



## **Department of Veterans Affairs**

### **Senior Executive Biography**

#### **Melissa A. Bryant**

##### **Deputy Assistant Secretary Office of Public Affairs**

Melissa A. Bryant was appointed on March 15, 2021, as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs (OPIA), at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Prior to that, she was Senior Advisor for OPIA and most recently the National Legislative Director for The American Legion. Ms. Bryant provides executive level advice and counsel to the Assistant Secretary for OPIA, and leads the public affairs team who help to build and maintain public confidence in VA by developing, routinely updating and communicating the Department's key messages to many audiences through media relations, public affairs, intergovernmental affairs, outreach and Veteran engagement to reach Veterans and their families, and other stakeholders.



A former Army Captain and Operation Iraqi Freedom combat veteran, her extensive record of public service includes critical roles in both military and civil service as a senior intelligence officer. As a Department of Defense and Intelligence Community plans, policy, and operations expert, she served in key leadership positions with the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Joint Staff, the United States Military Academy, and Army Intelligence. She was successful in building "coalitions of the willing" to advance operational and strategic objectives while developing and implementing plans and policy for the defense intelligence community.

Ms. Bryant is widely recognized for championing causes impacting women and minority Service members and Veterans, highlighting the distinct challenges this growing population faces while advocating smart policy and legislative solutions. She has provided remarks in dozens of press conferences, participated as both a panelist and moderator in a variety of venues, delivered numerous oral and written testimonies before Congressional and Administration hearings, as well as conducted live and taped interviews on FOX News, CNN, NPR, CBS Radio, PBS NewsHour, C-SPAN Washington Journal, MSNBC, HLN, local television segments, web-based and print articles, and much more. She was named one of the Hill Vets 100 in 2020, and an Aspen Institute Ideas Festival Scholar in 2018; her civil and military service awards include the Joint Civilian Service Commendation Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, plus dozens more accolades and honors.

#### **CAREER CHRONOLOGY:**

2021 – Present	Deputy Assistant Secretary, OPIA, Washington, DC
2019 – 2020	National Legislative Director, The American Legion, Washington, DC
2017 – 2019	Chief Policy Officer, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Washington, DC
2015 – 2016	Graduate Student and Teaching Assistant, Georgetown University, Washington, DC
2009 – 2015	Branch Chief, Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington, DC

A native of Philadelphia, PA, Ms. Bryant is a third generation combat Veteran, an ROTC Distinguished Military Graduate with a BA in Political Science *cum laude* from Hampton University, is an alumna of Howard University School of Law, and holds an MA in Policy Management from the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University.