

The Honorable Jessica L. Garfola Wright  
Former Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness  
Former Adjutant General of Pennsylvania  
Inducted 2016

The Honorable Jessica L. Garfola Wright served as the senior policy advisor to the Secretary of Defense on recruitment, career development, pay and benefits for 1.4 million active component military personnel, 1.1 million reserve component personnel, 680,000 DoD civilians, and was responsible for overseeing the overall state of military readiness.

Secretary Wright retired as a Major General in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. Her distinguished 35 year military career culminated in her final assignment as The (50<sup>th</sup>) Adjutant General of PA. In this Pennsylvania cabinet-level position, she was responsible for command, control and supervision of all Army and Air National Guard units, including over 19,000 service members, six state-owned veterans homes, and programs for Pennsylvania's one million Veterans. Prior to this assignment, she also served as the Deputy Adjutant General for Army.

Mrs. Wright began her military career in 1975 as an enlistee in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. After graduating from Alderson Broaddus College with a Bachelor's degree in social work, she earned a Master's degree in management from Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri.

Mrs. Wright attended the Women's Army Officer Corps Orientation/Officers Candidate School at Fort McClellan, Alabama. She attended the Officers Rotary Wing Aviator course at Fort Rucker, Alabama, and became the first female Army Aviator in the Army National Guard. Among myriad military courses and certifications, she is a graduate of the CH-47 Aviator Qualification Course (AQC), CH-54 AQC, and the Army War College Military Fellowship at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C.

In 1986, Mrs. Wright was assigned as an Assistant Professor of Military Science at Georgia Southern College. In 1989, she was reassigned to Headquarters, National Guard Bureau, Washington D.C., and served as a personnel staff officer, executive officer and chief of the Budget and Services Branch, chief of the Tours Management office, Army National Guard personnel directorate, and chief of Personnel Service Division, Army National Guard Personnel Directorate.

Then-Colonel Wright commanded the 28<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA from June 1997 to November 1998, when she became the first female maneuver brigade commander in the Army. She subsequently served as the State Army Aviation Officer and then was promoted to Brigadier General to serve in the position of Deputy Adjutant General for Army, Pennsylvania National Guard.

Secretary Wright's awards and decorations include the Distinguished Public Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, and Senior Army Aviator badge. Other awards include Chapel of the Four Chaplains Gold Award, ATHENA Award, the Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters Gold Medal Award, the Philadelphia Union League's Distinguished Soldier Award, and the Founders Day Award from Lebanon Valley College.