



*Rapporteur: Monique Jenkins*

On June 20, 2023, CNA held the fourth Inclusive National Security event of this year under the theme "intersectionality." The June event ([recording here](#)), "Breaking the Brass Ceiling: Recruiting & Retaining Women in Law Enforcement," explored the impacts of inadequate gender diversity on aspects of the recruitment, promotion, and retention processes. The event featured keynote speakers Chief (ret.) Ivonne Roman, former Chief of Police in Newark, New Jersey, and Dr. Helen Yu, University of Hawaii professor and retired United States Air Force Lieutenant Colonel. Dr. Cait Kanewske, a Research Analyst at CNA, served as the moderator for the event.

### Reflections from Chief (ret.) Ivonne Roman and Dr. Helen Yu

- For the past three decades, women have made up just under 13 percent of police officers and 3 percent of police chiefs in America, despite research showing that women produce better public safety outcomes for communities, victims, and suspects. These outcomes include the following:
  - Better outcomes for crime victims, especially victims of sexual assault
  - Fewer arrests for non-violent, low-level offenses
  - Less involvement in lawsuits
  - Fewer instances of discharging service weapons
- Chief Ivonne discussed challenges in recruitment of women in local law enforcement agencies, including the following:
  - Agencies are using recruitment materials that inaccurately depict the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement officers.
  - Agencies are not identifying and addressing issues unique to women, such as:
    - Lack of support for nursing parents
    - Flawed and/or inadequate sexual harassment policies
    - Equipment that is not designed for women's' bodies
- Chief Ivonne shared the *30x30 Initiative*, which pushes law enforcement to increase female representation to 30 percent by 2030, a proportion based upon representative bureaucracy theory. The premise of this is that at 30 percent, a marginalized group, such as women in policing, will become much more effective in influencing policy, practices, and culture.
- Dr. Yu discussed challenges specific to the retention of women in law enforcement careers, including the following:
  - Pervasive negative attitudes from male colleagues at both the peer and supervisory levels
  - Concerns about career progression owing to the lack of high-ranking women in law enforcement
  - Insufficient support for those serving as caretakers, leading to poor work-life balance
- Dr. Yu shared findings from research asserting that women who seek out mentors and champions within the field have better long-term outcomes in law enforcement.

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