little about “officer stuff,” namely ROTC and West Point.

When asked “Did you ever consider going into ROTC or West Point to become an officer?” one Hispanic-American senior attending the University of Texas at Austin, a student in the top 10 percent of his class, told me, “Yes, I had heard about West Point, and thought about applying, but I knew I could not afford it!” (This student was unaware that a West Point education is *free*.)

Overwhelmingly, focus group input revealed that Hispanic-American youth, at the high school and college levels, know little or nothing about the officer side of the Army. However, they do have some knowledge about enlisting. Very few high school students, and even few college students, realize that you do not have to put off college if you decide to go in the Army as an ROTC or West Point cadet. They are not aware that you can go right into college after high school, get a college degree, and then become an officer in the Army.

Surprisingly, even high school officials, such as vocational counselors, know very little about the officer side of the Army. When asked, “What do you tell a student if he or she is interested in becoming an officer in the Army?” one high school vocational counselor replied, “I turn them over to our local recruiter.” This is a problem because recruiters are working hard to make their quotas by getting people to enlist in the Army, not by getting them into the ROTC or West Point programs. (This dilemma is discussed further in finding no. 5, below.)

Additionally, there is a need for increased advertising and recruiting in California and Texas. As mentioned earlier, these two states are where the majority of Hispanic-Americans reside. Yet the study finds that vis-a-vis the Hispanic-American market, we do not conduct the preponderance of our advertising and recruiting in these states. Exacerbating the situation is the fact that base closures in California have significantly reduced general exposure to the Army, a fact confirmed by the results of our focus groups. California youth, particularly in the San Diego and southern California areas, do know about the Navy and the Marines, but not much about the Army.

Fortunately, our Army leadership is now aware of the need for increased advertising and recruiting efforts in those areas. What is still needed is follow-up with actual resources and programs.

Recommendations

Beef up the advertising and information flow about officer/college programs (ROTC and West Point), particularly in California and Texas. The Army should provide additional resources, including advertising and recruiting dollars, to target the California and Texas Hispanic-American markets. Although Texas clearly supports and maintains bases that provide exposure to the Army, challenges remain in California. This should be our number-one priority area for officer-recruiting of college-bound Hispanic-American youth.

Extend the advertising and recruiting efforts down to the high school counselor level. This is where that target group is most readily influenced. Arm high school-level vocational counselors with information about ROTC and West Point as *college programs*. Emphasize that an officer gets a college degree and starts a paying profession immediately after graduating from college.

Finally, get parents involved. Advertise in both English and Spanish and tell parents that these are college opportunities for their children.

2. There is a significant shortage of Hispanic-American senior officer role models.

Research data and input from the vast majority of the focus groups clearly suggest that the lack of Hispanic-American senior officers presents a role model problem. Hispanic-American youth, even at the high school freshman level, claim never to have seen Hispanic-Americans who have "made it" in the Army or were part of "the brass." As many of them made clear during this study, this absence of Hispanic-American senior officers prevents them from viewing such military opportunities as attainable for themselves. (Focus group participants maintained that a similar phenomena exists in the teacher community, where Hispanic-American role models are scarce.)

There are only three active-duty Hispanic-American general officers in the Army. Unfortunately, the near future does not look much better. The graphs on the following page reveal similar shortages at the Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel levels. Moreover, recent Army selection boards for key promotion and command boards (which lead to the attainment of senior officer status), have resulted in Hispanic-American selection rates that are significantly lower than the overall board averages (see Tables 1 and 2).

Recommendations

Develop a plan and “glide path” that seek to increase the number of Hispanic-American senior officer role models. Set an obtainable goal in terms of achievement and time frame, such as doubling the percentage of Hispanic-American officers in the Army within 10 years. Afford career enhancing jobs, such as command and S-3 officer, to qualified Hispanic-American officers. Closely monitor the results of selection boards to identify possible problem areas.

In the interim, make use of the more junior role models such as recent ROTC, West Point, and OCS officers and cadets. This will help take up the slack during the time frame when more senior officer role models are being “grown.”

3. There is a shortage of Hispanic-American officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) in the ROTC cadres.

Interviews and focus groups with ROTC cadres (officers, NCOs, and civilians) and with high school and college students led to the inescapable conclusion that we do not have enough Hispanic-American officers and NCOs running our ROTC programs. This particularly applies to the two regions of high Hispanic concentrations studied—California and Texas. Focus group participants overwhelmingly attested to sensing a void in Hispanic-American role models and influential figures in the military. They equally strongly indicated a belief that they and other Hispanic-American youth would be more prone to look into becoming officers if the officers talking to them “looked like them.” (ROTC cadre slots range from NCOs, Captains, Majors, and

Lieutenant Colonels at each college ROTC site, to Colonels serving as brigade commanders and region commanders.)

Recommendations

Increase the numbers of Hispanic-American officers and NCOs in the ROTC cadres in the regions of strong Hispanic concentration like California and Texas. Look specifically at selecting qualified Hispanic-American Lieutenant Colonels to serve as professors of military science and Colonels to serve as brigade and region commanders. The influence and visibility of these higher ranking officers will send a signal to Hispanic-American youth that they can "make it" too. (The ROTC Cadet Command is currently looking into this action).

Continue to emphasize the currently operating ROTC Gold Bar recruiter program. This program, in which ROTC units use recently commissioned ROTC Lieutenants to recruit candidates in the same areas where they went to school, is highly successful. It has proven to be an effective way of employing more junior role models. These young Lieutenants, close in age and experience to the target group we aspire to influence, are making great strides in appealing to youth during their decisive years. Currently, the ROTC command is focusing on using Hispanic-American ROTC graduates to function as Gold Bar recruiters and to assist in penetrating that market. The ROTC Cadet command should continue to develop the Hispanic-American sector of the program by selecting recent Hispanic-American Lieutenants.

4. Hispanic-American youth do not have a clear "image" of the Army.

Unlike the image they have of the Marines, Hispanic-American youth do not have a clear image of the Army. Participants in the overwhelming majority of focus groups, particularly at the high school and early college levels, saw the Army as "generic" and "big." Most were not aware of the elite branches of the Army, such as Rangers, Green Berets, Special Forces, or Airborne units. Most were not familiar with these elite areas of the Army, although they were familiar with the Marines and Navy Seals.

When asked to rate the image of the Army compared to the other services, the majority of focus group participants rated the Army lowest. Recent adverse reports in the media (including sexual harassment cases and extremist activities) had something to do with this rating, but the majority of participants just did not know much about the specifics of the Army, particularly the officer side. Their overall view about going into the Army was summarized well by one college freshman: "The military is like a 'fallback' position. It's something you might try if you're not sure what to do after high school."

Recommendations

Target recruiting and accessions of Hispanic-American youth to elite/tough branches of the Army, such as Rangers, Green Berets, Special Forces, and Airborne units. We should try to replicate the success of the Marines.

5. Hispanic-American youth see a "disconnect" between USAREC and ROTC recruiters.

Many Hispanic-American youth contacted in this study claim that enlisted recruiters do not appear to have enough information (or are hesitant to provide it) on the officer programs—ROTC and West Point. In predominant numbers, students in the focus groups did not know much about becoming an officer even though, as they reported it, they seemed to have been "hit up" a lot by Army recruiters hoping to enlist them. Numerous participants claimed to have been "sort of blown off" when they asked enlisted recruiters about becoming an officer, or about ROTC or West Point. In some cases, they claimed, the recruiters did not know the information, and in others, "they did not want to talk about it." It was unexpected and insightful to receive recommendations, even from young high school students, such as "Why don't you guys [enlisted and ROTC recruiters] work together, even out of the same office, like the Marines do?"

The research phase of this study included interviews with several enlisted recruiters in California and Texas. Their professional but candid comments led to several findings: First, the recruiters have the clear, overwhelming perception that they will lose a quota if they tell prospective

recruits about ROTC or West Point. They admitted that they are not willing to chance that. Second, they all confirmed that they would be more forthcoming with information about "officer stuff" if they received full "credit" for diverting people to the ROTC or West Point side. Given their reach and visibility, recruiters could be a valuable resource in helping to fix the Hispanic-American officer shortage.

Recommendations

Initiate a collaborative program between USAREC recruiters and ROTC recruiters. Equip all enlisted recruiters with information on ROTC and West Point, and give enlisted recruiters *full credit* for steering candidates to the officer side. Giving full credit to enlisted recruiters whenever they divert a recruit to the officer side will prevent them from viewing such action as a lost quota.

Attempt to parallel the apparent successes of the Marine recruiting program. For example, consider co-locating enlisted and ROTC recruiters in the same offices. In sum, have enlisted recruiters work hand-in-hand with ROTC recruiters.

6. There are few veterans in Hispanic-American families.

The data clearly show that there are few veterans in Hispanic-American families. Focus groups revealed two common patterns in this area. The first was that the overwhelming majority of participants in the non-ROTC and non-officer focus groups did not grow up with any veteran family members. Conversely, the common pattern among focus groups consisting of ROTC cadets, West Point cadets, and officers was that the majority had immediate family members who were veterans.

Recommendations

Give Hispanic-American veterans visibility in areas of Hispanic concentration, such as California and Texas. Provide these areas with role models (junior and senior), guest speakers,

and mentorship teams. Use existing personnel within our ROTC and West Point hierarchies to facilitate these efforts.

Educational Attainment

There are three routes to the Army officer corps: the ROTC program, West Point, and Officer Candidate School (OCS). The great majority of officers (over 70 percent) come from ROTC. The remainder come from West Point (about 20 percent) and OCS (over 9 percent). The research findings in this category concern young Hispanic-Americans' motivation and ability to enter college or West Point and to get access to ROTC scholarships. Any of these would make their eventual commissioning as officers possible.

Enhancement of the ROTC program, as the largest producer of Army officers, is absolutely key to improving Hispanic-American representation. Recommended changes to the West Point admissions program will also contribute significantly. The research did not include the OCS program because of the time constraints of this study and the relatively small number of Army officers produced by OCS. As a point for further research, however, OCS deserves some consideration. It only takes a few months to produce an officer through OCS as compared with the four years required through ROTC and West Point.

1. The affiliation between the U.S. Army (and its ROTC program) and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) is insufficient.

This is the study's most significant finding and has the potential to become the most effective remedy to the severe underrepresentation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army's officer corps.

A major part of HACU's work is to promote Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). HSIs are accredited colleges and universities where Hispanic students constitute 25 percent or more of the enrollment. To date, there are 193 HSIs in the country (Appendix D). California has the largest number of HSIs (57), followed by Puerto Rico (43) and Texas (30). Yet out of these 193 institutions nationwide, *only ten* have Army ROTC programs. To date, the military has not

formalized a program that provides resources (such as the allocation of ROTC scholarship dollars) to the HSIs around the country. Although DoD has signed a Partnership Agreement with HACU, it is philosophical in nature and does not commit to specific funding. The agreement is a good start, but it now needs to be followed up with resources.

Recommendations

The U.S. Army should develop the affiliation between its ROTC program and HACU. This is an area where we can make progress by paralleling the successes of a proven program: the ROTC affiliation with historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Over the last 20 to 30 years, military affiliations with the HBCUs, specifically the ROTC programs at HBCU campuses, have resulted in increased African American officer representation in the Army.

The bottom line is this: Why reinvent the wheel? The Army should allocate resources (ROTC scholarship money) in an effort that parallels the successes of the HBCU/ROTC program for African Americans. This program needs to be developed without delay—results are assured.

2. Most Hispanic-American college-bound youth are in two-year and state colleges.

In 1997, 11 percent of Hispanics ages 25 to 29 completed a four-year college degree. This study found that of the relatively few Hispanic-Americans who attend college, most are in two-year colleges and state colleges. As one senior Army officer put it, “For many people, the be-all of life is getting out of college. For Hispanics, it’s getting out of high school.” Yet the pool of college-bound Hispanics is increasing, and the 11 percent rate is still far higher than the Army’s current 3.5 percent Hispanic-American officer content. The Army needs to take advantage of this prospective pool of highly qualified Hispanic-American youths.

Recommendations

Initiate or “beef up” ROTC programs at state and junior colleges in California and Texas. Continue to offer ROTC scholarships to two-year college students. Continue to expand the ROTC program into the junior college market. The Army should concentrate on HSIs in these

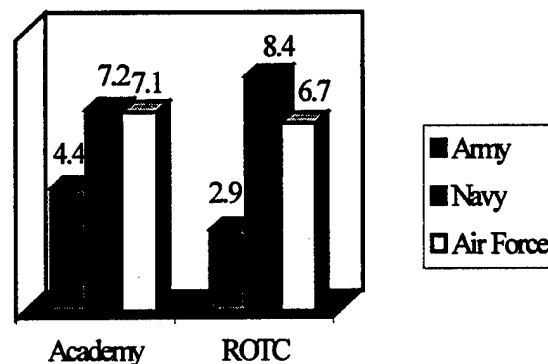
efforts, and should provide the additional funds needed to facilitate them. (ROTC Cadet Command is currently making gains in these areas).

Additionally, the Army should continue to support ongoing “stay in school” efforts. Continue to provide resources to programs such as the Army National Guard’s Youth Challenge Program, the NCLR’s “ALMA” awards, educational programs sponsored by the League of Unified Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and other recruiting and advertising initiatives.

3. Hispanic-Americans are underrepresented *as cadets* in the Army’s ROTC program and at West Point.

Cadets in ROTC and at West Point represent the future of officer representation within the Army. As the following graph demonstrates, Hispanic-American Army ROTC and West Point cadets are significantly underrepresented when compared with the Army’s sister services. In the Navy and Air Force, the representation is about double what it is in the Army. The fact of the matter is that the accession of Hispanic-Americans into the ROTC and West Point cadet corps must improve if the officer representation is to follow suit. If the low accession rates continue, the Hispanic-American underrepresentation in the officer corps will remain in its present state.

Hispanic-American Cadets: Percentage Distribution



Source: Army, Navy, and Air Force military academies, Nov. 1998; Army, Navy, and Air Force ROTC commands, Nov. 1998.

On a positive note, West Point's Funded Visitation Program is extremely effective. This program is run by the West Point Admissions Office and funded by the Association of Graduates (AOG). Its purpose is to bring highly qualified minority high school students to West Point for a visit, which culminates in an offer to apply for admission. Since the program began, 85 percent of the visiting students have accepted offers of admission. Starting this year, West Point has also started bringing Hispanic-American students as a group. This is a program that deserves to continue and be strengthened.

Recommendations

Collaborate with the sister services to capitalize on their more successful working programs. If it has been working for them, why reinvent the wheel? Formalize and disseminate recruitment and admissions goals to subordinates. (ROTC Cadet Command is currently looking at formalizing a goal that more closely approximates the national population).

4. The West Point admissions goal for Hispanic-Americans needs to be "re-looked."

West Point has a well-established policy of aspiring to meet various cadet admission goals for several categories, including minorities. The academy's current goal for Hispanic-American cadets is *4 to 6 percent*.

Part of West Point's methodology for setting these goals is based on the current percentage/content of officers in the Army. If achieving genuine diversity and making full use of the nation's minority potential are the Army's goals, West Point's current methodology is based on a somewhat flawed rationale. Basing admissions goals for this group on an already critically low officer content will only keep Hispanic-Americans perpetually underrepresented.

The current admissions goal of 4 to 6 percent pales in comparison with the national population, where the Hispanic-American proportion is three times greater. Hispanic-Americans now make up 11.4 percent of the total (12.8 percent if Puerto Rico is included). By contrast, the academy's admissions goal for the next-largest minority population, African Americans, is 10 to 12 percent,

which closely parallel's this group's actual distribution in the U.S. population. Without immediate changes, the gap between West Point's goal for admissions and the actual Hispanic make-up of the population can only become wider as the Hispanic population continues to grow.

Recommendation

Direct West Point to increase its admissions goal for Hispanic-Americans. Employ a methodology that pays more attention to parity with national demographics or to the admission goals set for other minority populations and less attention to the Army's current officer content.

5. Hispanic-American members of Congress are not making use of all their allocated nominations to West Point.

Meetings with members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), West Point admissions officers, and West Point cadets surfaced the following fact: many of our Hispanic-American members of Congress are not using all the nominations they are authorized to make in recommending candidates for West Point. Since these elected officials generally serve constituencies with the nation's highest concentrations of Hispanic citizens, improvement in this area is certainly possible and would help to increase the number of Hispanic-American cadets at West Point—and therefore the number of future officers. Moreover, from the elected official's political point of view, nominations are a "hip pocket" benefit they can offer their constituencies. It is worth mentioning that in the course of this study, several members of the current CHC indicated that they understand this problem and are committed to improving matters.

Recommendation

Solicit the support of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. The Army, through the West Point leadership, should continue to brief and solicit the support of the CHC for increased nominations to West Point. Contact with these members should include their chiefs of staff and aides to ensure that the actual administrative legwork gets done.

The ROTC Cadet Command leadership should also continue their ongoing efforts to brief and solicit the support of the CHC for the Army's ROTC program.

Cultural Issues

Attitudes and views derived from all 18 focus groups strongly suggested that various areas of Hispanic culture hinder, or in some cases enhance, our ability to bring Hispanic-Americans into the Army's officer corps. Such areas include strong family ties, a tendency to start work early, Hispanic parents' image of the military, and a propensity towards patriotism.

1. Hispanics have a tendency to stay near home.

This was one of the study's most frequently recurring findings. The cultural tendency to stay near home and help out with the family still exists even at the early high school ages. This linked tendency to live near home appears to be as strong with second-generation Hispanic-Americans as it is with the first generation. The discussions in all 18 focus groups confirmed that this phenomenon is alive and well.

Recommendation

Offer or guarantee Reserve and National Guard commissions to Hispanic-American ROTC cadets. This complements the preference among many Hispanics to stay close to home. (The ROTC Cadet Command is considering implementing this).

2. Hispanic-American teens start work early.

One young student at the University of Texas at El Paso summarized this tendency by his comment: "I'm pretty lucky to be in college now. It's just a matter of time before my older brother leaves the family--then I'll have to start work."

According to recent Census Bureau data, Hispanic men have the highest labor-force participation of any group of American male workers. In 1997, 80 percent of Hispanic males over age 16 were working or looking for work, the highest rate of any group. While this suggests a commendable work ethic, it discourages Hispanic-American youth from completing high school

and, therefore, works against the pursuit of careers that require a college education, such as becoming officers in the Army.

In addition to these Census Bureau data, the study's focus group input confirmed this phenomenon. Several focus group participants at the high school and college levels displayed extreme interest in "how much an officer makes." Others, including one college freshman ROTC student, were unaware that officers generally make more money than enlisted soldiers. When correctly informed on this matter, they recommended that we show the wage figures in our advertising and recruiting for the officer side.

Recommendations

Advertise, in terms of money, what an officer makes over time. Likewise, provide information, to be distributed at the high school level, on how much ROTC scholarships and a West Point "full ride" are worth.

3. Hispanic parents do not like the idea of women going into the Army.

This emerged as a salient finding with virtually every focus group. There appears to be a cultural block, within Hispanic families, to the idea of women going into the Army. According to female focus group participants, this stems from their parents' perception that the Army is "not a respectable place for a woman to be." Several participants surmised that this attitude transfers from the way Hispanic parents view certain Latin American militaries: dictatorships, human rights abuses, and so on. Additionally, most focus groups attested to the fact that Hispanic parents do not distinguish between going into the Army as an officer and going in as an enlisted soldier, and therefore do not associate the Army with college.

Recommendations

Conduct additional research into this phenomenon. In the interim, highlight some of the Army's current successful female cadets and officers, and emphasize the college aspect of officer preparation. Advertise officer-producing programs (ROTC and West Point) in Spanish for the sake of the parents.

4. Patriotism is a valued quality in the Hispanic-American culture.

The preponderance of research data, together with the attitudes expressed in focus groups, meetings, and interviews, strongly suggest that Hispanic-Americans value patriotism. This attitude was prevalent from the high school freshmen all the way to the general officers, political appointees, and the Hispanic members of Congress. The Hispanic-Americans contacted throughout this study consistently expressed gratitude for what this country has done for them, consider the United States *their* country, and expressed a genuine intent to fight for this country if needed. This finding supports the historical facts on record: proportionately, Hispanic-Americans are the recipients of the most the Medals of Honor of any group, have the highest propensity for military service, and have some of the highest retention rates. Of equal interest, 28 percent of the names on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., are Hispanic.

Recommendation

Continue to target patriotism in advertising, recruiting, and accession efforts. This complements Hispanic-American culture.

Outreach and Mentorship

Under this category are research findings concerning the need for programs that could provide outreach and mentorship for Hispanic-American youth and for young officers. Also discussed are vehicles that would bring greater visibility to Hispanic-American issues relating to careers in the Army. Such long-term vehicles would ensure continued engagement, increased visibility, and more effective tutelage of Hispanic youth.

1. There is no outreach or mentoring program targeting Hispanic-American youth, officers, and ROTC programs.

Interviews, meetings, and focus groups revealed the need for an outreach and mentoring program targeting Hispanic-American cadets and officers in the Army.

Examples of currently working programs include ROCKS and the Association of Naval Service Officers (ANSO). ROCKS, which has existed for 34 years, provides outreach and mentorship to African American Army officers and ROTC cadets, among other functions. It also raises the concerns of African Americans before the Army's senior leadership. Many success stories relayed by African American officers today are tied to some interaction they had with ROCKS while in ROTC. ROCKS members are requested throughout the school year to visit HBCU/ROTC campuses in various capacities as mentors and guest speakers. ANSO is a Uniformed Naval Services program that seeks to mentor, provide outreach, and develop Hispanic-Americans in the community.

These two programs have brought about improved career development and have improved the advancement, retention, and accession of the members of these minority groups. Thus far, our Army has no such programs.

Recommendation

The Army should form a task force that will assist in the development of an outreach and mentoring program targeting Hispanic-American youth, officers, and ROTC programs. Consider selecting a "champion/figurehead" for the organization, for example one of our senior Hispanic-American Generals, retired or active-duty. Make use of the format, by-laws, and lessons learned from the ROCKS and ANSO programs. Parallels to the ROCKS and ANSO programs can be drawn and implemented. We cannot go wrong by duplicating programs that work.

(During the course of this research project, the Honorable Gil Coronado, the director of the Selective Service System (SSS), a nationally respected advocate for Hispanic-American issues, and the president of the Heroes & Heritage program, expressed interest in starting such an outreach and mentoring program for Hispanic-Americans. He would align it under the auspices of Heroes & Heritage, an organization "dedicated toward highlighting Hispanic contributions to the U.S. military, defense, intelligence, and

diplomatic communities.” Likewise, other senior general officers in the Army also expressed interest in bringing such a program to fruition.)

2. There is no Senior Service College (SSC) Fellowship position with one of the premier Hispanic-American think tanks.

The Army’s Senior Service College (SSC) Fellowship Program selects officers, at the Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel levels, to function as fellows at various academic, governmental, and research agencies for one year. During this year the fellow selects, conducts, and publishes a research project relating to relevant strategic issues confronting the military.

Currently, one of the SSC fellowship positions, and the one sponsoring this study, is at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank focusing on the impact of public policy on African American interests. The Army has not yet established a similar fellowship position with any of the Hispanic-American think tanks.

Establishing such a position would give Hispanic-American issues (such as the issues investigated in this study) a long-term vehicle through which strategies for addressing them could be researched and developed.

Recommendation

Start a SSC Fellowship position with one of the premier Hispanic-American think tanks, commencing AY 2000. Use the same documentation that authorized the current position at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. Two recommendations for the new fellowship location are the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute in California and the National Council of La Raza in Washington, D.C. The presidents of both of these organizations have indicated that they would host such a position.

3. There is potential for support from local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce.

This was an unexpected, but welcome, finding. Local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, if armed with information about ROTC and West Point, can serve to assist us in our quest to bring in more Hispanic-American officers. These business organizations are becoming very influential in Hispanic communities, particularly in California. Interviews with several members of local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce confirmed that this is the kind of information they would like to be able to offer their members and their college-bound sons and daughters.

Recommendations

The Army should solicit the support of local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. Direct our ROTC and West Point leadership to establish working relationships with their local Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. Arm the Chambers of Commerce with information about the ROTC program and West Point. Cadres and outreach personnel should act as "point" in this development.

4. The Troops to Teachers Program is not being fully used to address the Hispanic-American role model problem.

As discussed earlier, one of the findings of this study is that there are very few Hispanic-American military role models. The Troops to Teachers Program is a federally funded program that enables retiring military members to become teachers. By encouraging retiring Hispanic-American military members to take advantage of this program and become teachers in areas where Hispanics are concentrated, Hispanic youth would have more role models.

Recommendation

Encourage retiring Hispanic-American military members to use the Troops to Teachers Program. Provide information and encouragement during retirement outprocessing.

Stress the importance of their influence as role models in school systems where Hispanic-Americans are concentrated.

IV. CONCLUSION and IMPLICATIONS

Fixing the underrepresentation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army's officer corps is *not* an insurmountable problem. We now know how to fix it. We have the talent and resources to fix it. We just need to establish the *will* to fix it. As of this writing, the Army has no strategic document, such as a plan, time line, or glide path, to improve Hispanic-American representation. Such a document would clearly demonstrate that the Army considers bringing this group up to parity with other groups a priority goal. In short, the Army must develop a written intent, priority, and specific plan to fix the drastic underrepresentation of Hispanic-American officers.

I strongly urge our Army leadership to expedite the implementation of the recommended actions. Time is clearly of the essence on this issue. We know that our Department of Defense aspires to maintain a military force structure that looks like the nation it defends. We also know that the Hispanic-American population will become the largest minority group in America in the next six years. Yet Hispanic-Americans only represent 3.5 percent of the Army's officer corps—a fraction nearly four times smaller than their portion of the overall population.

Moreover, the Army stands to benefit from the improvement of Hispanic-American representation. Documented data make it clear that Hispanic-Americans have demonstrated great potential for distinguished service. They comprise the largest number of Medal of Honor recipients, proportionately, of any group. They represent 28 percent of the names on the Vietnam Memorial. They show the highest propensity (expressed willingness) for military service. And they have some of the highest retention rates in the Army.

Several of the recommendations outlined in this report, if implemented, will have significant, wide-reaching, and long-term impact on Hispanic-American participation in the Army's officer corps. They come with policy and program implications. Other

recommendations may not have quite the breadth and scope, but will also contribute significantly to solving the problem. I urge our Army leadership to use these recommendations as supporting documentation for a written, specific plan or prioritized intent to end the underrepresentation of Hispanic-Americans in the Army's officer corps.

On a positive note, I firmly believe the glass is on its way to becoming "half full." Our Army leadership are now voicing their concern, their commitment, and the priority they place on this issue—and in many cases are already allocating resources to it. As this study was being completed, several Army commands, including ROTC Cadet Command and West Point, had already begun to implement various programs that will certainly help us make progress on this vital issue.

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Wallace, Maj. Gen. Stewart W. "U.S. Army ROTC Cadet Command." Briefing given at the Hispanic Leadership Summit '99 Conference, sponsored by the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, San Antonio, Texas, January 13, 1999.

APPENDIX A: Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the following persons.

Military

The Honorable Louis Caldera, Secretary of the Army, October 21, 1998, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

The Honorable Patrick T. Henry, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, November 4, 1998, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

Colonel Michael L. Jones, Director, and Colonel Bob Johnson, Minority Admissions Officer, West Point Admissions Office, October 27, 1998, West Point, NY.

The Honorable Francis M. Rush, Jr., Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, September 24, 1998, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

Brigadier General Ricardo S. Sanchez, J-5, U.S. Southern Command, January 13, 1999, San Antonio, TX.

Lieutenant General (Retired) Theodore G. Stroup, Jr., Vice President for Education, Association of the United States Army, January 11, 1999, Arlington, VA.

Major General Alfred A. Valenzuela, senior serving Hispanic-American General Officer in the U.S. Army and Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Southern Command, September 28, 1998, Arlington, VA.

Dr. Naomi Verdugo, U.S. Army Demographer, June-July 1998, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

Major General Stewart W. Wallace, Commanding General, U.S. Army ROTC Cadet Command, September 30, 1998, Fort Monroe, VA.

Congress

Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, February 25, 1999, Washington, DC.

Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz (D-TX), Congressional Hispanic Caucus, February 23, 1999, Washington, DC.

Congressman Matthew G. Martinez (D-CA), Congressional Hispanic Caucus, February 25, 1999, Washington, DC.

Government

The Honorable Gil Coronado, Director, Selective Service System, August 20, 1998, Arlington, VA.

The Honorable Dr. Hector O. Nevarez, Administrative Director of the Congressional Commission on Service Members and Veterans Transition Commission, August 26, 1998, Arlington, VA.

Private Sector

Mr. Roger A. Campos, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), September 8, 1998, Washington, DC.

Dr. Rudy de la Garza, Vice President, The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, University of Texas-Austin, October 16, 1998, Washington, DC.

Dr. Norman R. Heitzman, Jr., National Council of La Raza, August 26, 1998, Washington, DC.

The Honorable Reynaldo P. Maduro, Sr., President and Chief Executive Officer, Research Planning, Inc., September 1, 1998, Falls Church, VA.

Dr. Harry P. Pachon, President, The Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, December 10, 1998, Claremont, CA.

The Honorable Fred Pang, previous Undersecretary of the Navy and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, September 16, 1998, The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

Dr. Gumecindo Salas, Vice President of Governmental Relations, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), March 26, 1999, Washington, DC.

Mr. Raul Yzaguirre, President, National Council of La Raza, September 9, 1998, Washington, DC.

Educators

Dr. Doris Alvarez, Principal, Herbert Hoover High School, December 8, 1998, San Diego, CA.

Dr. Edwin Dorn, Dean, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas-Austin, November 18, 1998, Austin, TX.

APPENDIX B: Focus Groups

A total of 18 focus groups were conducted with the following target groups.

Officers

West Point graduates at the West Point Minority Admissions Office (6 participants: Junior Hispanic-American officers, recent Captains, and one recent Major, all of whom function as admissions/outreach/recruiting officers), October 27, 1998.

ROTC cadre at San Diego State University (3 participants at the Captain and Lieutenant Colonel level), December 8, 1998

ROTC cadre at University of California at Davis (5 participants at the Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, Major, and Civilian cadre levels), December 9, 1998.

High school JROTC cadre at Grant Union High School, Sacramento, CA (3 participants at the Lieutenant Colonel, Sergeant, and vocational counselor levels), December 11, 1998.

Junior officers at Fort Bragg, NC (10 participants: Hispanic-American Lieutenants and Captains), February 18, 1999.

College Students (ROTC and non-ROTC)

West Point cadets (6 participants: Hispanic-Americans of all four year-groups), November 12, 1998.

Non-ROTC students at University of Texas-Austin (3 participants: Hispanic-Americans of all year-groups), November 18, 1998.

ROTC students at University of Texas-Austin (13 participants: Hispanic-Americans of all year-groups), November 18, 1998.

ROTC students at University of Texas-El Paso (15 participants: Hispanic-Americans of all year-groups), November 19, 1998.

ROTC students at San Diego State University (10 participants: Hispanic-Americans, mostly freshmen and sophomores, and two seniors), December 8, 1998.

Non-ROTC students at San Diego State University (2 participants: Hispanic-Americans, a sophomore and a junior), December 8, 1998.

ROTC students at University of California-Davis (14 participants of all year-groups, races, and ethnicities), December 9, 1998.

ROTC students at University of California-Davis (10 participants, Hispanic-Americans of all year-groups), December 10, 1998.

High School Students (JROTC and non-ROTC)

West Point candidates (13 participants: Hispanic-Americans from all over the U.S. participating in the West Point Visitation Program), November 12, 1998.

JROTC students at Herbert Hoover High School, San Diego, CA (14 participants: Hispanic-Americans of all year-groups), December 8, 1998.

Marine Corps JROTC students at Sweetwater High School, San Diego, CA (12 participants: Hispanic-Americans of all year-groups), December 8, 1998.

Non-JROTC students at Grant Union High School, Sacramento, CA (10 participants: Hispanic-Americans, mostly freshmen and sophomores), December 11, 1998

Non-JROTC students at Pleasant Valley High School, Chico, CA (12 participants: Hispanic-American juniors and seniors), December 14, 1998.

APPENDIX C: Focus Group Instrument

Initial Questions (“Ice Breakers”)

1. Why did you (or didn't you) come to West Point/join ROTC/become an officer?
2. What did (or would) your parents and peers think about your going to West Point/ROTC/becoming an officer?
3. Why do you think most of your other peers go to West Point/ROTC/become an officer?
4. Why do you think a lot of your peers do not want to go to West Point/ROTC/become an officer?
5. What do you see as the benefits of becoming an officer?
6. Why do you think we have so few Hispanic-American officers in the Army?

More Detailed Questions

(Note: The following are outline notes used by the facilitator.)

How strongly do you believe the following reasons are the cause of Hispanic-American underrepresentation in the Army's officer corps?

Section A – Exposure Issues

(Don't know or hear much about the Army or about being an Army officer)

1. Ineffective targeting by Army recruiting.
Target Hispanic-American interests. (Marines do better—why? Machismo?)
Target areas of Hispanic-American concentration (e.g., California and Texas).
2. Lack of military affiliation with colleges/ROTCs where Hispanic-Americans are concentrated (e.g., California and Texas)—as compared with African American HBCUs/“Rocks.”
3. Most college-bound Hispanic-Americans attending two-year colleges (no ROTC scholarships).
4. Few Hispanic-American senior officers/Generals to serve as role models and influencing figures.

Only three Hispanic-American Generals in the active component.

Few field-grade officers.

Vicious cycle: few officers = few role models = few accessions = deeper void.

5. Few veteran parents/family members (less knowledge about the military).
6. Low exposure to the Army due to base closures in key areas (e.g., California).
7. Few ROTC college programs where Hispanic-Americans are concentrated (e.g., California and Texas).
8. Competition from colleges and universities that offer “full rides” to highly qualified Hispanic-Americans—hard for the military to compete.

Section B – Cultural/Socioeconomic Issues

1. Low high school graduation rates among Hispanic-Americans—they do not go to college to become officers.
2. Matrilineal tendencies (strong family ties—stay near home).
3. Tendency to start earning wages early: Hispanic-American teens work the most.
4. Hispanic-American Congresspersons are not using all their nominations to West Point.
5. Until now, Hispanic-American officer representation has not been a high priority for the Army.

APPENDIX D: Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)*

Arizona

Arizona Institute of Business and Technology - Mesa
Arizona Institute of Business and Technology - Phoenix
Arizona Western College
Central Arizona College
Cochise College
Estrella Mountain Community College
Pima Community College
South Mountain Community College

California

Allan Hancock College
Bakersfield College
California State University - Bakersfield
California State University - Dominguez Hills
California State University - Fresno **
California State University - Los Angeles
California State University - Monterey Bay
California State University - Northridge
California State University - San Bernardino
Canada College
Cerritos College
Chaffey College
Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science - Los Angeles
Citrus College
College of the Desert
College of the Sequoias
Compton Community College
Don Bosco Technical Institute
D-Q University - Davis
East Los Angeles College
El Camino College
Fresno City College
Fullerton College
Gavilan College
Hartnell College
Heald College School of Business - Salinas
Heald College School of Business - San Jose
Heald College School of Business - Stockton
Heald College School of Business and Technology - Fresno

* HSIs have 25 percent or higher Hispanic enrollment. List current as of April 21, 1999.

** Schools with Army ROTC Programs

Heald College School of Business and Technology - Hayward
Imperial Valley College
Kelsey-Jenney College
Long Beach Community College
Los Angeles City College
Los Angeles County Medical Center School of Nursing
Los Angeles Harbor College
Los Angeles Mission College
Los Angeles Trade Technical College
Los Angeles Valley College
Merced College
Mt. Saint Mary's College
Mt. San Antonio College
National Hispanic University
Oxnard College
Palo Verde College
Pasadena City College
Porterville College
Rancho Santiago Community College
Reedley College
Rio Hondo College
Riverside Community College
San Bernardino Valley College
Southwestern College
University of Laverne
Ventura College
West Hills Community College
Whittier College
Woodbury University

Colorado

Adams State College
Commonwealth International University
Community College of Denver
Otero Junior College
Pueblo Community College
Trinidad State Junior College

Florida

Barry University
Caribbean Center for Advance Studies - Miami
Florida International University **
Miami-Dade Community College District
Miami-Dade Community College Homestead

** Schools with Army ROTC Programs

Miami-Dade Community College Kendall
Miami-Dade Community College Medical Center
Miami-Dade Community College North Campus
Miami-Dade Community College Wolfson
St. Thomas University
Trinity International University - South Florida
University of Miami

Illinois

Harry S. Truman College
Lexington Institute of Hospitality Careers
MacCormac College
Malcolm X College
Morton College
Northeastern Illinois University
Richard J. Daley College
Saint Augustine College
Wilbur Wright College

Kansas

Dodge City Community College

New Jersey

Hudson County Community College
Jersey City State College
Passaic County Community College
Saint Peters College

New Mexico

Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute
College of Santa Fe
Dona Ana Branch Community College
Eastern New Mexico University - Roswell
Luna Vocational Technical Institute
New Mexico Highlands University
New Mexico Junior College
New Mexico State University - Carlsbad
New Mexico State University - Grants
New Mexico State University - Main Campus **
Northern New Mexico Community College
Santa Fe Community College
University of New Mexico - Los Alamos
University of New Mexico - Main Campus
University of New Mexico - Taos Education Center

** Schools with Army ROTC Programs

University of New Mexico - Valencia County
Western New Mexico University

New York

Boricua College
Borough of Manhattan Community College
Bronx Community College
City College
College of Aeronautics
Hostos Community College
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
LaGuardia Community College
Lehman College
Mercy College
New York City Technical College

Texas

Bee County College
Del Mar College
El Paso Community College
Laredo Community College
Mountain View Community College
Odessa College
Our Lady of the Lake University
Palo Alto College
San Antonio College
South Plains College
South Texas Community College
Southwest Texas Junior College
St. Edwards University
St. Mary's University **
St. Philip's College
Sul Ross State University
Texas A&M International University
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University - Kingsville **
Texas Southwest College
Texas State Technical College - Harlingen
University of Houston - Downtown
University of Texas - Brownsville
University of Texas - El Paso **
University of Texas - Pan American **
University of Texas - San Antonio **
University of Texas Health Science - San Antonio

** Schools with Army ROTC Programs

University of Texas of the Permian Basin
University of the Incarnate Word
Victoria College

Washington

Heritage College

Puerto Rico

American University of Puerto Rico - Bayamon
American University of Puerto Rico - Manati
Atlantic College
Bayamon Central University
Caribbean Center for Advanced Studies
Caribbean University - Bayamon
Caribbean University - Carolina
Caribbean University - Ponce
Caribbean University - Vega Baja
Colegio Universitario del Este
Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico
Escuela De Artes Plasticas De Puerto Rico
Humacao Community College
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Aguadilla
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Arecibo
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Barranquitas
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Bayamon
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Central System
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Fajardo
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Guayama
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Metropolitano
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - Ponce
InterAmericana University of Puerto Rico - San German
The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Arecibo
The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Guayama
The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez
The Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico - Ponce
Techno College of the Municipality of San Juan
Universidad Adventista de Las Antillas
Universidad del Turabo
Universidad Metropolitana
Universidad Politecnica de Puerto Rico
University of Puerto Rico - Cayey
University of Puerto Rico - Colegio Regional de Aguadilla
University of Puerto Rico - Colegio Regional de Carolina
University of Puerto Rico - Colegio Regional de la Montana
University of Puerto Rico - Colegio Universidad de Arecibo

University of Puerto Rico - Colegio Universidad de Bayamon
University of Puerto Rico - Colegio Universidad de Ponce
University of Puerto Rico - Humacao
University of Puerto Rico - Marati
University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez **
University of Puerto Rico - Medical Sciences Campus
University of Puerto Rico - Rio Piedras **
University of the Sacred Heart

** Schools with Army ROTC Programs