

Auditors say missing Iraq money totaling \$6.6B possibly stolen

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Mavs' moment

Dallas finishes off Miami for first NBA championship

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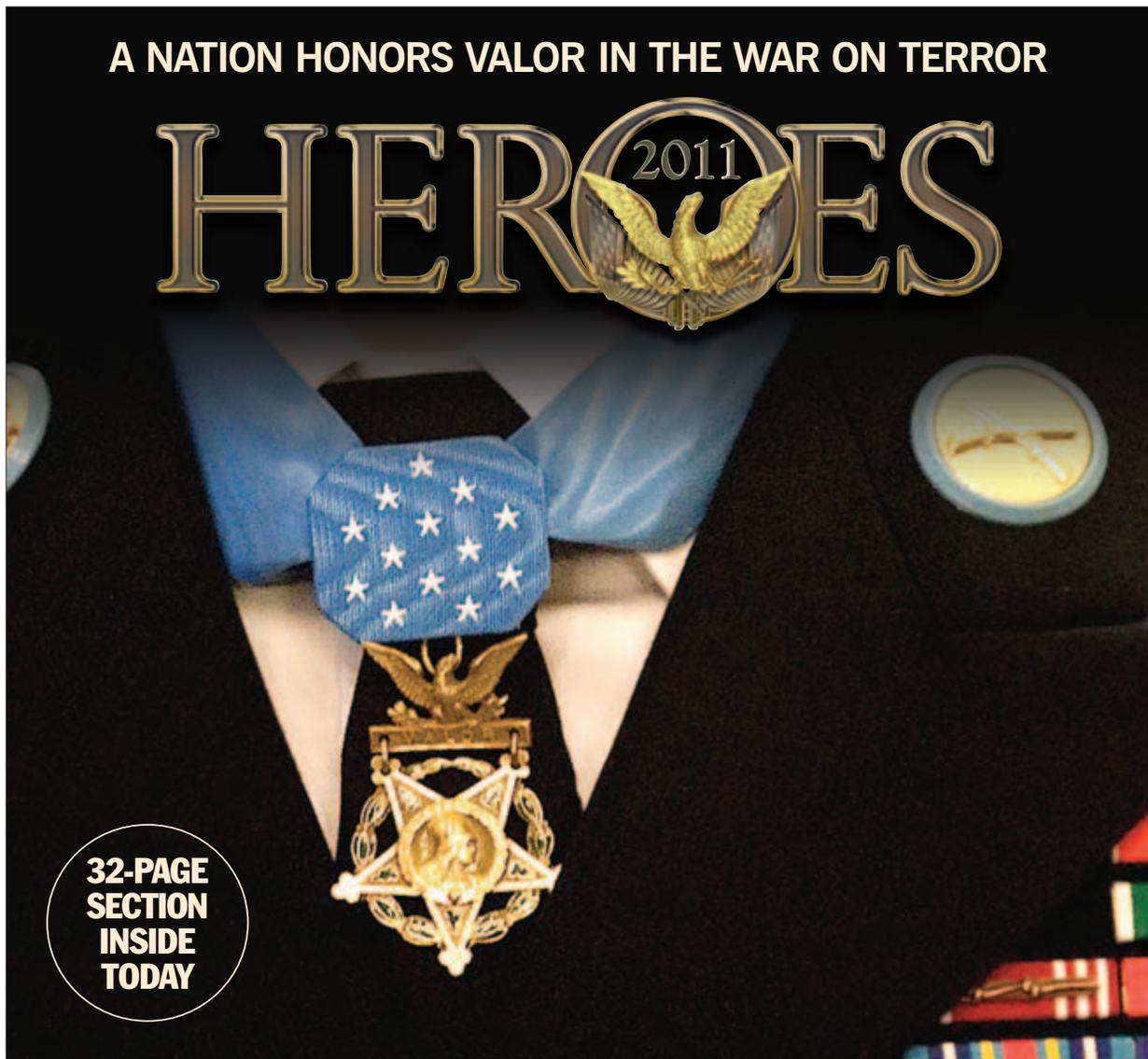
TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2011

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A NATION HONORS VALOR IN THE WAR ON TERROR

HEROES 2011



32-PAGE SECTION INSIDE TODAY

Why aren't there more profiles of black heroes?

By LEO SHANE III
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — There aren't a lot of black faces in this year's Heroes special section. Unfortunately, that's not a surprise. Every year, we try to present a diverse selection of battlefield stories, to best reflect the makeup of the military. We seek representatives from each of the services. And we want to make sure that every hero

we feature isn't a white male. And, in most respects, this section succeeds in that. We rarely have to search for Hispanic troops to profile. We've had trouble finding women, but that's not unexpected given the Defense Department's prohibition against women in combat. But finding African-Americans who have received valor awards has often been difficult.

SEE HEROES ON PAGE 2

ON THE WEB

Watch an exclusive video of Sal Giunta reflecting on his whirlwind year as the first living recipient of the Medal of Honor from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.



stripes.com/heroes

Two Silver Stars awarded during ceremony for heroic actions in Afghan war Page 4

Probe finds ex-schools chief abused her position

By JEFF SCHOGOL
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — An investigation concluded that the former head of the Defense Department's school system abused her power to secure jobs for relatives and friends, received pay and benefits to which she was not entitled and engaged in "unprofessional conduct and speech," according to a letter from the Defense Department Inspector General's office.

Shirley Miles was removed as director of the Department of Defense Education Activity a year ago amid an inquiry into numerous allegations raised by her former assistant, Belinda Croteau.



Miles

Miles was transferred elsewhere in the Defense Department and put in charge of a project to make all certificate or graduate education degree-granting programs available online. Pentagon spokeswoman Maj. Monica Matoush declined to reveal Miles' current salary, saying only that as an SE-3, it falls within a range of \$119,500 to \$179,700.

In a letter to U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, the Inspector General's Office said six allegations against Miles were confirmed. Other allegations against Miles were not substantiated, according to the letter, which was dated June 8.

"It's disturbing to see so many violations of the public trust from a civil servant," Grassley said. "Now that the investigation is completed, thanks to an inspector general, and serious allegations are substantiated, the agency should follow through to seek accountability from everyone responsible. Accountability and repercussions are necessary to move forward with what I hope is better leadership."

SEE PROBE ON PAGE 6

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"You want to talk about a sound that will send shivers up your spine."

— Firefighter Jay Walter, currently fighting wildfires at night in Arizona, talking about the dangerous cracking and falling of weakened trees

See story on Page 8

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The most popular stories on our website:

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2. 'Rambo did stuff like that' - Heroes 2011
3. Maltreated and hazed, one soldier is driven to take his own life
4. Overlooked and cut loose by the Army, veteran's life spirals to an end
5. Salvatore Giunta interview

COMING TOMORROW

In education on Wednesday

The case for preschool



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WAR/MILITARY

Heroes: Fewer blacks seeing combat in current wars

FROM FRONT PAGE

It has meant scouring other newspapers and blogs looking specifically for black heroes. It has meant tactless last-minute calls to public affairs officers asking for help identifying "troops with heroic stories, but they have to be black."

Since we began publishing the Heroes special section seven years ago, we have included profiles of 21 black servicemembers and veterans — just over 10 percent of the total stories.

This year, we tried to figure out if there's a reason why those stories of extraordinary heroism by African American troops seem hard for us to find.

The Defense Department does not track racial data on valor awards, and has no central database of all the troops who have received those honors. So there is no empirical way to determine whether black servicemembers receive proportionally fewer valor awards than their counterparts.

But broad demographic shifts in the military over the last decade suggest that one of the main reasons we've seen fewer battlefield awards for African Americans is because there are fewer African Americans on the battlefield.

According to figures from the Defense Manpower Data Center, today there are more than 241,000 African American active-duty troops in the four services, and nearly 130,000 more in the Guard and Reserve.

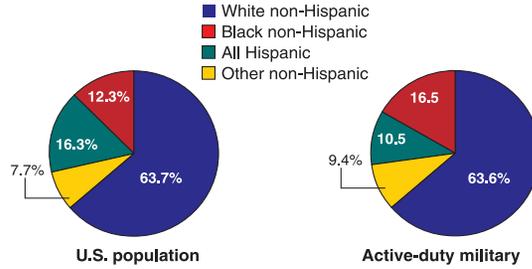
But those numbers have dropped significantly in recent years. In 2000, one out of every four soldiers was African American. In 2010, it was less than one in five. The Marine Corps saw the proportion of blacks drop from nearly 16 percent to about 10 percent over the same span.

Moreover, even fewer blacks are serving in front-line positions, in the kind of combat units where most valor awards are earned.

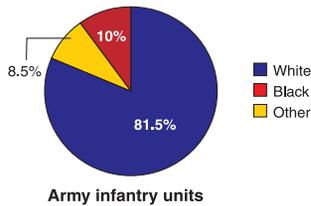
In 1994, blacks made up nearly 25 percent of all Army infantry units. By 2009, that figure had dropped to 10 percent. Today, there are four times more blacks serving in administrative or supply positions in the Army than in infantry posts, according to service statistics. Marine Corps sta-

Race on the battlefield

African Americans are slightly overrepresented in the military, compared to the U.S. as a whole ...



... but underrepresented on the battlefield.



SOURCES: U.S. Census data, Defense Manpower Data Center; Defense Department Personnel and Procurement Statistics; Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute

tistics show similar trends.

"That doesn't surprise me at all," said Edward Dorn, an assistant secretary of defense in the 1990s and now a professor of public policy at the University of Texas. "That's in line with trends we've seen in the past. In an ideal world, you'd like the distribution of [racial] groups to be close to the rest of the military, but that's the ideal."

Why are fewer African Americans electing to serve in combat units? Dorn said it's a combination of factors, most pointing toward why many African Americans are drawn to the military in the first place.

"Some of it has to do with racial trends in society," he said. "[African Americans] join the military because they see it as a place they can get a leg up, with more opportunity than the civilian economy. So they think about it as a career, or think about the kind of jobs that can translate into a civilian job later on."

That means gravitating to administrative jobs that provide a long-term career track or are easier to translate into resume-

friendly job skills.

John Sibley Butler, author of several books on race in the military, said the overall decline in the number of blacks in the military is not unexpected, given that college enrollments among African Americans have increased in the last 20 years. That has brought the military's racial composition closer to the country at large.

There's also a long-held perception inside the black community that more minorities were forced to the front lines during the Vietnam War than their white counterparts, Butler noted.

African Americans comprised roughly a third of Army combat infantry ranks during that conflict, according to Butler's research. Thus, parents who have encouraged their children to join the military in the last 20 years have also pushed them to seek jobs outside of combat specialties.

"So, while Vietnam was fought disproportionately by blacks," Butler said, today's wars "are being fought disproportionately by whites."

In fact, only about 9 percent of the troops killed in Iraq and Af-

ghanistan have been black, even though they make up more than 17 percent of the total active-duty force. In contrast, Hispanics make up roughly 10 percent of the active-duty force and 10 percent of the deaths from the current wars.

Andre Sayles, director of the Army's Diversity Strategy and Integration office, said the decline in the proportion of African Americans serving in combat roles has raised eyebrows within military circles. Numerous service-wide studies — including a recent report from the Military Leadership Diversity Commission — have noted the falling combat numbers as a potential area of concern.

"If we are to maintain an all-volunteer army, we must consider all the factors, to include any barriers that may impact lack of African American service in the combat arms branches," he said in a statement to Stars and Stripes.

But those are just the statistical explanations. Tyrone Williams, chief operating officer at the outreach group Black Veterans for Social Justice, asserted that African American troops are receiving fewer valor awards because of lingering racism in the military.

"There is still some institutional racism out there," he said. "It's better than in the past, but we still see a lot of bad paper for black veterans, more bad discharges or mistakes with paperwork than with white veterans. It's still a problem."

Williams can't point to any hard data, but he said veterans he works with believe that blacks have to work harder to get recognition and receive services from the military. And because issuance of a valor award depends entirely on recommendations from commanding officers, the process is vulnerable to human biases.

So the medals problem could be due to hidden prejudice against black servicemembers. And it could be due to shifting demographics.

And it could be, as Williams noted, "that you just need some better sources to find the ones that are out there."

Researcher Catherine Giordano contributed to this report. shanel@stripes.osd.mil twitter: @LeoShane



Happy Birthday United States Army

Service Credit Union congratulates the United States Army on its 236th birthday on June 14, 2011. We thank them and their families for their dedication to our great nation.



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