



75TH ANNIVERSARY HONORING
EXECUTIVE
ORDER 9981

NAACP Armed Services & Veterans Affairs Committee

NAACP
Empowerment Programs

GREETINGS

February 2023

NAACP Chairman Leon Russell and President & CEO Derrick Johnson join me in sharing the NAACP Armed Services & Veterans Affairs Toolkit honoring the 75th Anniversary of Executive Order 9981. The executive order, signed on July 26, 1948, was President Harry S. Truman's historic move to integrate the U.S. military. It not only transformed the rank and file of people who served our country in the military, but it also integrated and transformed our society.

This toolkit includes activities for your unit, sample letters, as well as graphics to post for special military dates on the calendar. We hope you will pay tribute to this momentous occasion in our history and thank you in advance for supporting this important milestone. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Paula Edme, pedme@naacpnet.org.

In solidarity,



Elder Edward DuBose

Chairman, NAACP Armed Services & Veterans Affairs Committee

NAACP ARMED SERVICES & VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE 2023

Elder Edward O. DuBose, Chairman

Alphonso Braggs, Vice Chairman

Ron Hasson, Vice Chairman

Barbara Ward, Vice Chairman

LTC. Larry Burks, Sr.

Ray Curry

Gen. Arnold N. Gordon-Bray

LTC. Patricia Jackson-Kelley

Octavia Harris

W. Clyde Lemon

Ginger Miller

Edward B. Perry

Benard Simelton

Antwanisha Williamson

SUPPORT STAFF

Paula Brown Edmé

Hilary O. Shelton

Dawn Chase

India Artis

NAACP UNIT ARMED SERVICES & VETERAN'S AFFAIRS (ASVA) STATE/STATE-AREA COMMITTEES

NAACP BYLAWS MARCH 2019 ARTICLE VIII SECTION 2c

At its first meeting following the elections, and at any time during the term of office, the Executive Committee shall approve the Unit President's appointment of Chairpersons of the various Standing Committees as presented by the President.

NAACP BYLAWS MARCH 2019 ARTICLE VIII SECTION 5B

The Committee on Armed Services and Veteran's Affairs shall (1) seek to establish a working relationship with those agencies in government, national, state and local, having the responsibility in the affairs of members of the various Armed Services and Veterans and to see that programs to which they are responsible are administered fairly and justly to members of the minority community; (2) study conditions pertaining to veterans and members of the Military Service and their dependents and/or survivors in the community; (3) serve as a center of information on matters affecting the members of Active Military, Reserves, State, National Guard and Veterans; (4) maintain a repository of materials, information and forms to be used in assisting veterans and/or dependents of veterans and military personnel with their problems; (5) receive and act on all complaints relative to acts of discrimination on account of race, color, creed or denial of benefits to which they are entitled because of discrimination; (6) prepare a quarterly report on committee activities to be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Unit and the National Director of Armed Services and Veterans Affairs. Upon appointment of the Chair and members of Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee, of which there should be no the Committee should determine the annual program, issues and events on which the Committee will focus. If a budget has not been submitted to the Branch Finance Committee for review and incorporation into the annual budget of the Branch, the Committee should draft the ASVA annual budget based on their projected agenda for the year.

2023 ARMED SERVICES AND VETERANS AFFAIRS PROGRAMMATIC YEAR

In addition to the focus of the NAACP State/State-Area Conference, Branch, and Youth Unit on issues relative to the role and responsibilities of the Committee as outlined in the NAACP Bylaws Article VII Section 5b, during the calendar year 2023, the Committee should develop programming that acknowledges the 75th Anniversary of President Harry S. Truman's signing of Executive Order 9981 on July 26, 1948, which served to integrate the United States Armed Services and American society.



IN THE BEGINNING

In 1940, the U.S. population was about 131 million, 10% of which was African American. During World War II, the Army had become the nation's largest minority employer. Of the 2.5 million African American men who registered for the draft through December 31, 1945, more than 1 million were inducted into the armed forces. Along with thousands of African American women, these inductees served in all branches of service during World War II.

During World War II, President Roosevelt responded to complaints about discrimination at home against African Americans. NAACP Executive Secretary Walter White assisted labor leader A. Philip Randolph in pressing for a Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC). Randolph threatened to organize a large march on Washington, D.C. Roosevelt recognized that the potential presence of 100,000 or more protesters in the nation's capital could be embarrassing and would distract attention from more pressing matters.

President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 in June 1941, directing the military to accept African Americans into job-training programs in defense plants, forbidding discrimination by defense contractors, and establishing a FEPC. After the war, President Harry S. Truman faced a multitude of problems and allowed Congress to terminate the FEPC.

In December 1946, after meeting with NAACP Executive Secretary Walter White and other leaders of the NAACP, and a month after the jury acquitted the accused in the arrest, beating and blinding of African American serviceman Isaac Woodard, Truman issued *Executive Order 9808: Establishing the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity In the Armed Forces*, which established the Civil Rights Commission, a 15-member, interracial group, including the President of General Electric, Charles E. Wilson; Sadie Tanner Alexander, a Black attorney for the city of Philadelphia; Channing Heggie Tobias, an NAACP board member and later Chairman; and other activists.

The Commission recommended "more adequate means and procedures for the protection of the civil rights of the people of the United States." When the commission issued its report, *To Secure These Rights*, in October 1947,

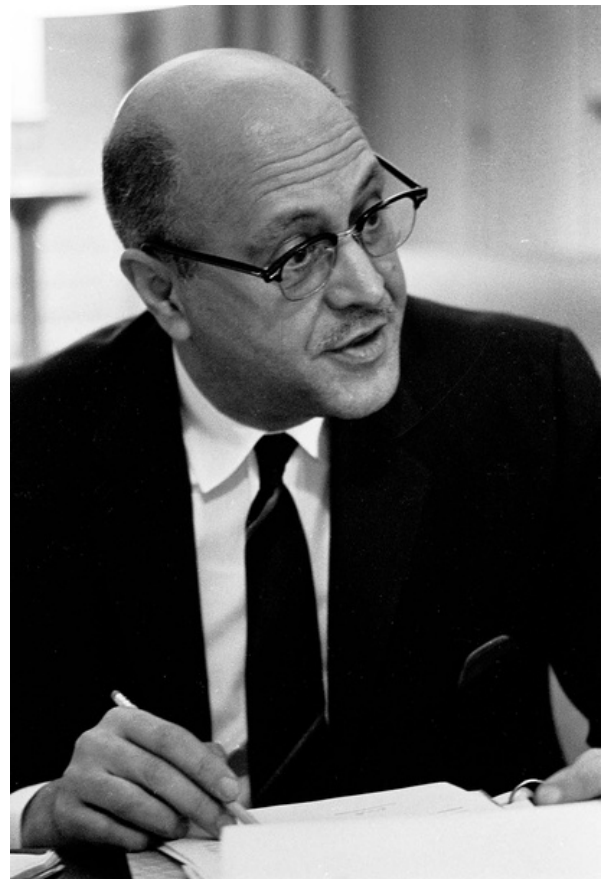
its proposals included anti-lynching and anti-poll tax laws, a permanent FEPC, and strengthening the civil rights division of the Department of Justice. In a speech to the NAACP National Convention on June 29, 1947, Truman said that civil rights were a moral priority, and it was his priority for the federal government. Woodard's assault and other cases showed him that the issue could not be left to state and local governments.

Who Is Robert Weaver?

During the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration, Robert Weaver was one of 45 prominent African Americans appointed to positions and helped make up the Black Cabinet, an informal group of African American public policy advisers. Weaver directed federal programs during the administration of the New Deal and held several positions in various agencies of the U.S. government, starting as the first African American adviser on racial problems in the Department of the Interior.

In 1934, Weaver was appointed as an aide to U.S. Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes. In 1938, he became special assistant to the U.S. Housing Authority and drafted the U.S. Housing Program which was established in 1937. In 1942, he became administrative assistant to the National Defense Advisory Commission, the War Manpower Commission (1942), and director of Negro Manpower Service.

After the signing of Executive Order 9981, Weaver continued to advocate for civil rights and in 1959-1960, served for a year as chairman of the NAACP National Board of Directors. Roosevelt appointed a total of 45 prominent African Americans to positions in executive agencies, and called on them as informal advisers on public policy issues related to African Americans, the Great Depression, and the New Deal. Weaver drafted the U.S. Housing Program under Roosevelt, which was established in 1937.





The Pre-cursor: Executive Order 8802

The March on Washington Movement (MOWM), 1941–1946, organized by activists A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, was a tool designed to pressure the U.S. government into providing fair working opportunities for African Americans and desegregating the armed forces by threat of mass marches on Washington, D.C. during World War II. In order to appease the civil rights leaders, especially Randolph, the President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, which specified that there would be no discrimination in the U.S. defense industry on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The executive order did not establish full employment equality, but it did establish a FEPC.

On June 25, 1941, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802, which banned “discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin.” At the same time, the FEPC was established to help enforce the order. Roosevelt took this action in response to concerns raised by African American leaders such as labor organizer A. Philip Randolph, Mary McLeod Bethune (director of minority affairs in the National Youth Administration), and others, who were outraged that Black soldiers were fighting for the United States in segregated units in the military and returning home to a society that still violated their basic rights.

After World War II, the U.S. Congress debated making the FEPC permanent, but two bills designed to do that were defeated. In 1945 Congress, whose most important committees were headed by Southerners, cut off funding to the FEPC, which then formally dissolved in 1946. In 1948, President Truman sent a civil rights package to Congress calling for a permanent FEPC, but Congress refused to pass it. In 1950, the House approved a permanent FEPC bill but Senators from the South filibustered and prevented the bill from passing. The FEPC was never made a permanent government agency.

THE ARREST, BEATING, AND BLINDING OF ISAAC WOODARD

The arrest, beating and blinding of African American veteran Isaac Woodard by Batesburg, South Carolina police on February 12, 1946—hours after he was honorably discharged from the United States Army, and while still in uniform—caused a national furor and helped inspire President Harry Truman's move to desegregate the military. Chief Lynwood Shull jammed the ends of his Blackjack into Mr. Woodard's eyes, at one point striking him so violently that the stick broke. Under pressure from the NAACP, the federal government eventually charged Chief Shull for the attack on Mr. Woodard, but after deliberating for 30 minutes, the jury acquitted Shull of any wrongdoing.



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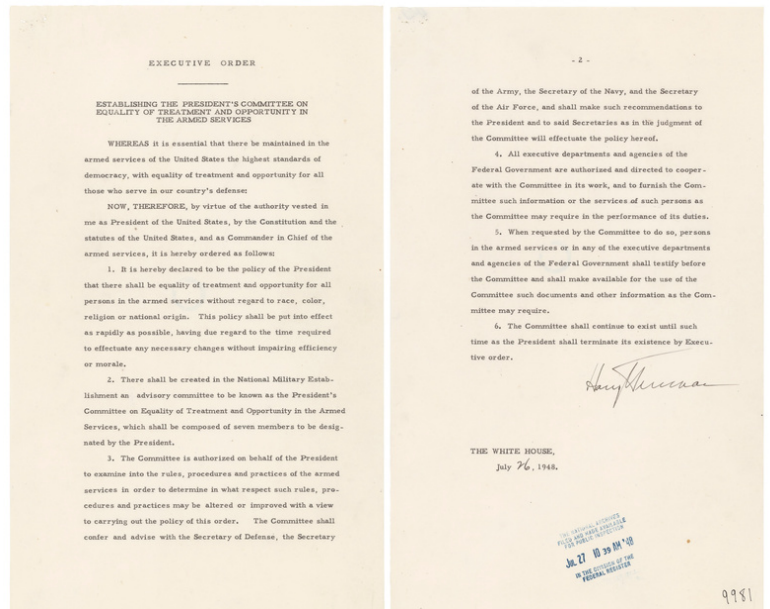
It is my deep conviction that we have reached a turning point in our country's efforts to guarantee freedom and equality to all our citizens. Recent events in the United States and abroad have made us realize that it is more important today than ever before to ensure that all Americans enjoy these rights. When I say all Americans—I mean all Americans.

”

- President Harry S. Truman

EXECUTIVE ORDER 9981

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, establishing the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, committing the United States government to integrate the segregated military. Executive Order 9981 stated that “there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed forces without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.” July 26, 2023, will mark the 75th Anniversary of the signing and implementation of Executive



Order 9981, integrating the U.S. Armed Services and effecting the integration of American society. The order also established an advisory committee to examine the rules, practices, and procedures of the armed services and recommend ways to make desegregation a reality. There was considerable resistance to the executive order from the military, but by the end of the Korean conflict, almost all the military was integrated.

HOW THE NAACP WILL HONOR EXECUTIVE ORDER 9981

GET INVOLVED

Black History Month – February 2023

Your branch, in coordination with the Youth Council and College Chapter, may plan a Town Hall Program, “A Conversation: The Historic Impact of Executive Order 9981.”

In partnership with the local military base, the town hall may be held on a military base, community center, local high school, ecumenical institution, etc. The Town Hall should be a “living room style” conversation/discussion focusing on the challenges, impact, importance, and historic significance of the implementation of the Executive Order.

The Town Hall provides an opportunity for intergenerational participation, gender inclusion and diversity around the conversation, choosing the moderator, participants and invitation to attendees. This is also an opportunity to reach out and connect with community-based organizations affiliated with the military, local veterans' organizations, ROTC programs in secondary education, and youth and senior citizen organizations.

NAACP Civil Rights Advocacy Training Institutes (CRATI) – March – May 2023 (Regional CRATI Locations TBD)

As the host State/State-Area Conference of the 2023 CRATI, the State Conference Planning Committee, in conjunction with mandates of the National Office for programming, should ensure the host Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committee plans an observance of Executive Order 9981 to take place at the Annual CRATI.

The host State/State-Area Conference ASVA Committee should implement programming that highlights the role integration of the military in the U.S., accomplishments of African Americans in the military, and opportunities for career and leadership development in the military. The Committee should have determined and established a relationship with the existing military bases and installations in the region. If the Committee has not done so, now is an opportune time to establish and develop a relationship. Working closely with the military leadership:

- Invite a member of the military leadership (Marine Corp, Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, or Space Force) to be a keynote speaker at the CRATI Mass Meeting or one of the special event meal functions, highlighting the 75th Anniversary of Executive Order 9981.
- Create a 75th Anniversary Executive Order 9981 presentation to show at the CRATI Mass Meeting, ASVA Reception or workshop. The creation of the PowerPoint should be coordinated with the host State/State-Area Conference Communications, Press and Publicity Committee.

- The CRATI ASVA Workshop may focus on the status of persons of color in the military through the decades, 1940 – 2000’s, highlighting the increase in representation and diversity, advancements, accomplishments, challenges, setbacks and opportunities for service in the military. Panelists should include military veterans and current military personnel. The ASVA workshop should be a joint workshop planned and coordinated with the CRATI programming for Youth & College Division, enlisting the input from youth leadership of the host Youth Councils and College Chapters.

75th Anniversary Celebration of Executive Order 9981 - July 26, 2023

The NAACP local units should start coordinating with federal, state and city officials now to have Wednesday, July 26, 2023 declared “Executive Order 9981 Day.” Proclamations should be issued from Senators, Congressional representatives, and local legislators for presentation at a City Hall ceremony on the day of observance. The Branch, Youth Council, and High School Chapter Education Committees should begin coordinating with principals of local elementary and secondary schools to plan a special “75th Anniversary Executive Order 9981 Day Assembly” to take place before the end of the school year.

Prior to Sunday, July 24, 2023, the Branch Religious Affairs Committee should be coordinating with the ecumenical community, encouraging the clergy to use their sermons to acknowledge the signing of the order, the service we as a people have given to the United States of America, and its impact on integration in our nation.

NAACP 114th National Convention – July 26 - August 1, 2023

In the NAACP Experience Hall, feature a video and pictorial exhibit highlighting integration of the military. For the NAACP Plenary Session/Special Forum & Luncheon, extend an invitation to U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd James Austin for keynote and attendance at Luncheon. Presentation of White House Proclamation. Implement an ASVA Workshop for ASVA chairpersons, committee members, and all attendees Implement ASVA Luncheon at which annual awards are presented.

Memorial Day & Veterans Day Community Activities

Memorial Day (Monday, May 29, 2023) and Veterans Day (Saturday, November 11, 2023) serve as an opportune time for NAACP Branches and Youth Councils to coordinate an NAACP Memorial Day or Veterans Day “Executive Order 9981 Family” BBQ/Fish Fry. This activity can be done In partnership with other community based organizations (fraternities, sororities, veteran’s organizations, churches, etc.).

In a local park, the grounds of a local church or community center, the NAACP Branch may host an Executive Order 9981 BBQ/Fish Fry with a complimentary menu. Invitees would include the families of descendants of active duty military and veterans who integrated the armed services. It is also an opportunity to set up kiosks to distribute NAACP information, membership opportunities, and information about resources such as medical, mental health and employment opportunities for veterans. The brief program should include remarks highlighting the anniversary of the signing and implementation of Executive Order 9981.

NAACP Youth Councils, High School and College Chapters

Encourage the NAACP Youth & College Division to incorporate the 75th Anniversary of Executive Order 9981 in their 2022-2023 programming, to include National Convention, Regional and local programming for NAACP College Chapters, Youth Councils, High School Chapters, and Junior Youth Councils. They are encouraged to coordinate programming with ROTC programs in high schools, college campuses, fraternities and sororities, and local veterans’ organizations.

State/State-area Conferences, Freedom Fund Dinners, and other Special Events

During 2023 Fall Annual Conferences and branch Freedom Fund Dinners, each entity should plan to highlight the historical significance of the integration of the military as part of their program. Appropriate state and local high ranking officials from the Marine Corps, the Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Space Force should be honored and extended invitations to attend. NAACP special awards should be presented to these arms of the military. If printing a hard copy or virtual program/journal, 1-2 pages should be dedicated to the 75th Anniversary of Executive Order 9981.

2023 SOCIAL MEDIA & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

February

February 3: Four Chaplains Day, a remembrance honoring four military chaplains who sacrificed their lives to save the lives of their fellow service members during WWII.

Activity idea:

- Share bios on the four chaplains

February 4: United Service Organization's (USO) Birthday.

Activity idea:

- Send a message of support and encouragement via the USO website: www.uso.org/message/force

Feb. 2-18: National Salute to Veteran Patients

Activity ideas:

- Contact the local VA hospital and find out the types of care packages needed. Purchase items and assemble care packages along with Youth and College.
- Volunteer visits to VA Hospitals to spend time with patients.

Feb. 19: U.S. Coast Guard Reserve Birthday

Activity idea:

- Invite a U.S. Coast Guard Reservist to address your branch meeting.

March

March 3: U.S. Navy Reserve Birthday

Activity idea:

- Invite a U.S. Navy Reservist to address your branch meeting.

March 13: K-9 Veterans Day

Activity idea:

- Donate food, towels and blankets to local animal shelters and police precincts with K9 units. (Check with local units for the type of dog food used.)

2023 SOCIAL MEDIA & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

March 25: Medal of Honor Day

Activity idea:

- Invite a Medal of Honor recipient to speak during a unit meeting.

March 29: Vietnam War Veterans Day

Activity idea:

- Invite several Vietnam War veterans to share their experiences.

April

April 1 - 30: Month of the Military Child, recognizes and thanks children from military families for the sacrifices they make living the military lifestyle.

Activity ideas:

- Recognize military children in your unit with picture display; introduce them at the monthly meeting and allow them to share some thoughts.
- Youth & College Division can assemble care packages for Military serving.

April 5: Gold Star Spouses Day

April 14: U.S. Air Force Reserve Birthday

April 23: U.S. Army Reserve Birthday

2023 SOCIAL MEDIA & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

May

May 1 - 31: Military Appreciation Month

Activity idea:

- Host a letter writing campaign to military members thanking them for their service.
- Host a resource fair for Veterans.

May 1 - 31: Military Caregiver Month

May 1: Silver Star Banner Day

Activity ideas:

- Visit patients at local VA hospitals.
- Care packages - reading materials, games, cross word puzzle books, etc. Invite a wounded Veteran to share at the branch meeting.

May 12: Military Spouse Appreciation Day

Activity idea:

- Invite the spouse of an active duty military person to address the branch meeting.

May 13: Children of Fallen Patriots Day

May 20: Armed Forces Day

May 30: Memorial Day



2023 SOCIAL MEDIA & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

June

June 1 - 30: National PTSD Month

Activity idea:

- Invite a PTSD health professional to address the membership.

June 6: D-Day

June 14: Flag Day

June 14: U.S. Army Birthday

July

July 4: Independence Day

July 27: Korean Veterans Armistice Day

August

August 4: U.S. Coast Guard Birthday

August 7: Purple Heart Day

August 29: Marine Corps Reserves Birthday

September

September 11: Patriot Day

Activity idea:

- Moment of silence during your branch meeting.

2023 SOCIAL MEDIA & ACTIVITY CALENDAR

September 16: POW/MIA Recognition Day

September 18: U.S. Air Force Birthday

September 25: Gold Star Mother's & Family's Day

October

October 13: U.S. Navy Birthday

November

November 10: U.S. Marine Corps Birthday

November 11: Veterans Day

November 11: Armistice Day

December

December 7: Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

December 13: U.S. National Guard Birthday



RESOURCES

NAACP 75th Anniversary Executive Order 9981 Event Checklist

As NAACP Units and Armed Services Veteran’s Affairs (ASVA) Committee Members prepare for events celebrating the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9981, please keep in mind that all of the elements listed on the checklist below may not be required. The NAACP Unit and ASVA Committee should use this as a guide to help plan for a successful NAACP event. Feel free to adapt it to meet the needs of your Unit and the event.

Remember: the success of your event is the success of the NAACP!

Before the Event:

Task	NAACP Member Responsible	Notes	Due Date	Completed
Book venue				
Secure and provide deposit and insurance				
Outline and confirm event program				
Send letter of invitation with event details and bio request to invitees				
Confirm speaker(s)/panelists				
Ensure NAACP Unit President and/or MC has guest speaker bios				
Prepare timed run-of-show and scripts, if needed				

RESOURCES

Task	NAACP Member Responsible	Notes	Due Date	Completed
Confirm guest(s) itinerary and special needs, i.e. diet, wheelchair, etc.				
Arrange and confirm travel				
Confirm IT/audio visual needs, i.e. computer, screen, sound, etc.				
Confirm clergy, musician, and musical equipment needed				
Prepare content for program book and other collateral. Arrange for design and printing				
Order awards/plaques and determine messaging				
Prepare name plates for speakers (for Town Hall)				
Confirm sponsors' attendees and brand placement				
Dry run to check audio visual presentations				
If a meal is being served, confirm menu and service timeline				
Secure a photographer or videographer, if needed				

RESOURCES

Day of Event:

Task	NAACP Member Responsible	Notes	Due Date	Completed
Placement of event signage and decorations				
Designate reserved tables				
If a meal is being served, confirm service timeline and provide venue with the run-of-show				
Queue presentation and video, if needed				
Sound check				
Check designated seating for attendees, invitees, panelists, and sponsors				
Ensure NAACP leadership and MC are aware of special guests/ dignitaries				
MC are aware of special guests/ dignitaries				
Greet and escort speakers during arrival and departure				
Provide photographer and videographer examples of pictures you want/need				
Secure evaluations/comments from speakers and attendees				
Venue clean-up				

RESOURCES

After the Event:

Task	NAACP Member Responsible	Notes	Due Date	Completed
Send thank you notes to speakers				
NAACP leadership and committee member debrief				

DRAFT FREEDOM FUND DINNER INVITATION

Customize the draft letter below and use NAACP letterhead.

Date

Name

Title

Arm of Military Service Base/Installation Address

Dear **[Insert Title & Last Name]**:

As you are aware, the nation will mark the 75th Anniversary of President Harry S. Truman's Executive Order 9981, that resulted in the integration of the U.S. military, signed July 26, 1948. The signing of this order not only transformed the rank and file of persons who served our country in the military, but it also integrated and transformed our society.

On **[insert date, time and venue location]**, the NAACP **[Insert State/State Area Conference, Branch, Youth Council or College Chapter]**, will host our Annual Freedom Fund Dinner. The focus of this event is the acknowledgement and celebration of this monumental signing, its implementation and integration of the armed services, and its impact on our society.

Members of the NAACP **[Insert State/State Area Conference, Branch, Youth Council or College Chapter]** would be honored if you would join us as a keynote speaker or honoree.

Please confirm your attendance and acceptance (if a speaker or honoree) with: **[Insert Name, NAACP Title, phone number and email address]**. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact, **[Insert Name, NAACP Title, phone and email address]**.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[President's Name

Unit Name

Email address]

DRAFT TOWN HALL SPEAKER INVITATION

Customize the draft letter below and use NAACP letterhead.

Date

Name

Title

Arm of Military Service Base/Installation Address

Dear **[Insert Title & Last Name]**:

As you are aware, the nation will mark the 75th Anniversary of President Harry S. Truman's Executive Order 9981, which resulted in the integration of the U.S. military, signed July 26, 1948. The signing of this order not only transformed the rank and file of persons who served our country in the military, but it also integrated and transformed our society.

On **[insert date, time and venue location]**, the NAACP **[Insert State/State Area Conference, Branch, Youth Council or College Chapter]**, will host a community Town Hall, "The Historic Impact of Executive Order 9981." The Town Hall will be a conversation with military leadership, ancestors of members of the Armed Services, veterans, and active duty personnel. We will acknowledge and celebrate this monumental signing, its implementation and integration of the armed services, and its impact our society.

Members of the NAACP **[Insert State/State Area Conference, Branch, Youth Council or College Chapter]** would be honored if you would join us as a panelist.

Please confirm your attendance and acceptance with: **[Insert Name, NAACP Title, phone number and email address]**. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact, **[Insert Name, NAACP Title, phone and email address]**.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

**[President's Name
Unit Name
Email address]**