

**AFRICAN AMERICAN ARMY RESERVE FEMALE
WARRANT OFFICERS: TECHNICAL EXPERTS,
COMBAT LEADERS, TRAINERS, AND ADVISORS**

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African American Army Reserve Female Warrant Officers

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“**A** warrant officer is a self-aware and adaptive technical expert, combat leader, trainer, and advisor. Through progressive levels of expertise in assignments, training, and education, the warrant officer administers, manages, maintains, operates and integrates Army systems and equipment across the full spectrum of Army operations.” That’s the definition in the Department of Army’s Pamphlet 600-3.

African American Army Reserve female warrant officers are validating the definition. They perform duties in specific military occupational specialties comprising the many branches to include: Personnel, Legal, Maintenance, Quartermaster, Aviation, Transportation, Signal, Military Police, and Military Intelligence.

Among female warrant officers in the Army Reserve, a Defense Manpower Data Center Report dated March 2004, showed that there were 100 African American female warrant officers in a total group of 326. That number represented 30.7% of female warrant officers, while white female warrant officers were at 192 and 58.9%. More significant was the number of junior female warrant officers (WO1s) for African Americans at 44.7% compared to white females at 42.1%. These numbers mean that an increasing number of African American female soldiers are opting to become warrant officers and are flooding the pipeline to become senior warrant officers.

The Army Reserve has two basic types of warrant officer service. Active Guard Reserve (AGR) warrant officers serve full time and receive benefits and entitlements of Active Duty Soldiers, including full pay, medical care for themselves and their immediate family and the opportunity for retirement after 20 years of Active Service. Troop Program Unit (TPU) soldiers are members of the Selective Reserve Program. Traditionally, these soldiers have civilian careers while they continue to train near their homes and serve their country. TPU soldiers typically train on weekends and perform annual training. Other warrant officers serve in the Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) Program or in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

AGR Warrant Officer

When **Polly Milton-Cheeks** joined the Army Reserve on June 19, 1978, she didn’t even know what a warrant officer was. She completed basic training and her advanced individual training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and went off to her first duty assignment at Fort Hood, Texas with the Headquarters, III Corps with detail at the HHC, Adjutant General Transfer Point. She was selected to participate in a Field Training Exercise – Fort Hood, TASK Force ’80, that took place in Kaiserslautern, Germany with Headquarters, 7th Army Reserve Command, Heidelberg, Germany.

Her first overseas assignment was a one year tour at Camp Humphrey, Korea from July 1982 to June 1983 with the Post Medical and Dental Unit serving as a military personnel action specialist.

Milton-Cheeks reflected, “During my assignment in Korea, I worked with a Chief Warrant Officer Three. I was influenced by him. He explained that the Warrant Officer Career field was higher than the enlisted field with benefits of an officer and that the promotion systems was better than both enlisted and officer. Warrant Officers are the specialists in their areas of expertise and being in the Adjutant General Corps, it’s important to have good people skills”.

After her release from active duty in 1985, Milton-Meeks was assigned to the United States Army Mobilization Support Detachment (Troop Program Unit) in St. Louis, MO as a personnel management specialist. In 1989, she was selected as a warrant officer candidate. Upon completion of the Warrant Officer Basic Course, Milton-Cheeks was assigned to the 592nd Personnel Service Company in St. Louis. In 1995, she entered the AGR program with the 102nd Army Reserve Command (ARCOM). Her next assignment was with the Army Reserve Personnel Center followed by assignment at the 3rd Personnel Command (PERSCOM) in Jackson, Mississippi.

Milton-Cheeks has participated in the 3rd PERSCOM Bright Star Field Training Exercise in Cairo, Egypt and from February 2003 – March 2004 was deployed to Kuwait as the senior Personnel Administrative Staff Officer and Advisor for all units in Theatre in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). CW4 Milton-Cheeks is currently assigned to the 89th Regional Readiness Command in Wichita, Kansas City, serving the manager of the Full Time Staff (FTS) Management and Special Actions Branch. She is a graduate of the Battalion Training Management System Course, the Senior Military Personnel Records Course, and the Warrant Officer Advanced Course. Her awards include two Meritorious Service Medals, four Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, the Global War Terrorism Service Medal, and the Global War Terrorism Expeditionary Medal (among others).

When asked if she ever served or worked with other African American warrant officers, Milton-Cheeks replied, “I served with CW4 (Retired) Willie Charles Piggee who wrote my entry letter. We served together from 1985 to 1995 and Mr. Piggee was my mentor and guide into the officer world. I worked with CW4 Martha Ervin for a short time and she has stayed in touch by providing advice, sharing information, and keeping me updated on current Army Regulations”.

TPU Warrant Officers

Mary Carter began her Army Career by joining the Army Women Corps (WAC) in November 1966. She received a direct appointment as a warrant officer in the 1984. Her warrant officer assignments include duty with the 349th General Hospital, Los Angeles, CA; 6222d United States Army Reserve School, Pasadena, CA; 6218th Reception Battalion, Bell, CA; the 63rd Regional Readiness Command, Los Alamitos, CA

and the 104th Training Division in Pasadena, CA. CW4 Carter is a Personnel Manager with the County of Los Angeles. She has a Master Degree in Public Administration from California State University – Dominguez Hills. Chief Carter served on the Board of Directors of the United States Army Warrant Officers Association for four years and was selected as the CW4 Albert M. Holcombe Warrant Officer of the Year in 1994. Ms Carter is currently mobilized and stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas.

Belynda Lindsey joined the Army Reserve in 1986 and was assigned to the 78th Legal Support Organization as a legal specialist. She became a JAG warrant officer in 1994 after completing the Warrant Officer Candidate Course at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin and her Basic Course at the JAG School in Charlottesville, Virginia. In her civilian capacity, she is a senior investigator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission- Los Angeles District Office. In 2006, CW3 Lindsey was cross-leveled with an active duty unit the Headquarters Headquarters Company (HHC), 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) at Fort Hood, Texas with deployment to Anaconda, Balad, Iraq.

Lindsay states, “I have many missions that take up my time. The missions include: Coordinating a JAG Conference, Naturalization ceremonies, Officer Evaluation Reports, Awards, and issues regarding the building and other contracts that I must manage, besides personnel issues”.

She further says, “I am not exaggerating when I tell you that about 97% of what I do is new to me. And there is no one else here to assist me because there is only one JAG office in Iraq. I am the only legal administrator. So, not even anyone in my office can assist me, even though they have been deployed before. And every mission that I have received, I have achieved”.

CW4 Ida Tyree Hyche has excelled professionally as a warrant officer and as a federal civilian. Ms. Tyree Hyche graduated Magna Cum Laude from Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and then earned her Juris Doctorate degree from the Birmingham School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama. With over 24 years in federal civil service, she is employed as a Supervisory Human Resources Management & Labor Relations Specialist for the 81st Regional Readiness Command and Chief, Personnel Management Division.

Tyree Hyche is a graduate of the Personnel Managers Course, Warrant Officer Advanced Course, Warrant Officer Staff Course, the Staff Judge Advocate’s Course for Federal Labor Relations, Staff Officer Course, and the Organizational Leadership Course for Executives.

Tyree Hyche was a member of the last basic training class that was segregated by gender. During the Chief’s twenty –seven years of Army Reserve military service, she has served as a Military Personnel Technician, Mobilization Readiness Branch Officer, Action Officer in the Personnel Management Branch of the 81st Regional Readiness Command. Ms. Tyree Hyche has had an additional assignment as a Replacement Operations Personnel Warrant for the 3rd Personnel Command in Jackson, Mississippi.

CW4 Tyree Hyché was selected as the Reserve Officers Association's CW4 Michael Novosel Warrant Officer of the Year in January 2000. She served as Assistant Vice President for Reserve Affairs of the United States Army Warrant Officers Association for two years (2003-2004). In January 2007, CW4 Tyree Hyché was mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom with assignment in Kuwait.

CW4 Rowmell Hughes enlisted in the Women Army Corp in May 1970. She attended basic training and advanced training at Fort McClellan Army Base, Anniston, AL. At that time, Fort McClellan was the only base where female Soldiers were trained. Hughes spent the remaining three years of active duty, stationed at the Oakland Army Base, CA, where served as Personnel Specialist. Immediately after discharged from active duty she joined the Army Reserve and continues to serve.

In 1989, Chief Hughes applied and was accepted into the warrant officer candidate program. After completing the warrant officer tactical course at Fort McCoy, WI and warrant officer technical course at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, she was appointed as warrant officer in the Adjutant General Corp, in Aug 1989. She was assigned and served as a Military Personnel Warrant Officer, 319th Transportation Brigade, Oakland, CA until Sep 1993. In Oct 1993, Chief Hughes transferred to 2d Medical Brigade, San Pablo, CA where she is currently serving. .

Ms Hughes, in her civilian capacity, is employed as the Supervisory Staff Administrator for 2d Medical Brigade, a General Officer Command. She represents the commander and is responsible for daily operational of an organization that encompass the western states (CA, NV, AR, MT, CO, UT and Washington state). She serves as the senior Brigade full time civilian with supervisory responsibility for full time support (FTS) personnel (military & civilian). With a staff of approximately 300 FTS, she provides support to 6,000 Soldiers in the areas of personnel, logistics and training comprising of (48 different units) in the western medical region.

Chief Hughes' duty assignments as a warrant officer have provided her the opportunity to travel extensively in the United States and some aboard. She has served short tours in Japan, Korea, Okinawa and most recently Iraq. In 2004, CW4 Hughes was cross-leveled to 376th Personnel Service Battalion out of Long Beach, CA and subsequently deployed to Iraq. While in Iraq she was assigned to Forwarding Operating Base (FOB) Speicher in Tikrit. There she served as Human Resource Technician and Detachment Executive Officer. The Detachment was responsible for providing personnel services to approximately 5,000 Soldiers and civilians at five (5) Forward Operating Bases in Northern Iraq. CW4 Hughes returned to her current assignment with 2d Medical Brigade in December 2005.

Ms Hughes has attended and completed a wide variety of civilian and military schools/colleges. She is a graduate of the Army Organizational Leadership Course for Executives, and the Army Supervisors and Managers Course. She is authorized to wear the Superior Service Medal for outstanding service as a civilian. In October 2002, she

received the Association of the United States Army's Citation Award for Exceptional Service. This award was presented to Ms. Hughes by the former Army Vice Chief of Staff. In 2005, she was presented with the Reserve Officers Association Department of California's CW3 James H. Witcher Outstanding Warrant Officer of the Year Award.

Her military awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation, Army Achievement Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, NCO Professional Development, National Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and the Iraq Campaign Medal.

CW4 Hughes comments regarding her experience in Iraq, "A very long year, a very long time to be away from your family and friends. Having to adjust to a life style of inconveniences, loneliness' and living in fear of life was quite a challenge. In retrospect, what a journey and experience, one that I will never forget...Although there were many scarifies, this journey took me to places I would never ever dream of visiting...Imagine sitting or standing on the bank of the biblical Tigris River or walking the halls of former Iraqi regime Palaces near Tikrit Iraq"

CW3 (Retired) Roxana Beattie joined the Army Women Corps (WAC) in 1976 as an active Army Reserve, Troop Program Unit member of the 445th Civil Affairs Unit, Oakland Army Base, Oakland, California.

In 1988, while assigned as a Senior Supply and Retention NCO, with the 353rd Psychological Operations Battalion, Presidio of San Francisco, California, she was accepted as a Warrant Officer Candidate. After completing the tactical 1st phase Warrant Officer Entry Course, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, and the technical Warrant Officer Basic Course at Fort Lee, Virginia, Ms. Beattie was appointed a Quartermaster Corp Warrant Officer in 1990. Her initial assignment was a property book officer and a long list of additional duties assigned with the 801st Engineer Port Construction Company, Oakland, California. In 1994, she transferred to the 55th Materiel Management Center (MMC) Fort Belvoir, Virginia/55th Theater Support Command (TSC), Eighth Army, Korea. In 1996, Chief Warrant Officer Beattie was mobilized with NATO-IFOR, Operation Joint Endeavor, Bosnia.

Ms. Beattie attended and completed a wide variety of civilian and military schools/colleges in her 28 years of service. Without a break in service, she retired in 2004.

Her military awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters (OLC), Army Achievement Medal (2 OLC), Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (3 OLC), Armed Forces Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, NCO Professional Development (#3), National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Bronze Hour glass, Armed Forces Reserve Medal w/Silver Hour glass, Armed Forces Reserve Medal w/"M" device,

Army Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon (#2), NATO Medal, and the Army Forces Expeditionary Medal.

Ms. Beattie has had a distinguished career in the federal service with the Department of Defense and is currently employed in Northern Virginia.

Leading the Way

Army Reserve African American female warrant officers have exhibited leadership qualities that have propelled them well above their peers. They joined the military for different reasons. Each has had successful civilian careers in addition to their outstanding military careers. They set the example by fostering mentorship and relationship building. Each has dedicated their lives in support of Army goals and in defense of their country. Each has responded to the call of duty and deployed as ordered. They serve with honor. They are pioneers for all African American females. They are the role models for enlisted, officers, and other warrant officers to emulate.

African American Female Warrant Officers in the Army Reserve – the Quiet Professionals – Making a Difference.