
IN THE
Supreme Court of the United States

STUDENTS FOR FAIR ADMISSIONS, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS
OF HARVARD COLLEGE,
Respondent.

STUDENTS FOR FAIR ADMISSIONS, INC.,
Petitioner;

v.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, *et al.*,
Respondents.

**ON WRITS OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURTS
OF APPEALS FOR THE FIRST AND FOURTH CIRCUITS**

**BRIEF OF ADM. CHARLES S. ABBOT, ADM. DENNIS C. BLAIR,
GEN. CHARLES F. BOLDEN, JR., GEN. THOMAS P. BOSTICK,
GEN. VINCENT K. BROOKS, ADM. WALTER E. CARTER, JR.,
ET AL., AS AMICI CURIAE IN SUPPORT OF RESPONDENTS**

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INTEREST OF *AMICI CURIAE*

Amici include 35 top former military leaders,¹ reflecting the highest leadership from all four services: four Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Chiefs of Staff of the Army and the Air Force; Chief of Naval Operations of the Navy; Commandant of the Marine Corps; Medal of Honor recipients; and other military leaders who also serve as university presidents, chancellors, and professors. *Amici* are greatly interested in this case because of its impact on our Armed Forces' ability to defend our Nation. *Amici's* submission is informed by their collective centuries of experience serving in and leading our Armed Forces.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

Diversity in the halls of academia directly affects performance in the theaters of war. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* ("*Grutter*"), 539 U.S. 306 (2003), *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* ("*Fisher I*"), 570 U.S. 297 (2013), and *Fisher v. Univ. of Tex. at Austin* ("*Fisher II*"), 579 U.S. 365 (2016), this Court adjudicated the constitutionality of colleges and universities considering racial diversity as one of many factors in admissions practices. These cases remain of great interest to *Amici* because of their potential impact on the military's ability to cultivate a diverse, highly

1. See Appendix. All parties have consented to the filing of this brief. Pursuant to Rule 37.6, *Amici* and their counsel represent that no party to this case or their counsel authored this brief in whole or in part, and that no person other than *Amici* and their counsel paid for or monetarily contributed to prepare or submit this brief.

qualified officer corps.² That ability hinges, in turn, on the military's continuing admission of diverse student bodies into its service academies and continuing recruitment of diverse students into Reserve Officer Training Corps ("ROTC") programs at civilian universities nationwide, such as Harvard College ("Harvard") and the University of North Carolina ("UNC"). Indeed, because most of the military's officer corps come from service academies or ROTC, the diversity of these institutions and programs directly impacts the diversity of our military's leadership.

The importance of maintaining a diverse, highly qualified officer corps has been beyond legitimate dispute for decades. History has shown that placing a diverse Armed Forces under the command of homogenous leadership is a recipe for internal resentment, discord, and violence. By contrast, units that are diverse across all levels are more cohesive, collaborative, and effective. The importance of diverse leadership has risen to new heights in recent years, as international conflicts and humanitarian crises require the military to perform civil functions that call for heightened cultural awareness and sensitivity to ethnic and religious issues. *All* service members—minority or otherwise—are better equipped to meet these challenges if they are educated in a racially diverse environment and guided by diverse leadership in the field.

2. The importance of this issue prompted scores of top-ranking Generals, Admirals and other leaders to submit *amicus* briefs supporting consideration of race in admissions policies. See Consolidated Br. of Lt. Gen. Julius W. Becton, Jr. et al., *Grutter* (Nos. 02-241 & 02-516) ("*Grutter* Military Brief"); Br. of Lt. Gen. Julius W. Becton, Jr. et al., *Fisher I* (No. 11-345) ("*Fisher I* Military Brief"); Br. of Lt. Gen. Julius W. Becton, Jr. et al., *Fisher II* (No. 14-981) ("*Fisher II* Military Brief," and, collectively the "Prior Military Briefs").

Our academies and ROTC programs admit students pursuant to the Raise and Maintain Clauses of the United States Constitution. *See* U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cls. 12–13. In *Amici’s* professional judgment, the status quo—which permits service academies and civilian universities to consider racial diversity as one factor among many in their admissions practices—is essential to the continued vitality of the U.S. military to “raise,” “support,” and “maintain” a diverse, highly effective officer corps. This Court has rightly deferred “to the professional judgment of military authorities” on matters concerning the optimal composition and operations of our Armed Forces. *E.g.*, *Goldman v. Weinberger*, 475 U.S. 503, 507 (1986). To that end, in *Grutter*, the Court deferred to the military’s judgment regarding the importance of a diverse officer corps and validated its interest in that diversity:

[T]o cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity. All members of our heterogeneous society must have confidence in the openness and integrity of the educational institutions that provide this training.

Grutter, 539 U.S. at 332.

These words remain true today. Prohibiting educational institutions from using modest, race-conscious admissions policies would impair the military’s ability to maintain diverse leadership, and thereby seriously undermine its institutional legitimacy and operational effectiveness. *Amici* respectfully request that, in

considering whether to reverse decades of precedent affirming the constitutionality of such admissions policies, the Court will continue to consider how such policies enable the military to serve our Nation's security interests.

ARGUMENT

I. Growing And Maintaining A Highly Qualified, Diverse Officer Corps Remains A U.S. National Security Imperative.

A. The U.S. military's commitment to diverse and inclusive leadership derives from decades of experience.

Our military's commitment to fostering racial diversity and inclusivity across its leadership grew from many decades of painful lessons. Racial minorities have fought and died in the Armed Forces since the American Revolution. *See* Morris J. MacGregor, Jr., *Integration of the Armed Forces 1940-1965*, WASHINGTON, DC: CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY, at 4 (1981). Yet minority servicemembers for more than a century were subjected to openly discriminatory practices that restricted opportunities for leadership. Army practices, for instance, "limited the employment and restricted the rank of black officers," and "tended to convince enlisted men that their black leaders were not full-fledged officers." *Id.* at 37.

In July 1948, President Truman ordered complete desegregation of the military. *See* Exec. Order No. 9981, 13 Fed. Reg. 4313 (July 28, 1948). That order, issued over 15 years before passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, was

a trailblazing act of deliberate institutional integration.³ But even after the Armed Forces were fully desegregated in 1954, the officer corps remained almost entirely white. *Grutter* Military Br. at 13–14 (“[i]n 1962, a mere 1.6% of all commissioned military officers were African-American,” in stark contrast to much larger percentages in the enlisted ranks). This continuing inequity—coupled with the military’s history of discriminatory policies and practices—prompted many Black troops to conclude that the command structure had no regard for their careers

3. Some military personnel opposed President Truman’s desegregation order, arguing that integration created inefficiencies and “impaired morale in mixed units.” *A Report by The President’s Committee*, U.S. GOV’T PRINTING OFFICE WASH., 14 (1950), <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/freedom-to-serve>. Such purported concerns echo those raised by the brief filed by Veterans for Fairness and Merit (“VFM Brief”), which repeatedly claims that efforts to diversify military leadership will cause inefficiencies, enable incompetency, and harm morale. VFM Br. at 5, 15–17, 21. The military has repeatedly debunked these deeply problematic tropes, finding that diversity initiatives promote a culture of inclusion that greatly benefits unit performance. *See, e.g., Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion Report: Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military*, DEP’T OF DEF. 1 (Dec. 17, 2020), [hereinafter *DoD Diversity and Inclusion Report*] (“President Truman commissioned the Fahy Committee . . . to determine the impacts of integration and desegregation. The Committee found that desegregation and inclusivity abetted military readiness and effectiveness, and the financial costs of these endeavors were minimal in the face of the benefits.”). Third-party studies have shown that “inclusive armies fight harder, suffer lower rates of desertion and defection, and exhibit more creative problem-solving on complex battlefields.” Jason Lyall, *The military is making changes in response to Black Lives Matter protests. That’s good for fighting wars*, WASHINGTON POST (2020). Studies on the impacts of diversity outside the military setting have reached the same conclusion. *See, e.g., Fisher II* Military Br. at 10 n.4.

and unfairly favored White troops. *See Grutter Military Br.*, at 16 & n.5.

Widespread instances of racial tensions, disruptions, and violence followed. *Fisher I Military Br.* at 6–7. “In 1969 and 1970 alone, the Army catalogued more than 300 race-related internal disturbances, which resulted in the deaths of seventy-one American troops.” Bryan W. Leach, *Race as Mission Critical: The Occupational Need Rationale in Military Affirmative Action and Beyond*, 113 *YALE L.J.* 1093, 1111 (2004) (citation omitted). This was “[o]ne of the darkest chapters in the recent history of the U.S. military,” caused in significant part by “a complete breakdown in understanding between minority enlisted servicemembers and the white officers who led them.” Robert Knowles, *The Intertwined Fates of Affirmative Action and the Military*, 45 *LOYOLA UNIV. CHI. L. JRN.L.* 1027, 1033 (2014) (footnote omitted) [hereinafter *Intertwined Fates*]. This painful chapter brought home the importance of cultivating diversity across all levels of leadership. *Id.* at 1034 (“[s]o began the military’s use of affirmative action in earnest,” including “race-conscious admissions policies at service academies” and in ROTC programs).

The VFM Brief⁴ strenuously denies that the military’s homogenous leadership contributed to internal discord and violence during the Vietnam War. *See VFM Br.* at

4. Unlike *Amici’s* military brief, the VFM Brief rests its arguments on anecdotes, unpublished studies, studies that do not directly support its assertions, opinion pieces, anonymous signatories, and the supposed expertise of individuals who are not signatories at all. The Court should consider these deficiencies in weighing its credibility.

9–12. This thinly sourced argument contradicts decades of broad historical and military consensus. *E.g.*, Bernard C. Nalty, *STRENGTH FOR THE FIGHT: A HISTORY OF BLACK AMERICANS IN THE MILITARY 287–317* (1986) [hereinafter *Nalty*].⁵ In 1972, for instance, a Department of Defense Task Force report concluded that minority troops:

resent leadership by a corps which does not contain a proportion of minority officers anywhere nearly equivalent to the proportion of minority members in the service, or services, as a whole. Our conversation with enlisted men convince us that this is a point of irritation with minority personnel, and causes distrust of both the military system and the military justice system.

Report of the Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces, DEP'T OF DEFENSE 54-57 (Nov. 30, 1972). Years later, the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, an independent body commissioned by Congress in 2009 to assess diversity in military leadership, reached the same conclusion:

During the Vietnam War, the lack of diversity in military leadership led to problems that threatened the integrity and performance of the Nation's military. This is because servicemembers' vision of what is possible for

5. In addition to chronicling numerous incidents, Nalty observed that, during the late 1960s, “[r]acial conflict surfaced in all the armed forces, from South Vietnam to Labrador to West Germany.” *Nalty*, at 311.

their career is shaped by whether they see individuals with similar backgrounds excelling and being recognized in their Service.

From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century Military, Final Report, MIL. LEADERSHIP DIVERSITY COMM'N, at xvi (Mar. 15, 2011), <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=11390> [hereinafter *MLDC Report*].⁶

The military's successes and challenges with integration and inclusion, both in peacetime and in war, inform its position that "developing and maintaining qualified and demographically diverse leadership is critical for mission effectiveness." *MLDC Report*, at 39. The military's post-Vietnam policies "established the basic framework for race-conscious affirmative action in the military" and "helped the military rebuild its morale and reputation during the 1990s." *Intertwined Fates*, at 1035. "The military transformed itself in a short period of time from a racially segregated institution hostile to equality to a model of successful integration." *Id.* at 1044. Its policies were widely praised and held up as a model for successful integration at civilian institutions." *Id.* at 1057.

6. This finding aligns with social science research documenting the beneficial effects of gender or racial concordance in some situations. For example, a National Academy of Science study reports the "benefits of female leadership for young women working at firms," and the dramatic decline of infant mortality rates of Black newborns when they are treated by Black doctors. Brad N. Greenwood, et al., *Physician-patient racial concordance and disparities in birthing mortality for newborns*, PNAS (Aug. 17, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1913405117>.

The recently retired Commanding General of the United States Army Forces Command aptly captured the essence of the military’s position: “[w]ithout diversity, a homogeneous team of soldiers would lack the resilience, perspective, and growth offered by teammates from different backgrounds. . . . This makes diversity not only a right but also a strategic military asset—essential to meet today’s security challenges.” Gen. Michael X. Garrett, *Military Diversity, A Key American Strategic Asset*, MILITARY REV., 14 (May-June 2021), <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/English/MJ-21/Garrett-Military-Diversity-1.pdf>; see also Jim Garamone, *DOD News, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Are Necessities in U.S. Military*, DEP’T OF DEF. (Feb. 9, 2022), <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2929658/diversity-equity-inclusion-are-necessities-in-us-military> (“When the military gets recruits from diverse backgrounds, there will be more innovative thought, more innovative solutions to incredibly complex and complicated problems that are facing the national security apparatus today.”). *Amici* urge this Court to continue to respect the military’s professional judgment regarding the optimal “composition, training, equipping, and control of a military force.” *Gilligan v. Morgan*, 413 U. S. 1, 10 (1973) (noting it is “difficult to conceive of an area of governmental activity in which the courts have less competence”).

B. The U.S. military’s international presence and engagement abroad with foreign military and civilians requires diversity in the officer corps.

Diversity is imperative to our military’s dealings with international allies and complex global challenges, which

require leaders who can leverage talent, experience, and perspective to reach nuanced and innovative solutions. Indeed, the most difficult missions often demand the most diverse talent pools. Military leadership understands that officers trained in a racially diverse environment can more capably manage engagements in foreign regions where understanding and ably navigating pre-existing religious and ethnic tensions are inextricably intertwined with battlefield success. *See* Colonel Maxie McFarland, *Military Cultural Education*, MIL. REV. 85 (Mar.-Apr. 2005), (“[o]ver the past decade the Army has increasingly engaged in lengthy overseas deployments in which mission performance demanded significant interface with indigenous populations,” and “engagement with local populaces has become so crucial that mission success is often significantly affected by soldiers’ ability to interact with local individuals and communities”); *see also MLDC Report*, at xiv (“The ability to work collaboratively with many stakeholders, including international partners, will also be critical . . . and will require greater foreign language, regional, and cultural skills.”).

The military has long recognized the importance of diversity in its ranks when engaged abroad. The Army explained that:

Today’s security environment demands more from our military and civilian leaders than ever before. . . . The unconventional and asymmetrical battlefields of the future mean we must understand people and the environments where they live. A more adaptive and culturally astute Army will enhance our ability to operate in these environments. Training, educating and

preparing culturally adaptive leaders, able to meet global challenges because of their ability to understand varying cultures, will continue to help the Army achieve mission readiness.

United States Army Diversity Roadmap, DEP'T OF THE ARMY 3 (Dec. 2010), http://www.armydiversity.army.mil/document/Diversity_Roadmap.pdf [hereinafter *Diversity Roadmap*]. Today is no different. As the Department of Defense recently advised, “[d]iversity and inclusivity in the ranks are not merely aspirations, they are fundamental necessities to our readiness and our mission success.” *Immediate Actions to Address Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity in the Military Services*, DEP'T OF DEF. 4 (July 14, 2020), https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jul/15/2002457268/-1/-1/1/Immediate_Actions_to_Address_Diversity_Inclusion_Equal_Opportunity_in_Military_Services.pdf; *See also DoD Instruction 1020.05: DoD Diversity and Inclusion Management Program*, DEP'T OF DEF. 12 (effective Sep. 9, 2020), <https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/102005p.pdf?ver=2020-09-09-112958-573>.

Recent military engagements have frequently required close collaboration with people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. In February 2020, for example, the Secretary of Defense ordered deployment of an Army brigade to Africa to train and assist African countries to better compete with China and Russia in those regions. *Statement on the Deployment of Army's 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade to Africa*, DoD NEWS RELEASE (Feb. 12, 2020), <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/Releases/Release/Article/2082314/statement-on-the-deployment-of-armys-1st-security-force-assistance-brigade-to-a>. On

August 15, 2021, the U.S. Southern Command established Joint Task Force Haiti to provide foreign disaster assistance to the Haitian people following a 7.2 magnitude earthquake. *See U.S. Southern Command Supports U.S. Disaster Assistance to Haiti*, SOUTHCOM (Aug. 15, 2021), <https://www.southcom.mil/News/PressReleases/Article/2732060/us-southern-command-supports-us-disaster-assistance-to-haiti>; *see also* Charlie Savage & Eric Schmitt, *Biden Approves Plan to Redeploy Several Hundred Ground Forces Into Somalia*, N.Y. TIMES (May 16, 2022), <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/16/us/politics/biden-military-somalia.html> (reporting deployment of U.S. soldiers to Somalia to counter Islamist advances). The United States also deploys forces to support operations in Europe, Central America, and Asia. *See* Captain Rachel Salpietra, *JTF-Bravo commits to additional assistance*, JTF-BRAVO PUBLIC AFFAIRS (Nov. 12, 2020), <https://www.jtfb.southcom.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2413413/jtf-bravo-commits-to-additional-assistance> (reporting the military's life-saving disaster assistance in Honduras, Panama, and Guatemala); Jim Garamone, *U.S. to Deploy 3,000 Troops to Romania, Poland, Germany*, DOD NEWS (Feb. 2, 2022), <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/2920844/us-to-deploy-3000-troops-to-romania-poland-germany> (Romania, Poland, and Germany deployments); Army Public Affairs, *Army announces upcoming 1st ABCT, 1st Armored Division, unit rotation*, (Dec. 16, 2021), https://www.army.mil/article/252603/army_announces_upcoming_1st_abct_1st_armored_division_unit_rotation (deployment to Korea).

A qualified and diverse officer corps is especially vital in the elite Special Operations forces. Life and death

missions conducted by these units require diverse skills, including foreign language competency and knowledge of other cultures, along with the ability to collaborate and culturally empathize with vastly different individuals. Yet these units face a critical shortage of minority officers and enlisted personnel. As of March 2021, 95% of all Navy SEAL and combatant-craft crew officers were White and just 2% were Black. *See* Lolita C. Baldor, *US military's elite commando forces look to expand diversity*, ABC NEWS (June 15, 2021), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/us-militarys-elite-commando-forces-expand-diversity-78307046>.

The urgency of the problem demands flexibility in recruiting and assignments. “Traditional SEAL Team demographics will not support some of the emerging mission elements that will be required.” Mark Thompson, *Navy Seeking More Minority SEALs*, TIME (Feb. 24, 2012), <http://nation.time.com/2012/02/24/navy-seeks-a-darker-shade-of-seals> (Navy SEALs actively recruit minorities, including Hispanic and Arab candidates). For this reason, the Special Operations Command views diversity and inclusion as “operational imperatives,” and is actively building “infrastructure dedicated to the sustainment of diversity and inclusion throughout the enterprise.” *See* Headquarters United States Special Operations Command, *Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan*, at 4, 9 (2021), <https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.militarytimes.com/assets/pdfs/1616771642.pdf>. As then-acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, Chris Maier, told House members last year: “[A] more diverse force empowers us to draw upon broader perspectives, different lived experiences, and new ideas.” Sarah Cammarata, *House panel explores how special*

operations can make its force more diverse, STARS AND STRIPES (Mar. 26, 2021), <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/house-panel-explores-how-special-operations-can-make-its-force-more-diverse-1.667440>.

Given the military's vital role in complex global affairs, officer corps diversity is far more than a laudable goal—it is a strategic imperative. Modest race-conscious admissions programs, such as those used by service academies and Respondents, enable the Nation's educational institutions to recruit and educate minority leaders to fill these critical leadership roles.

C. U.S. military diversity initiatives have led to significant progress in growing a highly qualified and racially diverse officer corps, but this work must continue.

The careful use of modest race-conscious policies is one of several means by which the U.S. military has increased the diversity of its officer corps, and it remains an essential one.

The Armed Forces' service academies provide tuition-free undergraduate education and prepare entrants to be military officers who, once commissioned, serve the military as officers for at least five years. Each academy admits 1,100 to 1,350 entrants annually. *See Defense Primer: Military Service Academies*, CONG. RSCH. SERV. 1 (updated Dec. 9, 2021) <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/IF11788.pdf>. In fiscal year 2019, the Department of Defense reported that approximately 19% of officers came from the academies. *See Population Representation in the Military Services: Fiscal Year 2019 Summary*

Report, DEP'T OF DEF., tbl. B-31 (2019), <https://www.cna.org/pop-rep/2019/appendixb/appendixb.pdf> [hereinafter *Population Representation 2019*].

Many civilian colleges and universities—including UNC and Harvard—offer ROTC programs. *See ROTC Programs*, TODAY'S MILITARY, <https://www.todaysmilitary.com/education-training/rotc-programs> (last visited July 2022). ROTC provides military education and training as well as scholarships, which include full tuition for up to four years in exchange for a five-year post-graduation service commitment. In fiscal year 2019, approximately 36% of active-duty officers were ROTC-commissioned. *Population Representation 2019*, at tbl. B-31. Notably, in 2019 ROTC provided 52.6% of the Army's officer corps (the largest service) and 40.7% of the Air Force officer corps. *Id.* ROTC has also been the primary source of minority officers: approximately 29% of Black officers and 32% of Hispanic officers obtained commissions through ROTC in 2019. *Population Representation 2019*, at tbl. B-32.

ROTC and the academies employ unique programs to achieve their diversity objectives, in addition to military-wide diversity initiatives. Each service branch has organizational divisions or offices devoted to recruiting members of demographic groups underrepresented in the officer corps, which participate with community leaders and affinity group events, such as events hosted by the National Society of Black Engineers and the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science. They also strategically establish ROTC programs and academic scholarships at Minority-Servicing Institutions and use media channels directed at diverse audiences.

The U.S. Military Academy (“West Point”) was the first service academy to successfully increase minority representation. *See Fisher II* Military Br. at 22; *Grutter* Military Br. at 18. West Point continues to pursue initiatives to sustain this progress, including diversity-oriented leadership conferences and visitation programs. *See, e.g.*, West Point Association of Graduates, *West Point Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives* (Mar. 20, 2022), <https://www.westpointaog.org/file/westpointdiversityandinclusion.pdf>. The U.S. Naval Academy (“USNA”) is similarly committed to diversity initiatives, and has pursued “[a]dmissions training sessions with congressional staff members to discuss nominations for underrepresented minorities.” *Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan*, U.S. NAVAL ACAD., at 6 (Mar. 2021), https://www.usna.edu/Diversity/_files/documents/D_I_PLAN. The Air Force recently announced that Air Force ROTC scholarship recipients attending Historically Black Colleges or Hispanic-Serving Institutions “will receive an upgrade offer from their current scholarship level, which will advance students to full tuition and fees paid, beginning the fall term of academic year 2020-21.” *Minority Serving Institution Scholarships to be upgraded to further Air, Space Force diversity efforts*, SEC’Y OF THE AIR FORCE PUB. AFFAIRS (Jun. 29, 2020), <https://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2241084/minority-serving-institution-scholarships-to-be-upgraded-to-further-air-space-f>.

On June 19, 2020, the Secretary of Defense announced additional initiatives to promote diversity across the Armed Forces, including a new Board on Diversity and Inclusion (the “Board”). *DoD Diversity and Inclusion Report*, at vii. Its review of military policies and programs led the Board to recommend further actions to improve diversity and inclusion. *Id.* at ix–xi.

These initiatives are important components of the military's diversity efforts, but modest race-conscious admissions policies remain indispensable. As detailed in *Fisher II*, the service academies employ an individualized, "whole person" approach to evaluate applicants. The U.S. Government Accountability Office ("GAO") has described the process, in part, as follows:

The academies do not grant waivers from academic criteria but do not have absolute minimum scores for admission. . . . This admissions approach is consistent with the intent of the academies to admit students who also demonstrate leadership and initiative characteristics, which cannot be quantified by purely objective scoring methods . . . The subjective nature of this approach is consistent with the intent of the whole person concept

Military Education: DOD Needs To Enhance Performance Goals And Measures To Improve Oversight Of Military Academies, U.S. GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFF. 19–20 (2003), <http://www.gao.gov/assets/240/239612>.

West Point notes that "[t]here are no appointments, vacancies, or nominations designed exclusively for minority groups . . . [yet] cultural and socio-economic backgrounds are given appropriate consideration while evaluating all applicants." West Point Admissions, U.S. MILITARY ACAD., http://www.usma.edu/admissions/SitePages/FAQ_Admission.aspx (last visited Jun. 8, 2022). ROTC likewise conducts a whole-person, individualized review of its scholarship applicants, objectively assessing academic, physical, and leadership aptitude. *See, e.g.*, Anny Wong

et al., *The Use of Standardized Scores in Officer Career Management and Selection*, RAND CORP. 13 (2012), http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2012/RAND_TR952.pdf (Department of Defense commissioned report noting ROTC “[a]dmission boards consider the candidate’s qualifications broadly using the whole-person concept, which includes a combination of test scores, academic background, athletic accomplishments, field of study in college, and other personal qualities”).

With the aid of modest race-conscious admissions policies this Court approved in *Grutter*, minority representation in service academies has moved closer to reflecting the Nation’s diverse demographics. The recent class of students matriculating at USNA had 41% minority representation. *See Class of 2025 Statistics*, U.S. NAVAL ACAD. (Jul. 7, 2017), https://www.usna.edu/NewsCenter/2021/06/CLASS_OF_2025_STATS.php. The U.S. Air Force Academy (“USAFA”) class of 2025 boasted approximately 35% minority enrollees. *See Demographic Profile of the Incoming USAFA Class of 2025*, U.S. AIR FORCE ACAD. (Jun. 24, 2021), <https://www.usafa.edu/app/uploads/CL2025-Class-Profile.pdf>. And the West Point Class of 2025 has approximately 40% minority representation.⁷ *USMA Class Profile – Class of*

7. The VFM Brief at 29 claims West Point’s diversity efforts have resulted in admitting “marginally qualified candidates” who are “failing by the Academy’s own standards,” yet West Point’s graduation rates prove otherwise. Indeed, graduation rates for West Point are roughly 20% higher than the national average. *Compare Retention and Graduation Rates*, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS, United States Military Academy, <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=united+states+military+academy&s=all&id=197036#outcome> (last visited July 11, 2020) (West

2025, WEST POINT, https://s3.amazonaws.com/usma-media/inline-images/about/g5/Class_2025_profile_final_0.pdf.

The service branches, buoyed by the diverse pool of servicemembers entering from the ROTC and service academies, have also made progress. Of the approximately 1.3 million soldiers serving in the active-duty forces as of 2020, roughly 60.8% identified as White, 17.2% as African American, 4.8% as Asian, 1.1% as American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.2% as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 3% as “multi-racial.” *2020 Demographics of the Military Community*, DEP’T OF DEF., 22 (2020), <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2020-demographics-report.pdf> [hereinafter *2020 Military Demographics*]. In sharp contrast to the Vietnam era, when minority officers were almost nonexistent, *see Grutter* Military Br. at 5, 6 n.2, 17, by fiscal year 2020, African Americans comprised approximately 9% of the officer corps; Asians 5.7%, American Indians or Alaska Natives 0.7%, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders 0.6%. *Id.* at 22–23. “Without these aggressive measures with respect to education, Defense Department officials have argued, the officer corps would rapidly revert to an almost exclusively non-minority one.” *Intertwined Fates*, at 1083.

The VFM Brief makes the stunning and completely unsupported claim that the military has reached and sustained this level of diversity without the aid of race-

Point has 84% graduation rate), *with Undergraduate Graduation Rates*, NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40> (last visited July 11, 2020) (nationally, 64% of students received a bachelor’s degree from the same institution within six years of enrollment).

conscious admission policies, while also warning that those policies undermine the military's effectiveness. In truth, the VFM Brief tries to have it both ways: it touts the very integration made possible by the military's race-conscious policies as evidence that those policies are, and never were, necessary.⁸ For example, the VFM Brief cites Colin Powell's remarkable achievements in the military and in government as evidence that a "color-blind" system allows qualified Black officers to rise to the top. Yet Secretary Powell's rise through the ranks was made possible in part by the race-conscious policies the VFM Brief condemns. *See* Franklin Foer, *Quotas and Colin Powell*, SLATE (Dec. 14, 1997), <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/1997/12/quotas-and-colin-powell.html>. And Secretary Powell himself consistently argued for the importance of race-conscious university admissions policies. *See, e.g.*, Sujit Raman, *Colin Powell's Turn at the Supreme Court Lectern: An Unknown Episode in the History of Affirmative Action*, NAT'L L.J. (Nov. 23, 2021), <https://www.law.com/nationallawjournal/2021/11/03/colin-powells-turn-at-the-supreme-court-lectern-an-unknown-episode-in-the-history-of-affirmative-action> (describing Secretary Powell's staunch support for affirmative action throughout his public life and for *Grutter*-approved policies in particular). The bottom line is that race-conscious policies have been critical to the military's progress toward its diversity objectives and prohibiting the continued use of such policies will undo that progress.

8. Indeed, the VFM Brief argues that race-conscious decision-making in promotions and assignments undermines military effectiveness, but offers nothing to explain why military effectiveness improved during the several decades in which race-conscious policies have been in place.

The VFM Brief also overstates the military’s advances on issues of diversity. Notwithstanding the progress outlined above, our military officer corps today remains significantly less racially and ethnically diverse than the enlisted corps. For example, in 2020, Black servicemembers accounted for roughly 19% of the enlisted corps but only 9% of the total officer corps, including just 5.7% of the Marine Officer Corps and 6.3% of the Air Force Officer Corps. *See 2020 Military Demographics*, at 22–24. This discrepancy continues to be felt by minority servicemembers, many of whom feel “constantly challenged over their right to be in elite units, let alone lead them.” Helene Cooper, *African-Americans Are Highly Visible in the Military, but Almost Invisible at the Top*, N.Y. TIMES (May 25, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/25/us/politics/military-minorities-leadership.html>. Many leaders have spoken to these challenges, including General Charles Brown, Jr., the first Black service chief in U.S. military history and current Air Force Chief of Staff, who explained how a lack of diverse leadership forced him to work “twice as hard” to achieve his success. *See Global News, First Black Air Force chief in U.S. history recounts his own experiences with discrimination*, YOUTUBE (Jun. 10, 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i76Wybvupgk>.

Thanks to this Court’s *Grutter* decision, our military’s leadership is more diverse today than in decades past, and the Armed Forces are much stronger for it. This progress gives reason for optimism, but it cannot be forgotten that the military’s diversity efforts come on the heels of over a century of institutionalized discrimination. Prohibiting the continued use of race-conscious policies at this critical juncture would ignore decades of experience—experience

that led this Court to accord deference to our top military leaders in *Grutter*, and more recently in *Fisher*.

II. Invalidating Universities’ Modest Race-Conscious Admissions Policies Would Seriously Impair the Military’s Efforts to Maintain Cohesion and Effectiveness.

A. Nullifying admissions policies that are carefully crafted to comply with *Grutter* and *Fisher* would adversely affect the military.

Hindering diversity in universities with ROTC programs would adversely affect the pool of recruits entering the military.⁹ Military entry-level recruits affect the composition of military ranks down the line because leaders are promoted from lower ranks. “Therefore, each stage of the military personnel life cycle—from who is recruited to who is promoted—is intricately linked to the composition of future military leaders.” *MLDC Report*, at 39. Prohibiting universities from continuing to use current whole-person admission practices would thus reduce the pool of qualified leaders.

9. With nothing to support their arguments, fear-mongers argue that “racial preferences in officer command selection and promotions . . . has begun to proliferate, necessarily diluting merit selection, compromising leader quality, demeaning those involved, eroding morale, and reducing overall military effectiveness.” VFM Br. at 26. This argument is not only false, it is also a red herring. ROTC and service academy admission practices govern entry from the civilian world into the officer corps. Officer promotions, by contrast, occur only after a servicemember has entered the Armed Forces and proven that promotion is merited; conflating these distinct and very different processes is unhelpful.

This is increasingly so as ROTC programs gain popularity in selective institutions, which are the largest pool of schools that consider race as a factor in admissions. Lorelle L. Espinosa, et al., *Race, Class, & College Access: Achieving Diversity in a Shifting Legal Landscape*, 15 (2015), <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Race-Class-and-College-Access-Achieving-Diversity-in-a-Shifting-Legal-Landscape.pdf> [hereinafter *Race Class and College*] (over 60% of universities that accept 40% or less of applicants include race as one of many factors). ROTC programs have increased in selective schools over the past decade. See, e.g., Yeganeh Torbati, *On Ivy League Campuses, Military Bases Find a Warmer Welcome*, REUTERS (May 23, 2016), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-military-elite/on-ivy-league-campuses-military-brass-find-a-warmer-welcome-idUSKCN0YE2MJ>. Today, Cornell, Dartmouth, Penn, Princeton, Harvard, Columbia, Yale, and Brown all have ROTC programs. *Brown Committee on the ROTC Report, Frequently Asked Questions*, BROWN UNIV., <https://www.brown.edu/reports/rotc/faq/frequently-asked-questions> (last visited June 5, 2022).

Racially diverse ROTC programs at selective universities are of particular importance to our military leadership.¹⁰ As former Defense Secretary Ashton Carter

10. As the military's competition for "high-quality entrants who have better civilian employment opportunities" makes recruitment more "challenging," securing candidates through ROTC programs becomes increasingly beneficial. Beth J. Asch, *Navigating Current and Emerging Army Recruiting Challenges: What Can Research Tell Us?*, RAND CORP., iii (2019), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR3107.html [hereinafter *Navigating Recruiting Challenges*].

explained, ROTC graduates help “bridge a divide” between the Armed Forces and society, often exposing fellow future leaders educated at Yale to the Armed Forces for the first time. Lisa Ferdinando, *Carter Commissions Yale’s First ROTC Class in Four Decades*, DoD NEWS (May 24, 2016), <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/780261/carter-commissions-yales-first-rotc-class-in-four-decades> [hereinafter *Ferdinando DoD News 2016*].¹¹ This important exposure and interchange should involve ROTC classmates who reflect the considerable diversity of the nation’s Armed Forces.

Universities across the country have long understood that failing to admit a sustained, diverse student body limits the intellectual and social development of all students, creating a material competitive disadvantage. Valerie Strauss, *Why race-based affirmative action is still needed in college admissions*, WASHINGTON POST (Jan. 30, 2020), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/01/30/needed-affirmative-action-in-college-admissions/>. Universities’ widespread commitment to race-conscious policies reflect that understanding. Military leadership similarly understands that students of all races benefit from diversity. This Court reaffirmed in *Fisher II* that “enrolling a diverse student body ‘promotes cross-racial understanding, helps to break down racial stereotypes, and enables students to better understand persons of

11. Defense Secretary Carter also aptly observed that “[p]eople think differently about the world when a former roommate is managing the nuclear reactor on a submarine, or a former organic chemistry classmate is serving as a combat medic, or a fellow programmer is defending our nation’s cybersecurity.” *Ferdinando DoD News 2016*.

different races.” 579 U.S. at 381. That analysis is true of students enrolled at service academies and in ROTC programs at colleges nationwide. In such environments, students and future military officers of all races and backgrounds benefit from learning from and with diverse classmates. Future leaders embarking on their military careers carry these lessons with them.

B. Completely ignoring race would impede our military’s ability to acquire essential entry level leadership attributes and training essential to cohesion, and thereby undermine prior diversity progress.

As with universities, the military’s “people are [its] most valuable resource.” *Diversity Roadmap*, at 5. Requiring that admission practices be oblivious to race would undermine the military’s ability, not only to recruit the highest quality officers, but also to further develop them over the years for higher command. That, in turn, would set back decades of progress in achieving diversity.

Diversity in higher education leads directly to diversity in the officer ranks. The civilian population eligible to be commissioned as officers remains markedly less racially and ethnically diverse than the population eligible for enlisted service. Thanks, in part, to *Grutter*, *Fisher I*, and *Fisher II*, officer diversity has measurably improved. *See, e.g., DoD Diversity and Inclusion Report*, at 8. However, and as noted above, even with nearly two decades under *Grutter*, officers continue to be substantially less racially and ethnically diverse than the enlisted corps. *Id.* This disparity primarily results from disparities in educational

attainment by race and ethnicity, due to the bachelor's degree eligibility requirement for officers.¹² *Id.* At 8 n.4.

Banning race-conscious admissions policies would, therefore, shrink an already-small pool of eligible and qualified minority officer candidates. Research confirms that eliminating consideration of race in admissions lowers acceptance and enrollment rates of minority students, particularly at selective institutions. *See, e.g.*, Mark C. Long & Nicole A. Bateman, *Long-Run Changes in Underrepresentation After Affirmative Action Bans in Public Universities*, 42 EDUC. EVALUATION AND POL'Y ANALYSIS 188 (2020) [hereinafter *Long and Bateman*]; Thomas J. Espenshade & Chang Y. Chung, *The Opportunity Cost of Admission Preferences at Elite Universities*, 86 SOC. SCI. Q. 293, 298 (2005). Recent studies report unavoidable declines in minority representation in public universities following state affirmative action bans, despite efforts to offset such declines. *See Long and Bateman* at 191 (noting, for example, “a large decline in URM’s share of students admitted to . . . and enrolling in . . . UC-Berkeley immediately upon the elimination of affirmative action in 1998,” a pattern that was “common among elite public universities”).

Not only would reversing *Grutter* reduce the number of minority candidates, it also would reduce the number of qualified officers of all races who will be exposed to the benefits of a diverse educational experience. The *Fisher*

12. The GAO identified racial and ethnic disparities in education as a trend that will affect the domestic and global context in future years. *Trends Affecting Government and Society*, GOV'T ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE, GAO-22-3SP, 12 (Mar. 15, 2022), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/720/719909.pdf>.

II Court recognized that student diversity “promotes learning outcomes, and better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society.” 579 U.S. at 381 (quoting *Grutter*, 539 U.S. at 330); *see also Fisher I*, 570 U.S. at 308 (student diversity “serves value beyond race alone, including enhanced classroom dialogue and the lessening of racial isolation and stereotypes”). Prohibiting consideration by colleges and universities of every holistic factor, such as race, would thus negatively impact all students, including ROTC and service academy cadets or midshipmen. *Fisher II* Military Br. at 32–33.

Critics of race conscious admissions policies often rely on simplistic definitions of “merit” that do not reflect the realities of either the admissions process or the military’s mission. The VFM Brief, for instance, cites two unpublished studies based entirely on SAT scores and class rank to argue that race-conscious admissions policies at military academies “dilute” the “merit” of their student bodies. VFM Br. at 5, 15–17, 21, 27–30. Despite the VFM Brief’s representations, however, the military has never lowered its standards for admission into any of its ranks. Rather, experience has taught military leaders that test scores and high school class rank are just two of many indicators of intelligence and leadership potential, and often not the most important ones. *See Fisher II* Military Br. at 32–33. Eliminating race as one of many factors as permitted by *Grutter* will lead to the exclusion of some applicants with solid test scores whose experiences and skills are most needed in our Nation’s leaders. Holistic admission policies such as Respondents’ consider the entire person and allow the military (and schools) to evaluate all qualities of a well-rounded, capable

leader.¹³ As explained by former Naval Academy Dean of Admissions, Dave Vetter, “Everybody [who] receives an offer to the academy has to be fully qualified . . . But beyond that, we want a brigade that reflects our country, geographically diverse, we want it to be diverse in other regards, too.” Adam Clymer, *Service Academies Defend Use of Race in Their Admissions Policies*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 28, 2003), <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/28/us/service-academies-defend-use-of-race-in-their-admissions-policies.html>. The military remains committed to using modest race-conscious policies to cultivate an Armed Forces that is both highly qualified and diverse.

III. Respondents’ and the Military’s Race-Conscious Policies Are Constitutional.

This Court consistently has affirmed that racial and ethnic diversity is a compelling state interest that justifies the use of race in university admissions. *Fisher I*, 570 U.S. at 297. In *Grutter*, the Court found that a university’s “educational judgment that such diversity is essential to its education mission is one to which [the Court] defer[s].” 539 U.S. at 328. Relying on the *Grutter* Military Brief’s explanation of the military’s diversity needs, the *Grutter* Court found that elite institutions, like the military, “must remain both diverse and selective.” *Id.* at 331.

This submission and the Prior Military Briefs—all of

13. Indeed, in recognition that holistic assessments are more reliable predictors of future success, some Ivy League schools are beginning to do away with standardized test scores entirely. See Aimee Picche, *Harvard says it won’t require SAT or ACT scores through 2026*, CBS NEWS (Dec. 17, 2021), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/harvard-test-optional-sat-act-scores-college-admission>.

which have been openly and unequivocally supported by the Nation's top-ranking military officers—underscore diversity as mission essential.¹⁴ The immediate past Secretary of Defense, Mark T. Esper, recognized the role diversity plays in military effectiveness:

For more than 200 years the U.S. military has fought to defend our great Nation and our interests abroad, earning the reputation as the greatest military force in history . . . We have also reached this level of mission excellence because we attract the best America has to offer: young men and women . . . [that] represent a wide range of creeds, religions, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and other attributes that distinguish us as individuals, and make us stronger together.

*Actions for Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Department of Defense, Message from the Secretary Mark T. Esper, DEP'T OF DEF. (Jun. 19, 2020), <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Jun/22/2002319394/-1/-1/1/actions-for-improving-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-dod.pdf>. As Lt. Gen. Becton explained, *Amici* have tested and affirmed this principle:*

14. Congress too has reaffirmed a strong commitment to maintaining military diversity: “[d]iversity contributes to the strength of the Armed Forces . . . It is the sense of Congress that the United States should (1) continue to recognize and promote diversity in the Armed Forces; and (2) honor those from all diverse backgrounds and religious traditions who have made sacrifices in serving the United States through the Armed Forces.” Section 528 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (P.L. 114 92).

Every senior officer who's on [the *Grutter* Military Brief], has been in battle, has been battle-tested. And every senior member—I'll be one to wager—would recognize [that minorities within the leadership] is a combat multiplier. It brings about unit cohesiveness. It takes away the “we–they” problems that we had 30 and 40 years ago and it makes the force to be one.

Steve Inskip, *Weekend All Things Considered*, NATL. PUB. RADIO 2–3 (Feb. 23, 2003) https://archive.org/details/npr-all-things-considered-02-23-2003/20030223_atc_03.mp3. Defense leaders have determined that highly qualified and diverse military ranks are imperative to effective defense of our Nation's security and have instituted measures to include more diversity in service academies and throughout the ranks. Deference to top, battle-tested leaders remains critical to our Nation. Disregard for race as one of myriad factors in lieu of *Grutter*-compliant, whole-person admission practices, instead of enhancing effectiveness and recruitment, would upend a mission-critical military need.

The Department of Defense has recognized that enhancing recruitment efforts alone, while necessary, will bolster but not replace existing policies. *See Diversity and Inclusion Report*, at 43; *see also MLDC Report*, at XIII (quoting Honorable Claiborne Haughton, Jr.: “Despite our progress today, too many people still suffer from what I call the *illusion of inclusion*, which is a condition you get when you rest on past laurels”). So long as ROTC serves as a primary source for officers, and universities control ROTC admissions, the national security interest in admissions policies will stand.

Respondents' policies are carefully crafted to comply with *Grutter* and *Fisher*, and they continue to be vitally important to the military's missions. These benefits not only flow to individuals of all races, but more critically to the many institutions with ROTC programs. As this Court recognized:

At present, "the military cannot achieve an officer corps that is both highly qualified and racially diverse unless the service academies and the ROTC used limited race-conscious recruiting and admissions policies." To fulfill its mission, the military "must be selective in admissions for training and education for the officer corps, and it must train and educate a highly qualified, racially diverse officer corps in a racially diverse educational setting." We agree that "it requires only a small step from this analysis to conclude that our country's other most selective institutions must remain both diverse and selective."

Grutter, 539 U.S. at 331 (cleaned up; quoting *Grutter* Military Brief). This remains as true today as in 2003. *Amici* urge the Court to rule for Respondents, thereby enabling our Nation's military to "remain both diverse and selective." *Id.*

CONCLUSION

Amici, who have a unique perspective based on centuries of combined military experience, respectfully submit that diversity in the Armed Forces is both a national imperative and an invaluable asset. Achieving such diversity requires the continuing modest use of race-conscious policies at universities such as Respondents, which serve as vital pipelines to the service branches. The Courts of Appeals correctly confirmed the constitutionality of the Respondents' admissions policies under existing precedent, and that judgment should be affirmed.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX

**APPENDIX — ABBREVIATED BIOGRAPHIES OF
*AMICI CURIAE***

Admiral Charles S. Abbot, Navy 4-star; Commander U.S. 6th Fleet (1996-98); European Deputy Commander in Chief, (1998-2000); Rhodes Scholar

Admiral Dennis C. Blair, Navy 4-star; Director, National Intelligence (2009-10); Pacific Commander-in-Chief, (1999-2002); Rhodes Scholar

General Charles F. Bolden, Jr., Astronaut; Marine 2-star; (four space shuttle missions, commanding two); Administrator, NASA (2009-17)

General Thomas P. Bostick, Army 3-star; Director, Army Personnel (2010-12); Chief, Army Corps of Engineers (2012-16); Commander, Army Recruiting Command (2005-09)

General Vincent K. Brooks, Army 4-star; Commander, 1st Infantry Division (2009-11); Commander, U.S. Army Pacific (2013-16); Commander, United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, Korea (2016-18)

Admiral Walter E. Carter, Jr., Navy 3-star; Naval Academy Superintendent, (2014-19); President, Naval War College (2013-14).

General Robert L. Caslen, Army 3-star; West Point Superintendent, (2013-18); President, University of South Carolina (2019-2021)

Appendix

General Daniel W. Christman, Army 3-star; West Point Superintendent, (1996-2001)

General Wesley K. Clark, Army 4-star; Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (1997-2000); Commander, U.S. Southern Command (1996-97); Commander, 1st Cavalry Division (1992-94); Rhodes Scholar

General Richard A. Cody, Army 4-star; Army Vice Chief of Staff (2004-08), Commander 101st Airborne Division (2000-02)

General Joseph Dunford, Marine Corps 4-star; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (2015-19); Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps (2014-15); Commander General I Marine Expeditionary Force (2009-10)

Admiral Cecil D. Haney, Navy 4-star; Commander, U.S. Strategic Command (2013-16); Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (2012-13)

General James T. Hill, Army 4-star; Commander, U.S. Southern Command (2002-04); Commander, I Corps and Fort Lewis (1999-2002); Commander, 25th Infantry Division (1997-99)

Admiral Bobby Inman, Navy 4-star; University of Texas at Austin LBJ Centennial Chair in National Policy (2000-2021); Deputy Director, CIA (1981-82)

General Michelle D. Johnson, Air Force 3-star; Air Force Academy Superintendent (2013-17); Rhodes Scholar

Appendix

General John P. Jumper, Air Force 4-star; Air Force Chief of Staff (2001-05); Commander, Air Combat Command (1999-2001); Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe (1997-99); President, VMI Board of Visitors (2016-17); Chairman/CEO, Museum of the American Revolution (2017-18)

Senator Joseph Robert (“Bob”) Kerrey, Congressional Medal of Honor, U.S. Navy SEAL, Special Forces; President, New School University (2001-11); U.S. Senator (1989-2001); Nebraska Governor (1983-87)

General William J. Lennox, Army 3-star; West Point Superintendent (2001-06)

General Lester L. Lyles, Jr., Air Force 4-star; Commander, Air Force Material Command (2000-03); Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, (1999-2000)

Admiral William H. McRaven, Navy 4-star; Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command (2011-14); Chancellor, University of Texas System (2015-18)

General Richard B. Myers, Air Force 4-star; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (2001-05); Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command (1998-2000), President, Kansas State University (2016-2022)

Admiral Michael H. Miller, Navy 3-star; Naval Academy Superintendent, (2010-14).

Appendix

Admiral Michael G. Mullen, Navy 4-star; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (2007-11); Chief, Naval Operations (2005-07)

General Tad J. Oelstrom, Air Force 3-star; Director, National Security Program, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (2001-2017); Air Force Academy Superintendent (1997-2000)

Honorable Joe R. Reeder, Army Under Secretary (1993-97); after West Point, served as an 82nd Airborne Division soldier

General Lori Robinson, Air Force 4-star; Commander, U.S. Northern Command, North American Aerospace Defense Command (2016-2018); Commander, Pacific Air Forces (2014-2016)

Admiral John R. Ryan, Navy 3-star; Naval Academy Superintendent (1998-2002); Chancellor, State University of New York (2005-07)

General Curtis M. Scaparotti, Army 4-star; Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (2016-19); Commanding General, 82nd Airborne Division (2008-10); West Point Commandant (2004-06)

General Henry H. Shelton, Army 4-star; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (1997-2001); Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command (1996-97)

Appendix

General Larry O. Spencer, Air Force 4-star; Vice Chief of Staff (2012-15); Joint Staff Director, Force Structure, Resources & Assessments (2010-12)

General Gordon R. Sullivan, Army 4-star; Army Chief of Staff (1991-1995); President, Association of the U.S. Army (“AUSA”) (1998-2016)

General Dennis L. Via, Army 4-star; Commander, U.S. Army Materiel Command (2012-16).

General Carl E. Vuono, Army 4-star; Army Chief of Staff (1987-91); Commander, Army Training and Doctrine Command (1986-87); Commandant, Army Command and General Staff College (1983-85)

General Darrell K. Williams, Army 3-star; Director, Defense Logistics Agency (2017-20); President, Hampton University (2022-Present)

General Johnnie E. Wilson, Army 4-star; Commander, U.S. Army Material Command (1996-99)