

# Lobby

1. Are you or have you ever served in the U.S. military as active duty, reserve, or national guard?
2. Have you done any ATOD prevention work with the military community?



Pacific Southwest (HHS Region 9)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



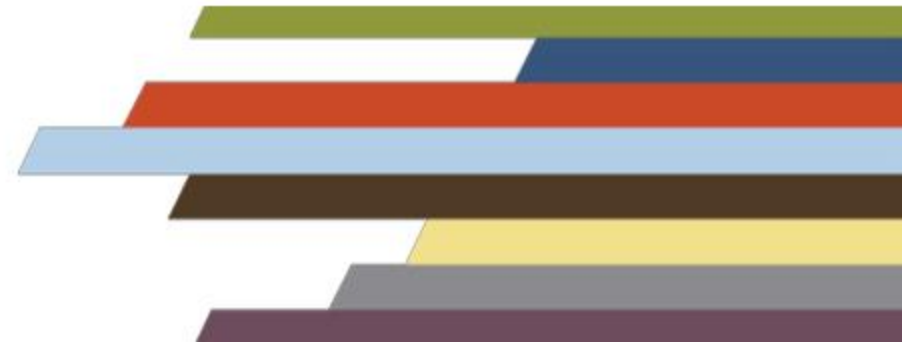
# The Role of Prevention in Addressing Alcohol Use in the U.S. Military

August 22, 2023

*Alicia Sparks, PhD, MPH*

*Synergy Enterprises, Inc.*

*U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance*



# Disclaimer

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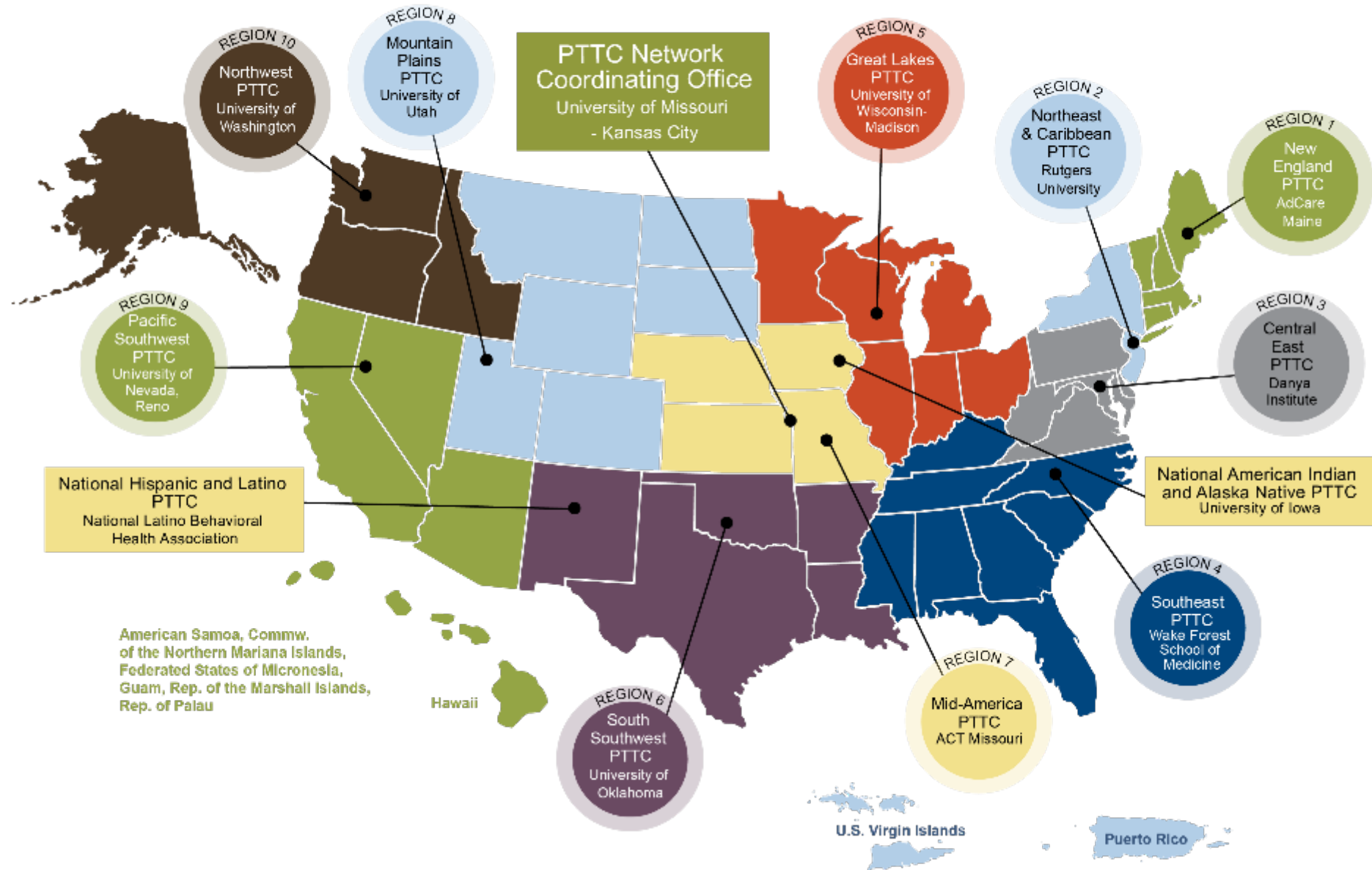
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# PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network  
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## PTTC Network



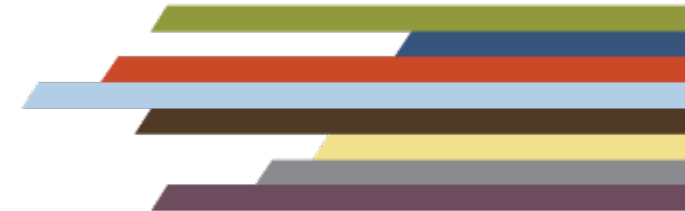
# Purpose of the TTCs

1

Develop and strengthen the **workforces** that provide substance use disorder and mental health disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.

2

Help people and organizations incorporate **effective practices** into substance use and mental health disorder prevention, treatment and recovery services.



# PTTC Network Approach

## ***The PTTCs...***

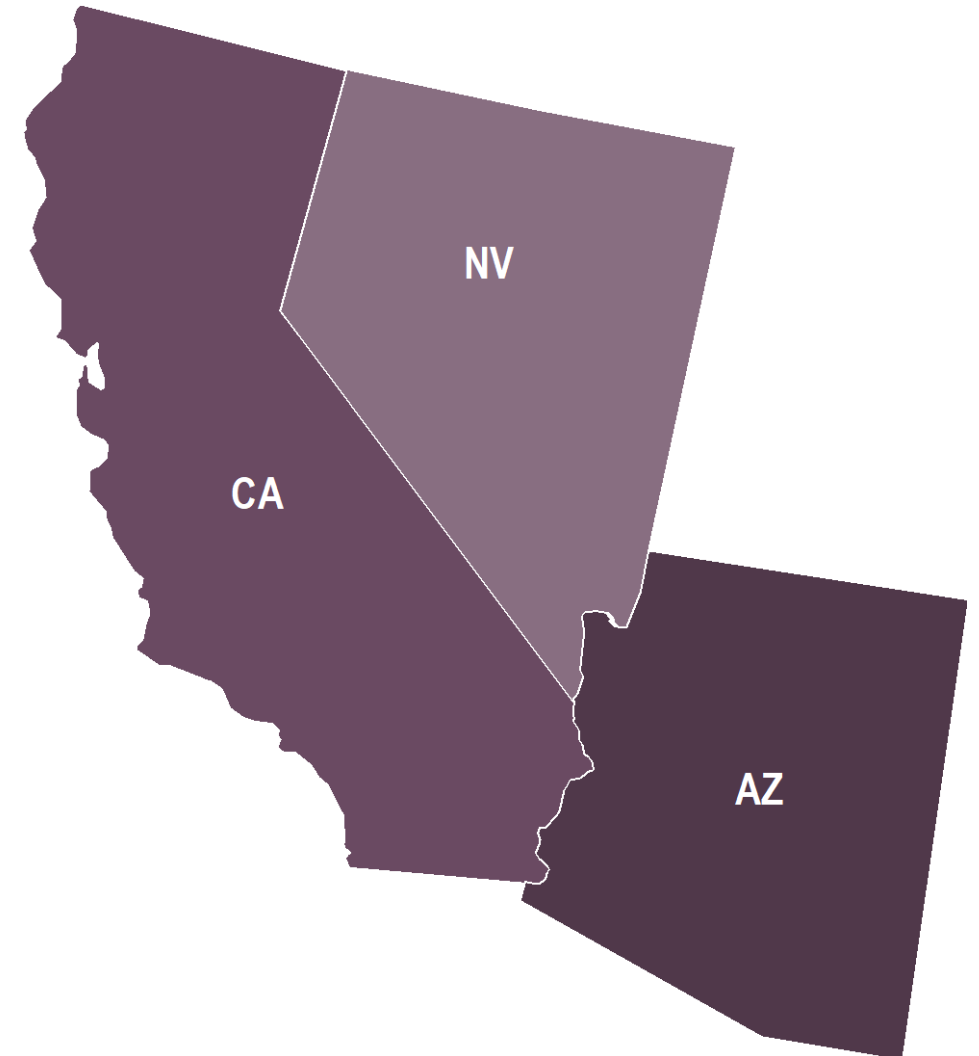
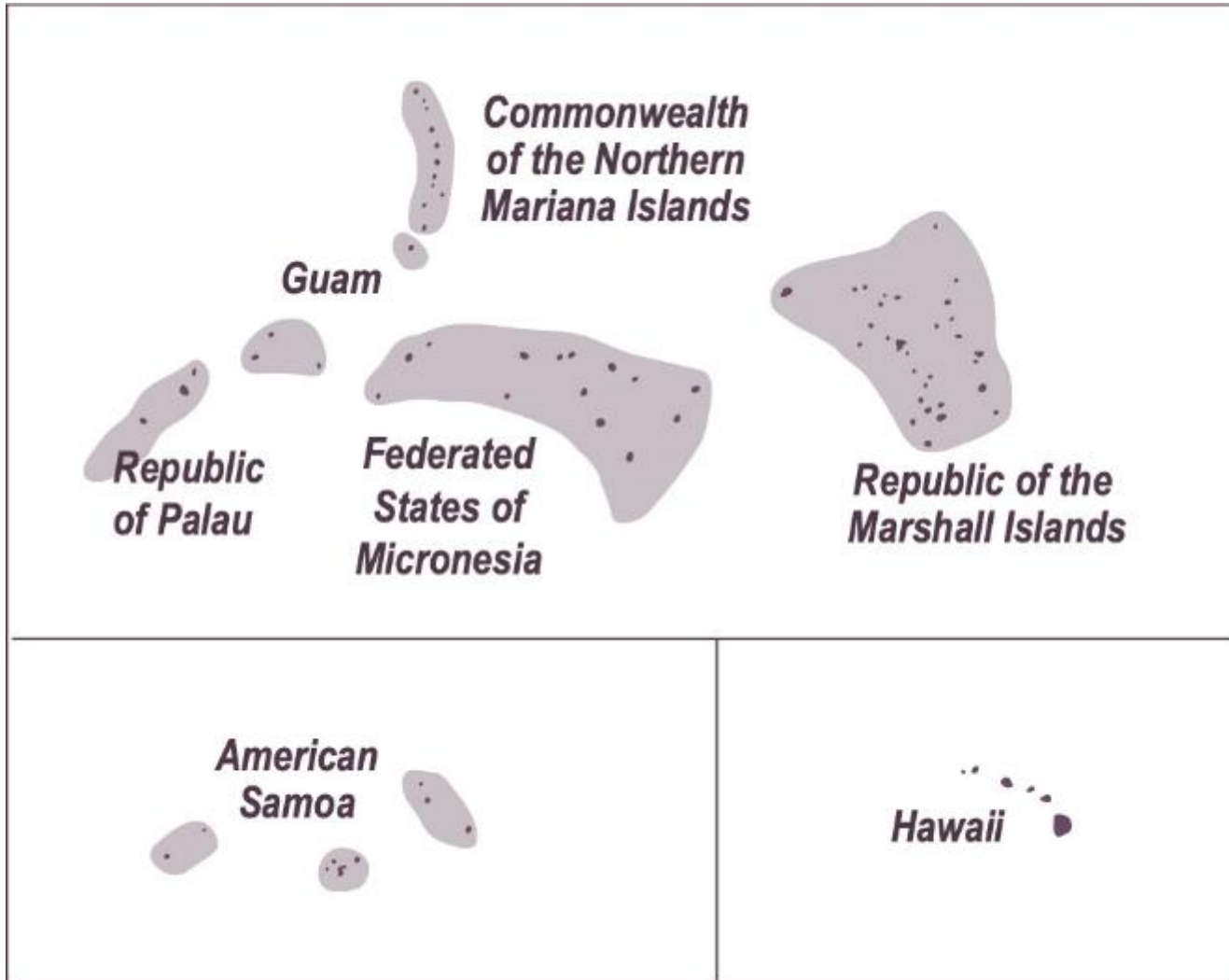
Develop and disseminate tools and strategies needed to improve the quality of substance abuse prevention efforts

Provide training and resources to prevention professionals to improve their understanding of

- prevention science,
- how to use epidemiological data to guide prevention planning, and
- selection and implementation of evidence-based and promising prevention practices.

Develop tools and resources to engage the next generation of prevention professionals

# Pacific Southwest





# Land acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the University of Nevada, Reno is situated on the traditional homelands of the Numu (Northern Paiute), Wašiw (Washoe), Newe (Western Shoshone), Nuwu (Southern Paiute) peoples. These lands continue to be a gathering place for Indigenous Peoples and we recognize their deep connections to these places. We extend our appreciation for the opportunity to live and learn on their territory.



# Housekeeping

- Meeting recording will pause during the discussion
- Webinar recording and materials
- Certificates of attendance



# Mark your Calendars!\*

Considering the Associations Between Substance Use and Suicide

*September 7, 2023*

*Please visit [pspttc.org](https://pspttc.org) for registration and more information!*

\*all times 3:00 Pacific, unless otherwise noted.

# Presenter Bio



**Alicia Sparks, PhD, MPH**, is the Chair of the U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance and a Senior Principal at Synergy Enterprises, where she serves as the Project Director for NIAAA's APIS contract, as well as SAMHSA's STOP Act contract. Dr. Sparks served as Project Director for CDC's alcohol advertising monitoring project, for which she directed a team of researchers in conducting analyses of Nielsen data to determine alcohol industry compliance with self-governed rules on advertising alcohol to youth audiences. She has more than 12 years of experience in alcohol policy research, including designing, implementing, and evaluating studies, programs, and policies. Dr. Sparks has led the development of numerous publications on alcohol policy, including the 2022 *Implementing Community-Level Policies to Prevent Alcohol Misuse* evidence-based resource guide and the 2016 *Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health*. She has published more than 20 peer-reviewed manuscripts and has presented at more than a dozen conferences. She is co-chair of the Alcohol Policy conference series and serves on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Global Alcohol Policy Conference.

# The Role of Prevention in Addressing Alcohol Use in the U.S. Military



Alicia Sparks, PhD, MPH  
August 22, 2023  
Synergy Enterprises, Inc.  
U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance

“...the single biggest issue we face with respect to the degradation of readiness due to misconduct is the irresponsible use of alcohol. The large majority of the [site reports/operations reports] I receive reporting incidents of domestic violence, sexual assault, vehicle/motorcycle mishaps etc. have alcohol abuse as a key contributing factor”

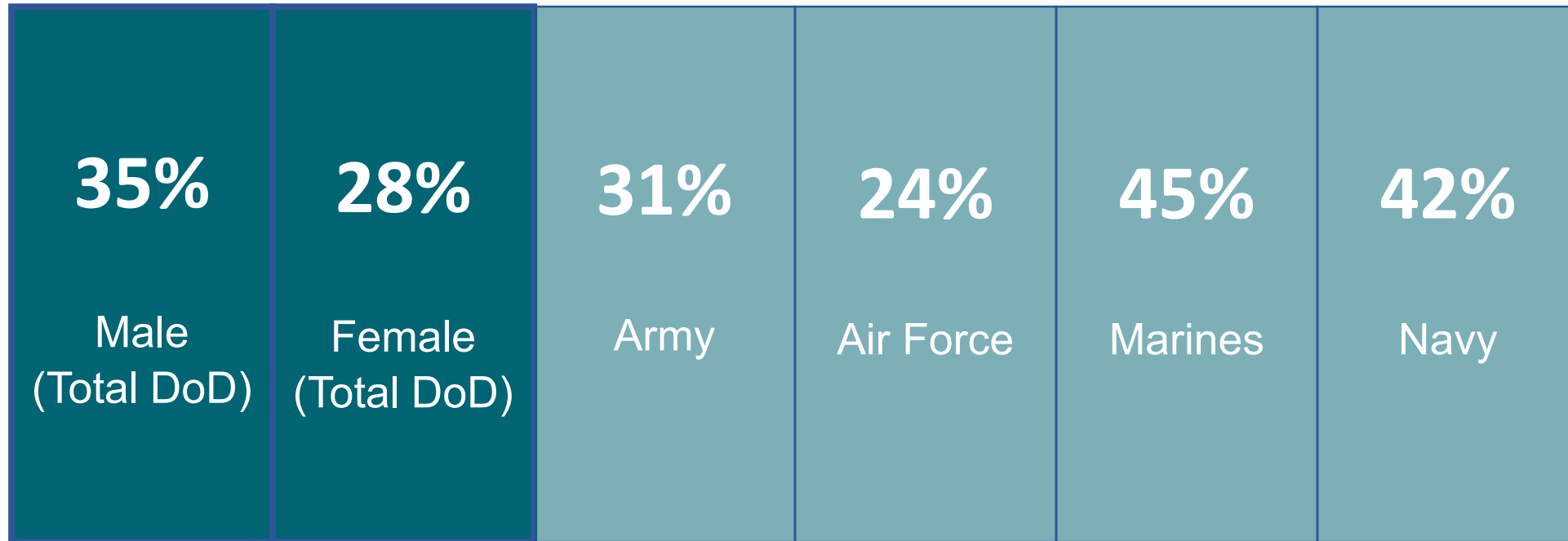
-Naval Admiral, 2011

# The Military has High Rates of Heavy and Underage Drinking

- 34% of military personnel across all branches reported binge drinking in 2018
- 66% of heavy drinkers are under the age of 25
  - 21.5% are under the age of 21

# Alcohol Use is a Large Problem

## Past 30-Day Binge Drinking\* Rate By Gender And Military Service



\*Binge Drinking: Having 5 or more drinks for males and 4 or more for females on the same occasion

# Young Military Personnel Drink More

Heavy Alcohol Use* In Past 12 Months: Active-Duty Personnel			
17-24	25-34	34-44	45+
12%	9%	7%	5%
*Heavy Alcohol Use: More than 14 drinks per week on average for males, and more than 7 drinks per week on average for females in the past year			

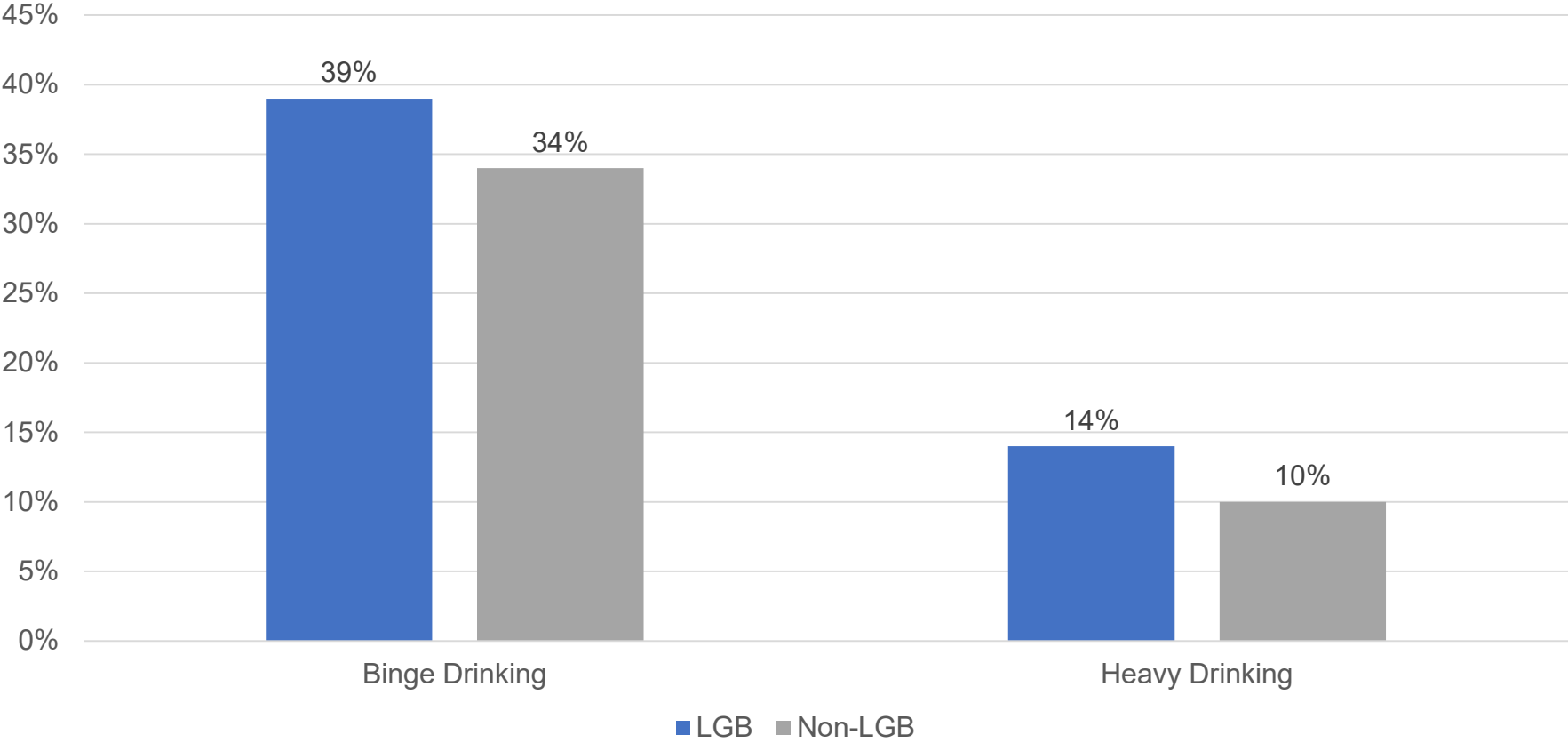


A black and white photograph of a group of people, possibly in a meeting or classroom setting. The image is slightly blurred and has a grainy texture. The word "Disparities" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The background shows several individuals, with one person in the foreground on the left looking towards the right. The overall tone is serious and contemplative.

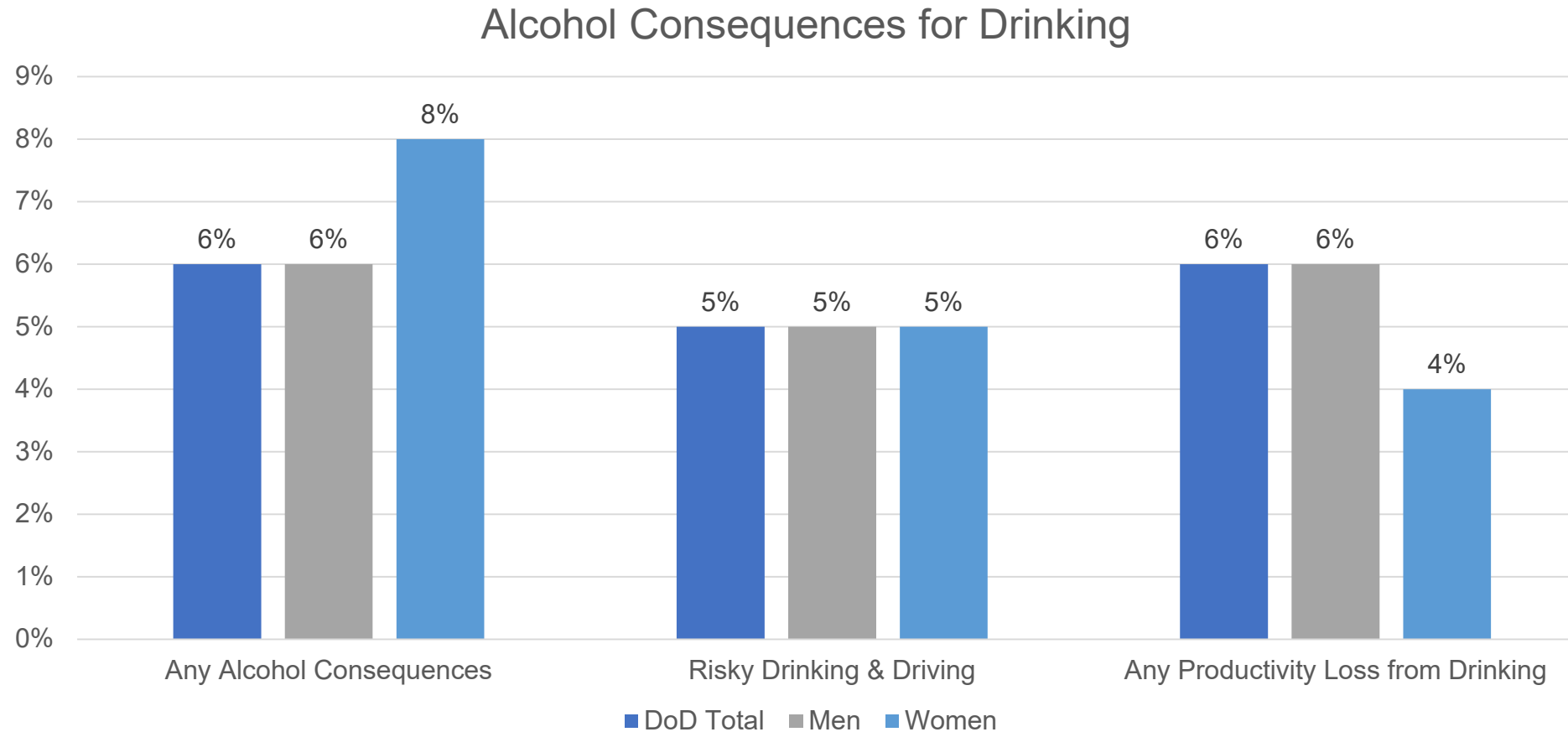
# Disparities

# Sexual Orientation

Drinking Rates by Sexual Orientation

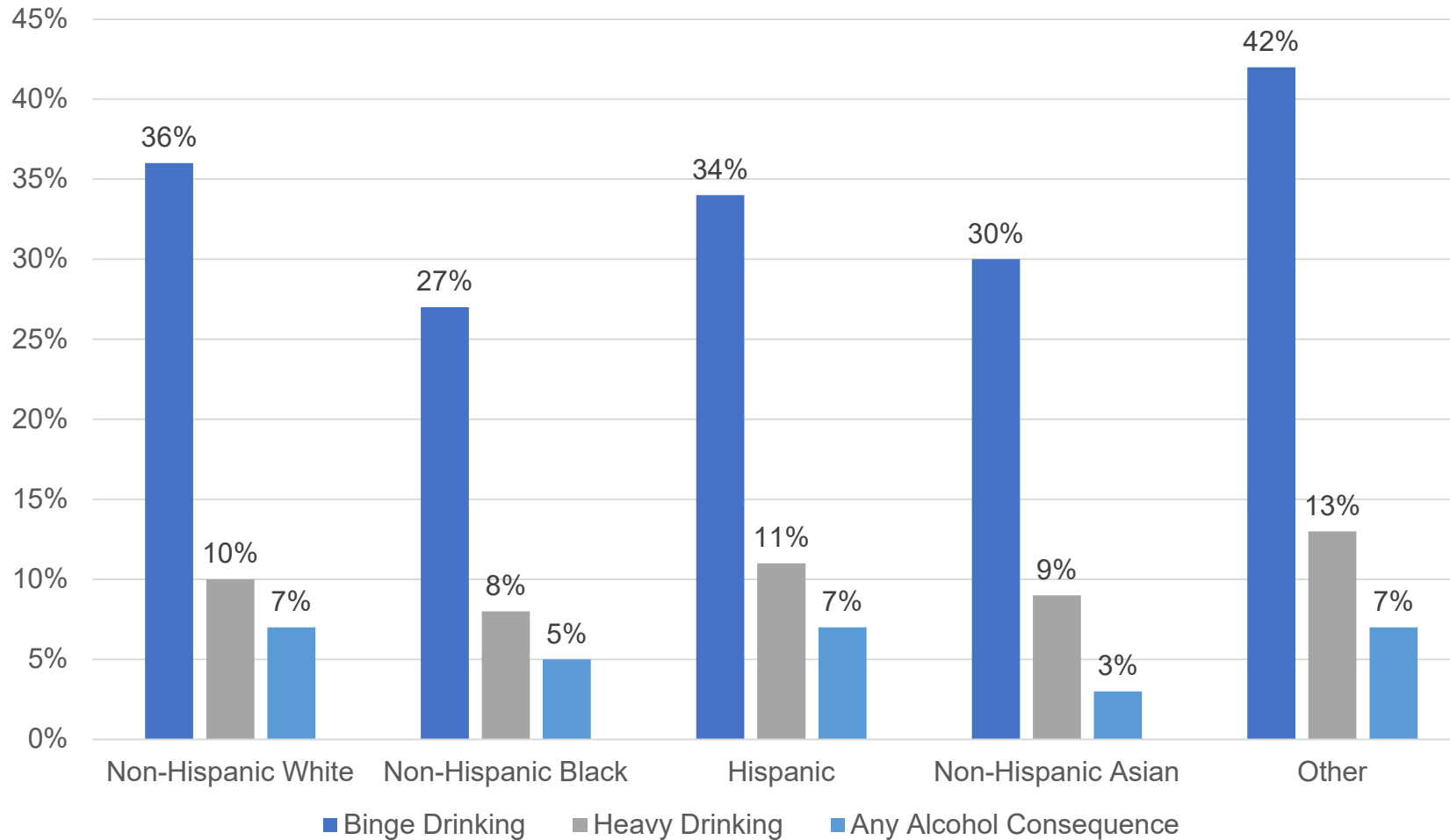


# Consequences- Men & Women



(Meadows et al., 2018)

# Consumption & Consequences by Race/Ethnicity



# Military-Specific Risk Factors

- High levels of stress
- Deployment, particularly with combat
- Isolation – time away from spouse/family
- Current military service
- Periods of freedom or free weekends
- Living with other peers and young adults

# Military Alcohol Traditions

- Having only alcoholic beverages at official events
- Selling alcohol at deep discounts on installations
- Informal rules that expect recently promoted officers to buy “rounds and rounds of beer”
- Building camaraderie, bonding, and confidence
- Helping individuals cope with war-related stressors

# Military-Specific Strengths

- Individuals dedicated to operational readiness
- Focus on health and fitness
- Strong health care system with potential for prevention
- Hierarchical system – strong leader, strong potential
- Peer support



# Alcohol in the Military Environment



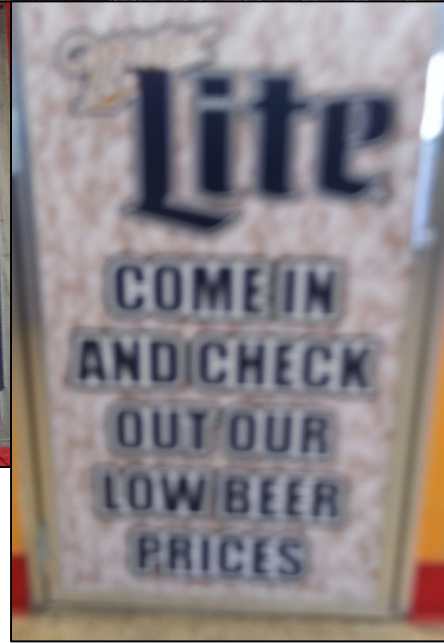
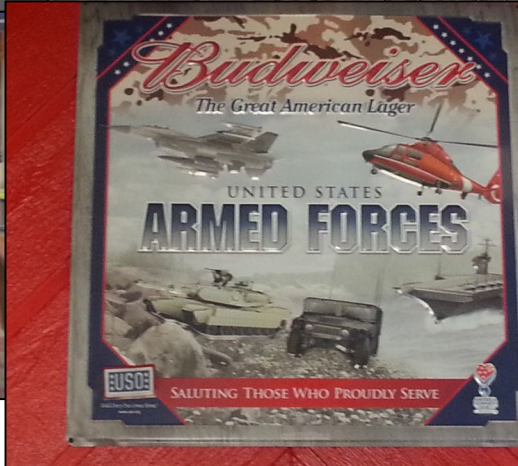
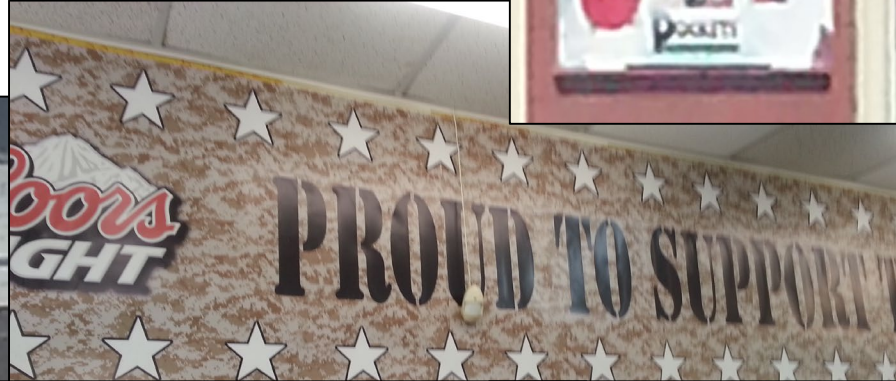
# The Environment Matters

I go to this fort in Louisiana and it's like out in the woods. You take this road and all of a sudden there's like a little town and it's all bars. I think that's pretty much how it is in every place because, I mean, it's like a tradition. You know, the sailor goes out, been at sea for this many months, and he goes out and he gets drunk.

*- 22 Year Old Sailor*



# Alcohol and the Military are Intertwined





# New and Novel Products

- Studies have shown that young people will have a brand preference before the age of 22
- Marketing and attractive flavors try to get young people to start drinking at a young age and to continue choosing their products



# Product



# Price and Taxes

For the general population, heavy drinkers, and adolescents:



**Price of Alcohol**



**Alcohol Consumption**



**Alcohol-Related Harms**

# Price

**MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH**

**Big City DINER**

**SAMUEL ADAMS**  
MASONRY BREWERY  
SUMMER ALE

**\$4 PINTS EVERYDAY IN MAY**

ENTER TO WIN TONS OF GREAT PRIZES: COOLERS, CHAIRS & WEARABLES!  
ASK YOUR SERVER FOR DETAILS

**MAHALO TO OUR TROOPS!**

FOR THE LOVE OF BEER **\$12** PINT & CLASSIC BURGER ON THURSDAYS

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION  
BRANCH 46  
891 VALKENBURGH  
422-2121

SHIRT & SERVICE FRIDAY  
\$5

FLEET WINGS WEDNESDAYS  
4pm-8pm  
75c WINGS  
\$2.00 BUD LIGHT PINTS

**\$300 BOTTLES**

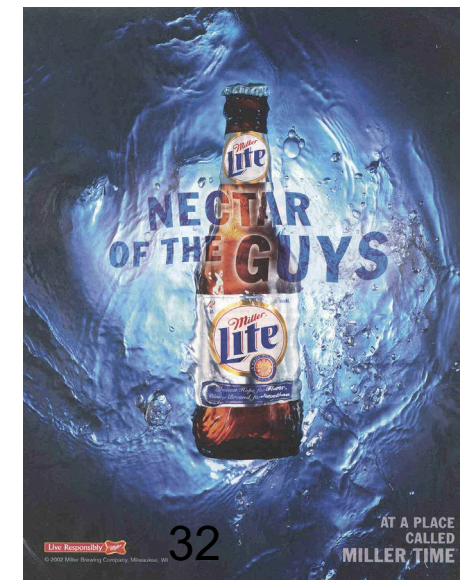
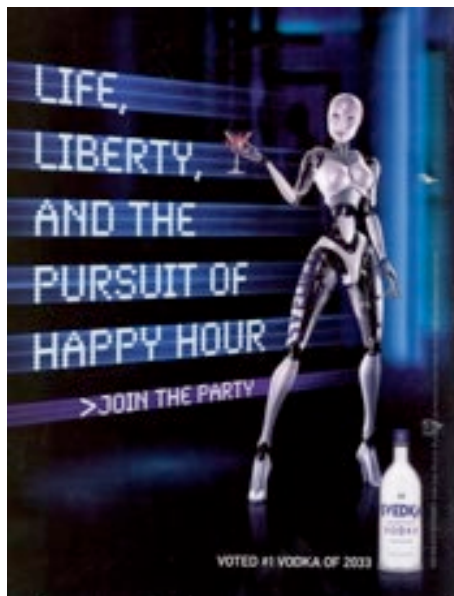
**Budweiser**  
HERE'S TO THE HEROES  
PROUD TO SERVE THOSE WHO SERVE  
ARMED FORCES

**Budweiser**  
HERE'S TO THE HEROES  
PROUD TO SERVE THOSE WHO SERVE  
**MILITARY APPRECIATION**  
EVERY TUESDAY WITH VALID MILITARY ID  
BUD & BUD LIGHT DRAFT  
**\$200**  
ARMED FORCES

# Risky Alcohol Promotions

➤ **Alcohol advertising is associated with:**

- Baseline and initiation of alcohol use
- Initiation of binge drinking
- Drinking in the past 30 days
- Alcohol-related harms





# Promotion



THE ONLY THING  
SMOOTHER THAN  
OUR TASTE?

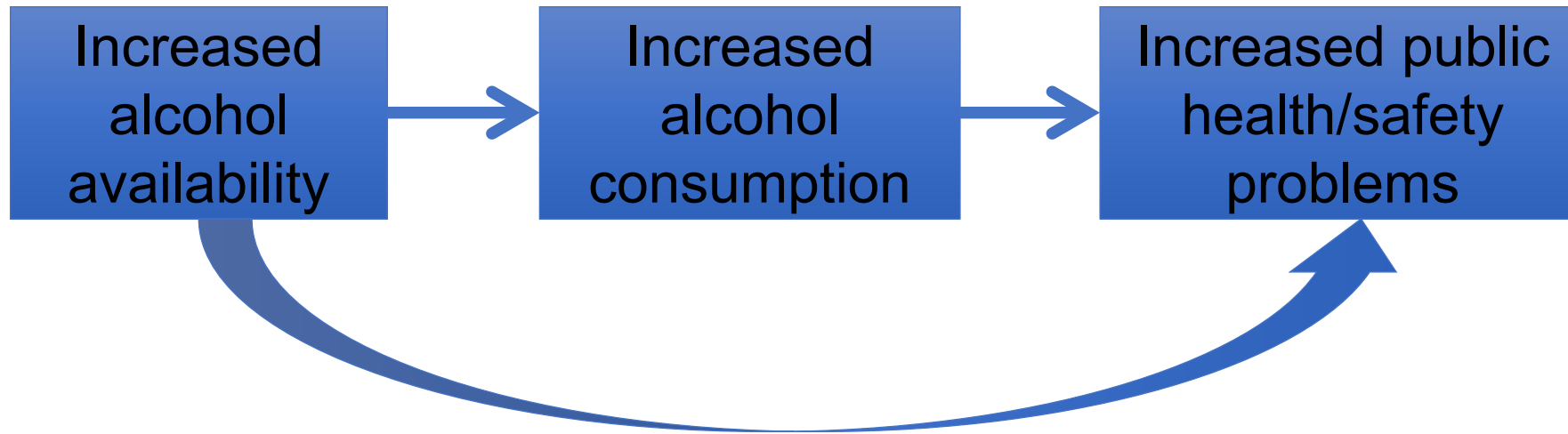
OUR MISSION.

One dollar of every bottle sold goes to help our Veterans. Shouldn't you Salute American?

The advertisement features a clear bottle of Salute American Vodka on the left and a martini glass with olives and a small American flag on the right. The text is centered and right-aligned.



# Commercial Availability



# Alcohol Availability On/Near Installations



**Military Commissaries Are Latest Battleground in Fight for Shelf Space**



# Alcohol in the Military Culture

28% of all service members agreed with at least one of the following statements about military culture being supportive of drinking:

- Finding it hard to fit in with one's command if they do not drink
- Belief that drinking is part of being in one's unit
- Belief that everyone is encouraged to drink at social events
- Belief that leaders are tolerant of drunkenness when personnel are off duty



**What Do We Do About It?**

# 2012 IOM Report Recommendation

- **Recommendation 1: DoD and the individual branches should implement a comprehensive set of evidence-based prevention programs**
  - Population-based environmental prevention strategies
    - Including: consistent enforcement of regulations on underage drinking, reducing the number of alcohol outlets, and limiting the hours of operation of such outlets.

# Similarities Between College & the Military

Colleges	Military
<p>College students often live in shared dormitories and shared off-campus housing and engage in most of their activities together, including going to classes as well as university-structured extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>Military personnel are constantly surrounded by other soldiers and leadership, including in the barracks and during training exercises.</p>
<p>Colleges structure (and can control) class schedules, academic calendars, and at least to some extent, extra-curricular activities.</p>	<p>The military structures a soldier's day, with drills, physical excursions, briefings, and other activities.</p>
<p>Classes and other activities are oriented to academic success and graduation.</p>	<p>Drills and skills training, as well as bonding activities, are oriented to combat readiness or military strategy.</p>
<p>Students at a college become alumni for life, with an attendant identity and sub-identities, including dormitory or residential affiliations, sports teams or clubs, fraternities or sororities, etc.</p>	<p>Developing a shared identity is a fundamental tenet of basic training, which stresses the importance of camaraderie and "brotherhood" for safety and military success. Sub-affiliations are also developed with one's unit or service.</p>

# Socio-Ecological Model





# Risk Factors

Level of SEM	College	Military
Community	Cheap alcohol on/near campus	Cheap alcohol on/near installation
Community	Targeted advertising	Targeted advertising
Organizational	Drinking “weekends”	Drinking “weekends”
Organizational	Illegal consumption in dorms	Illegal consumption in barracks
Organizational	Rituals and rites of passage	Rituals and rites of passage
Organizational	Bonding	Bonding
Organizational	“Work Hard, Play Hard” Culture	“Work Hard, Play Hard” Culture
Peer	Athletics, Greek life	Unit or Branch identity
Peer	Social Norms	Social Norms
Individual	Stress, genetics, sensation-seeking, masculinity	Combat, stress, trauma, PTSD, genetics, sensation-seeking, masculinity
Individual	Age (18-24)	Age (18-24)

# Evidence-Based College Interventions

- Form campus-community coalitions
- Enforce existing alcohol laws
- Reduce alcohol outlet density
- Address alcohol price and promotion
- Reduce social availability of alcohol
- Screening and Brief Intervention

# College vs. Military Interventions

College Interventions	Military Interventions
Form campus-community coalitions	Drug Detection Policies
Enforce existing alcohol laws	Deglamorization Efforts
Reduce alcohol outlet density	Media and Social Norms Campaigns
Address alcohol price and promotion	
Reduce social availability of alcohol	
Screening and Brief Intervention	Screening and Brief Intervention



Who is **THAT GUY?**

That Guy <sup>4)</sup> ([ˈtʰjɑːtˈɡɪ], n.

1. Anyone (yes, ladies, you too!) who, after drinking excessive amounts of alcohol, loses control of self or situation with humiliating or compromising results:
  - a. Used to suggest shameful or embarrassing behavior: What is That Guy thinking? Or, no way am I hanging out with That Guy.
  - b. Used to imply unpleasant transformation or metamorphosis: Everything was great until my friend drank a few too many and turned into That Guy.



# Implications for Public Health Practice

- Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
- Reducing alcohol outlet density
- Increasing the price of alcohol
- Changing sales and service practices
- Increasing enforcement

# Intervention Implementation

- The role of the military in alcohol policy
- The role of community coalitions in alcohol policy



# Making Military Connections



Installation drug & alcohol services



Installation command



Family Centers/Family Readiness Groups



Military-affiliated community organizations



Community locations with military presence

- Faith organizations
- Schools
- Sports



**Questions?**

[asparks@seiservices.com](mailto:asparks@seiservices.com)

# Breakouts

- Have you done work with the military population in your community?
  - If so, how did you engage with them? What was successful? What barriers did you face?
  - If not, why not?
- What are some strategies to working with the military that you can try?



# Report Out

- What ideas did you hear?
- What are some strategies your organization may employ?
- Other thoughts?

# Post-Webinar Feedback

Please click on the link in the chat to complete a very brief online feedback form!

*Thank you!*



# Connect with us!

Find us on the web: [www.pspttc.org](http://www.pspttc.org)

Join our mailing list: <http://eepurl.com/glssWD>

Email with general questions: [pspttc-info@casat.org](mailto:pspttc-info@casat.org)

Like us on Facebook: <https://tinyurl.com/PSPTTC-Facebook>

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Call us toll-free: 1-833-9SW-PTTC

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Pacific Southwest (HHS Region 9)

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**PTTC**

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# Thank You!

# CASAT



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