

CHARACTERIZING FACTORS THAT MIGHT AFFECT MILITARY ENLISTMENT, RETENTION, AND ATTRITION

Madison Arnsbarger (Virginia Tech), Jessica Flynn (Cornell University), Emily Stark (Austin Peay), with Kathryn Ziemer (SDAL)
Sponsor: Gregory A. Ruark, U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences

Policy Analysis

Research Question

- Are people influenced to join or leave the Army if new policies are implemented?
 - Do certain policy types have a greater impact than others?

Method

- Started with the Department of Defense (DoD) Directives and created selection criteria (see below) for deciding if a policy might affect military retention or attrition.
- Coded the directives according to the criteria.
- Performed a backward search for policy documents starting with widely publicized policies (see Case Study below).

Directive Selection Criteria

Retirement

- Benefits
- Veteran status
- Training for civilian jobs

Safety

- Laws regarding who can use which weapons
- Dealing with internal/foreign threats
- Sexual harassment

Health

- Changes to healthcare
- Suicide Prevention Program
- Treatment of deceased
- Food service programs

Education

- GI Bill
- Free law school

Privacy

- Changes in reporting to higher authorities
- Interrogations
- Social media/internet use

Grants

- Additional monetary compensation

Incentive programs

- Awards for service
- Promoting diversity
- Rules about receiving gifts

Requirements

- Foreign language proficiency
- Physical fitness
- Standards/codes/rules
- Dress code

Quality of Life

- Receiving packages/mail
- Positive work atmosphere/military culture
- Non-army activities
- Paying for equipment/uniforms out of pocket

DoD Directive

January 23, 2012 Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program

Creates a culture free of sexual harassment on military grounds.

January 6, 2011 Health Service Support

Sufficient medical personnel to meet mission requirements and training of all medical personnel will be monitored in a comprehensive manner.

June 8, 2015 Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the DoD

Gives DoD personnel the opportunity to rise in ranks with equal opportunity.

August 21, 2015 Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture (LREC) Program (DLRECP)

DoD members will be screened for foreign language skills.

Geographic Location

Research Question

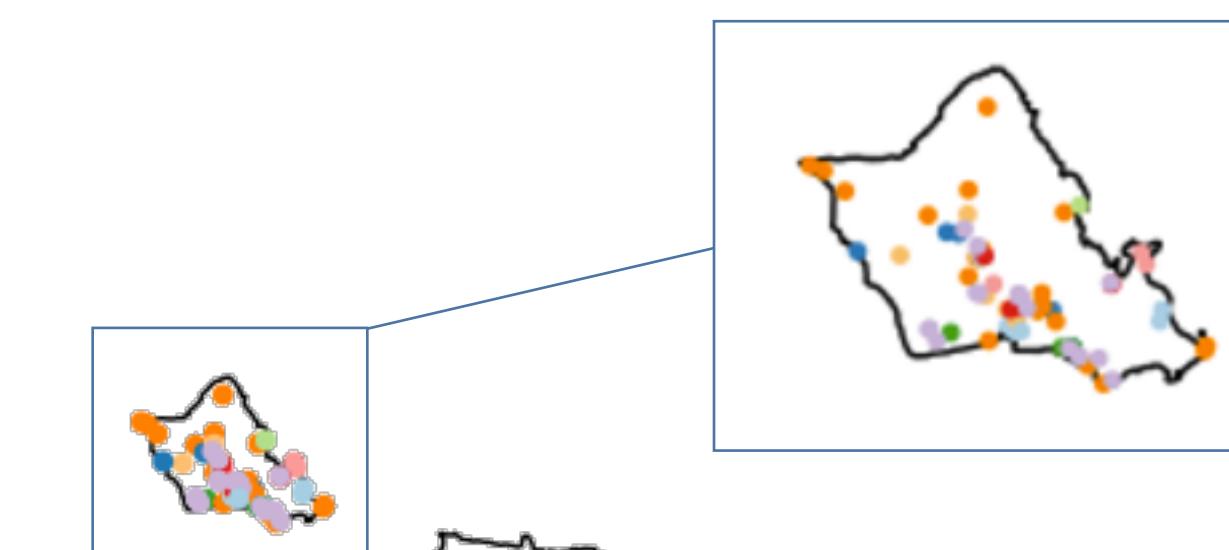
- Are people influenced to join the Army if they live near military installations, monuments, or national cemeteries?

Method

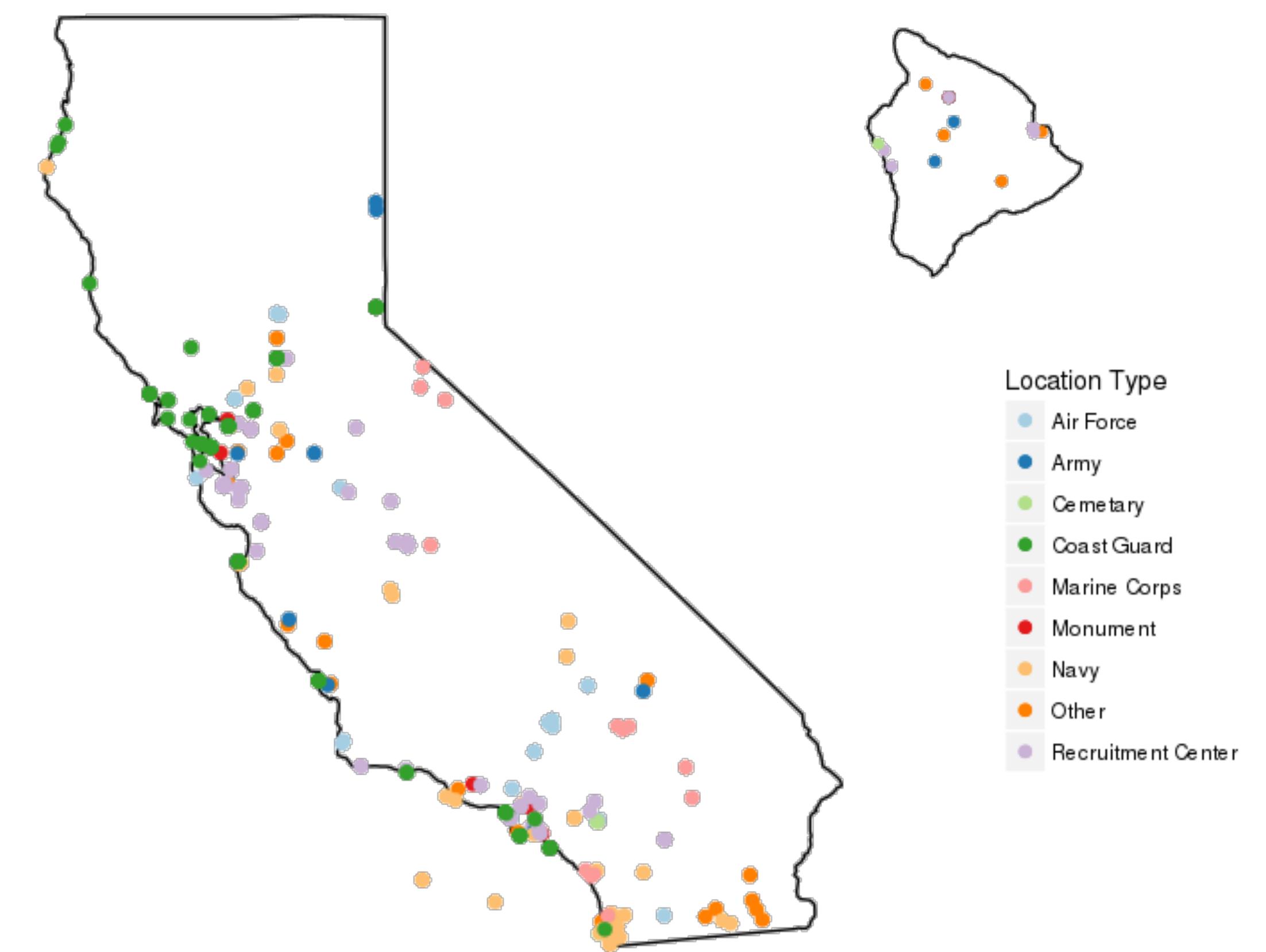
- We created maps displaying military base locations, recruitment centers, memorials and national cemeteries for three states with a high frequency of installations as a preliminary analysis.

Military Locations by State

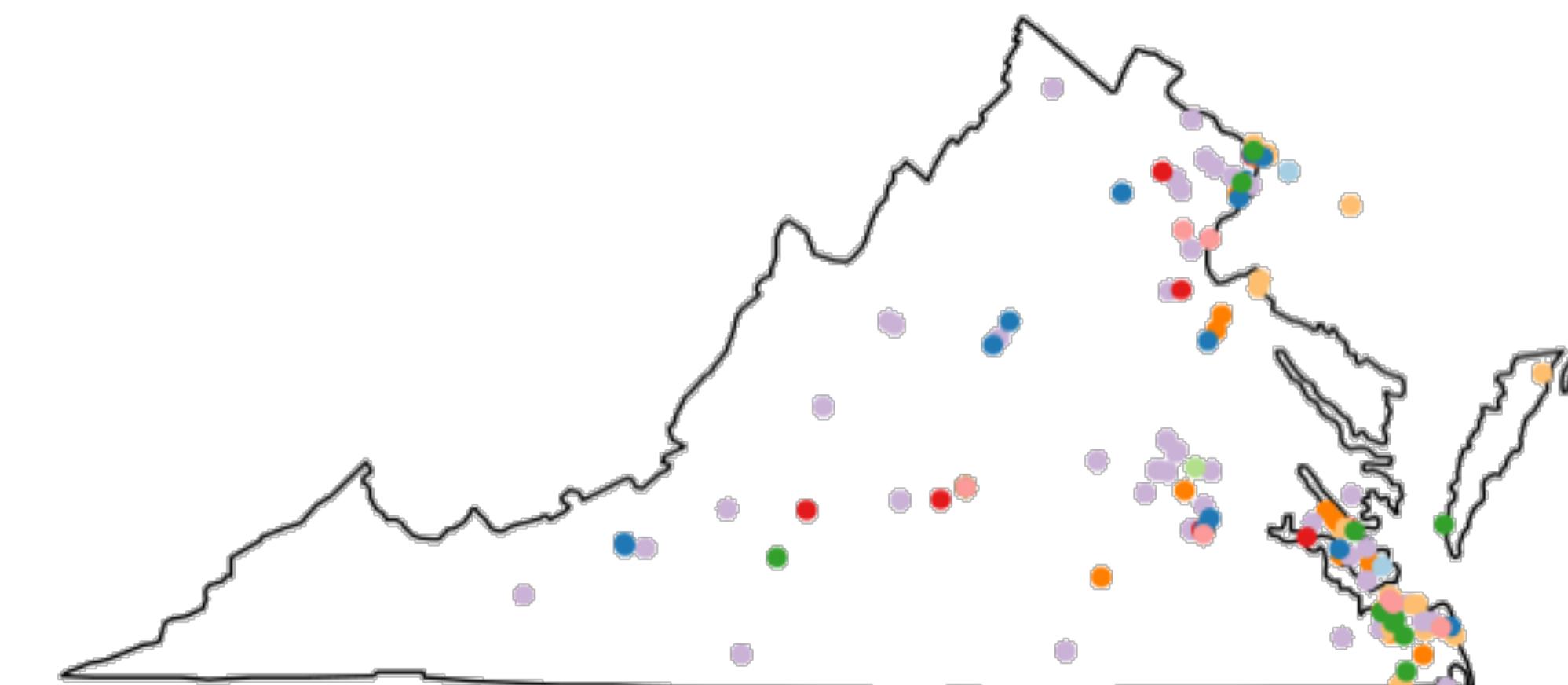
Hawaii



California



Virginia



Next Steps

- Research conducted thus far has been descriptive analyses regarding policies and military geographic locations.
- Additional data (e.g., DoD, Census, social media) will be combined with the policy and geographic information to explore the effect on retention and attrition.
 - **Policy:**
 - We will investigate the patterns of policy implementation on military enrollment and attrition.
 - Reactions to policies will be assessed via social media data.
 - **Geography:**
 - The location of enrollees will be mapped alongside the geographic location of military installations.

Case Study

Women in Combat¹⁻³

- Started with the known policy of allowing women to serve in combat positions and performed a search for policy documents.
- The Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 ordered an investigation into whether or not women have equal opportunities.
- Extensive research was done on the issue by the Congressional Research Service, United States General Accounting Office, and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense.
- January 24th, 2013, the USA officially lifted the ban on Women in Combat, which was quickly picked up by the news cycle.
- Overall, Congressional Research Service sources as well as news outlets should be considered in policy research.

References

1. United States of America, General Accounting Office. (1998). Gender Issues: Information on DoD's Assignment Policy and Direct Ground Combat Definition.
2. U.S. Cong. (2013). Women in combat issues for Congress (D. F. Burrelli, Author) [Cong.]. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service.
3. Women in combat: US military officially lifts ban on female soldiers. (2013, January 25). The Guardian.