



Veteran Poverty Trends

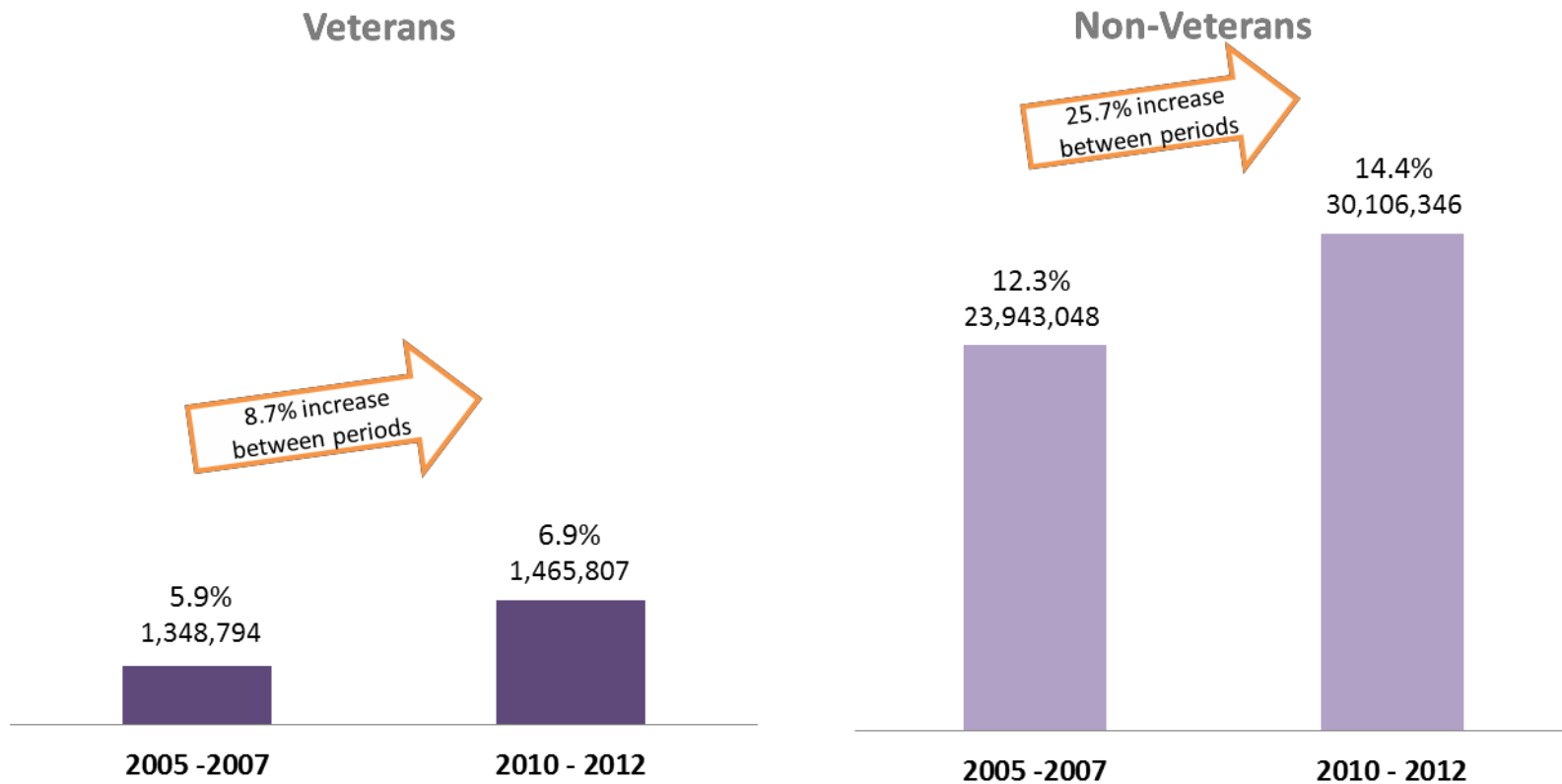
Prepared by the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics

May 2015

Data Sources and Methods

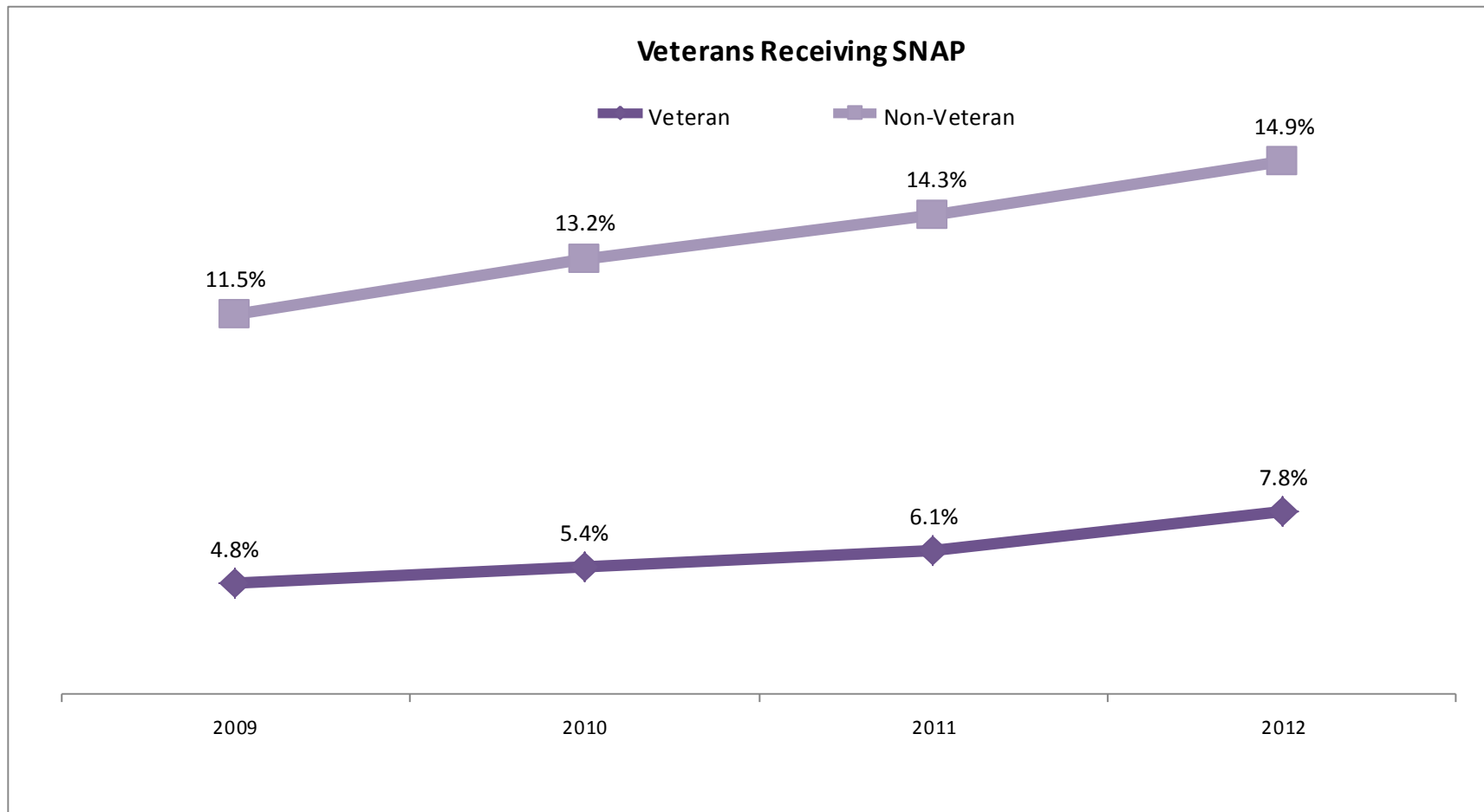
- Data for the demographic and socio-economic analyses came from the 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).
 - The ACS is an ongoing survey that provides annual data on the social and economic characteristics of the U.S. population.
 - The ACS uses a series of monthly samples to produce annually updated data for the same small areas (census tracts and block groups) formerly surveyed via the decennial census long-form sample.
 - ACS data are used to develop statistically valid samples of veterans.
- The universe for this analysis is the civilian population 17 years and older living in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.
- The Census Bureau uses dollar value thresholds varying by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. We use their definition in this report.
- Comparative statements have undergone statistical testing at the 90% confidence level. A “statistically significant difference” means there is statistical evidence that there is a difference in comparative figures; it does not mean the difference is necessarily large, important or significant in the usual sense of the word. The sample size of Veterans in poverty is small and could result in considerable standard errors, making determination of statistically significant differences between single year groups difficult. Use of 3-year data allows greater confidence in comparing rates among groups.
- Additional Census information is at http://www.census.gov/acs/www/data_documentation/documentation_main/#doc2012
- ACS data are collected and prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. For more information on ACS go to <http://factfinder2.census.gov/>

Veterans have a lower poverty rate than non-Veterans and the Veteran poverty rate is rising.



Note: The percentage increase in the arrows shows the percentage increase in raw numbers between the two periods. The percent above the bar shows the percent below poverty. The number in the bar below the percent, shows the number below poverty.

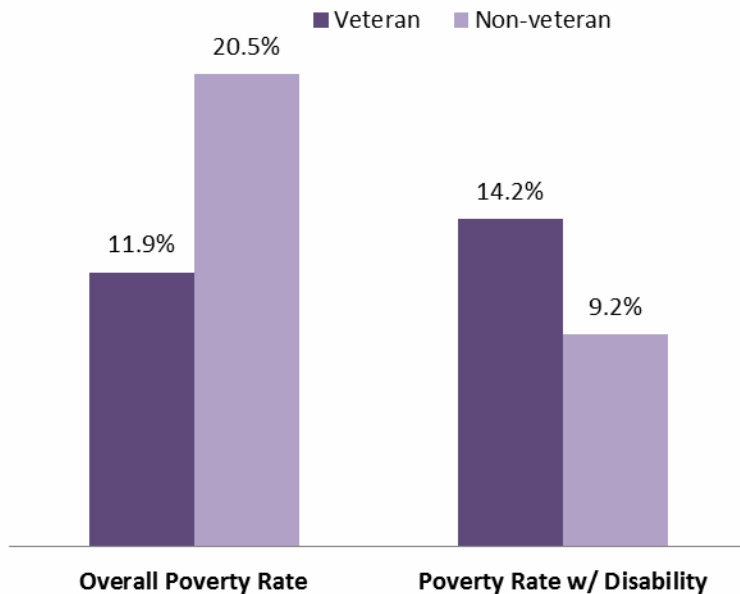
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit participation depends on meeting low income and asset thresholds. These data augment poverty statistics. Veteran participation in SNAP falls below the non-Veteran rate. Veteran rate of participation, in recent years, has been rising faster than the non-Veteran rate.



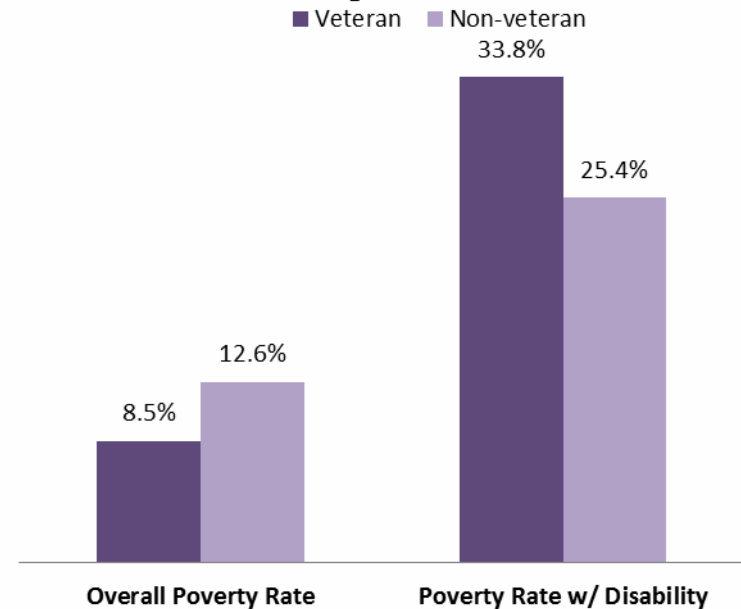
Note: The ACS data does not necessarily indicate that the Veteran is the person receiving SNAP benefits. It means the Veteran lives in a household that receives them.

The poverty rate for Veterans ages 18 – 34 years old is higher than those between the ages of 35 – 54 years old. The poverty rate for disabled Veterans is higher than for disabled non-Veterans for both age groups.

**Veteran and Non-Veteran Poverty
Ages 18 - 34**

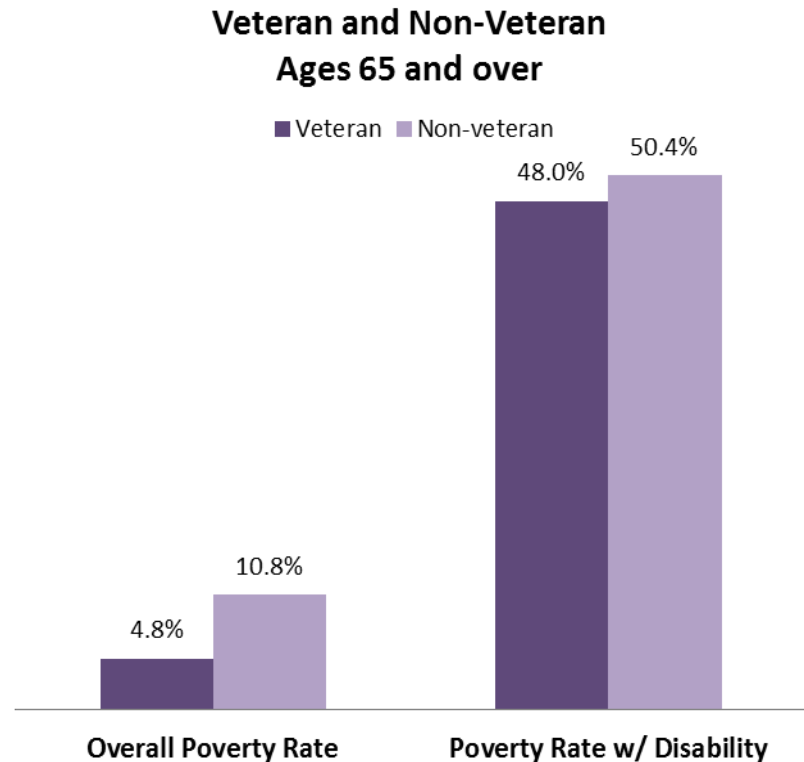
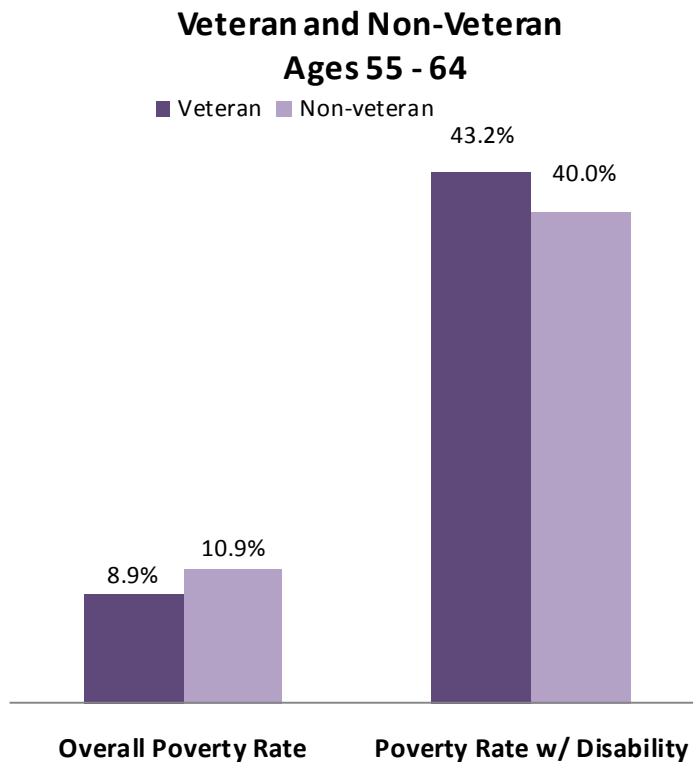


**Veteran and Non-Veteran Poverty
Ages 35 - 54**



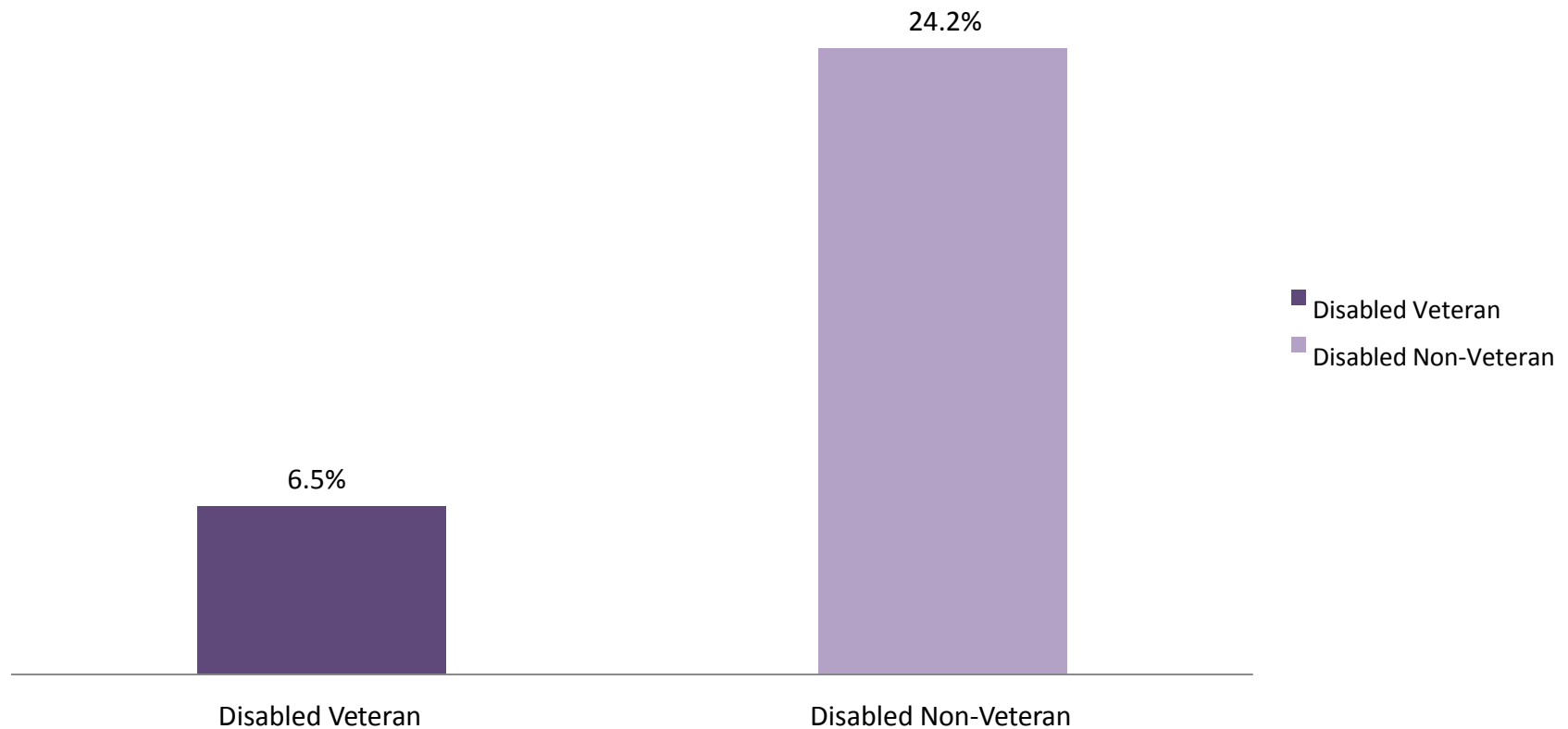
Note: The ACS disability definition includes anyone who identifies as having hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care or independent living difficulty.

The poverty rate for Veterans ages 55 – 64 years old are higher than those of ages 65 and over. The poverty rate for disabled Veterans is higher than disabled non-Veterans for ages 55 – 64, but less than disabled non-Veterans 65 and over.



Veterans receiving a Service-Connected Disability (SCD) benefit have a significantly lower poverty rate when compared with Non-Veteran disabled. This appears to show the importance of SCD benefits in helping Veterans avoid poverty.

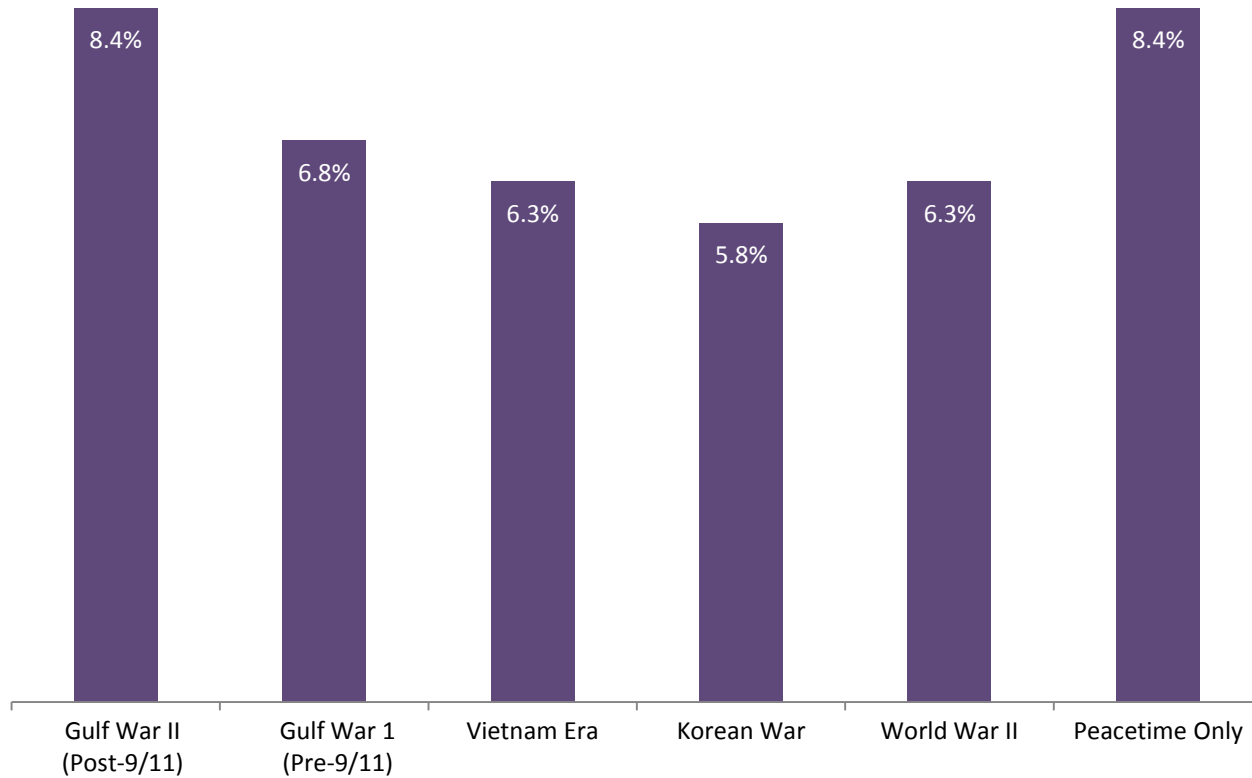
2012 Poverty Rates for Service-Connected Disabled Veterans and Disabled Non-Veterans



Note: A person with a service-connected disability rating has received a Department of Veteran Affairs service-connected disability rating.

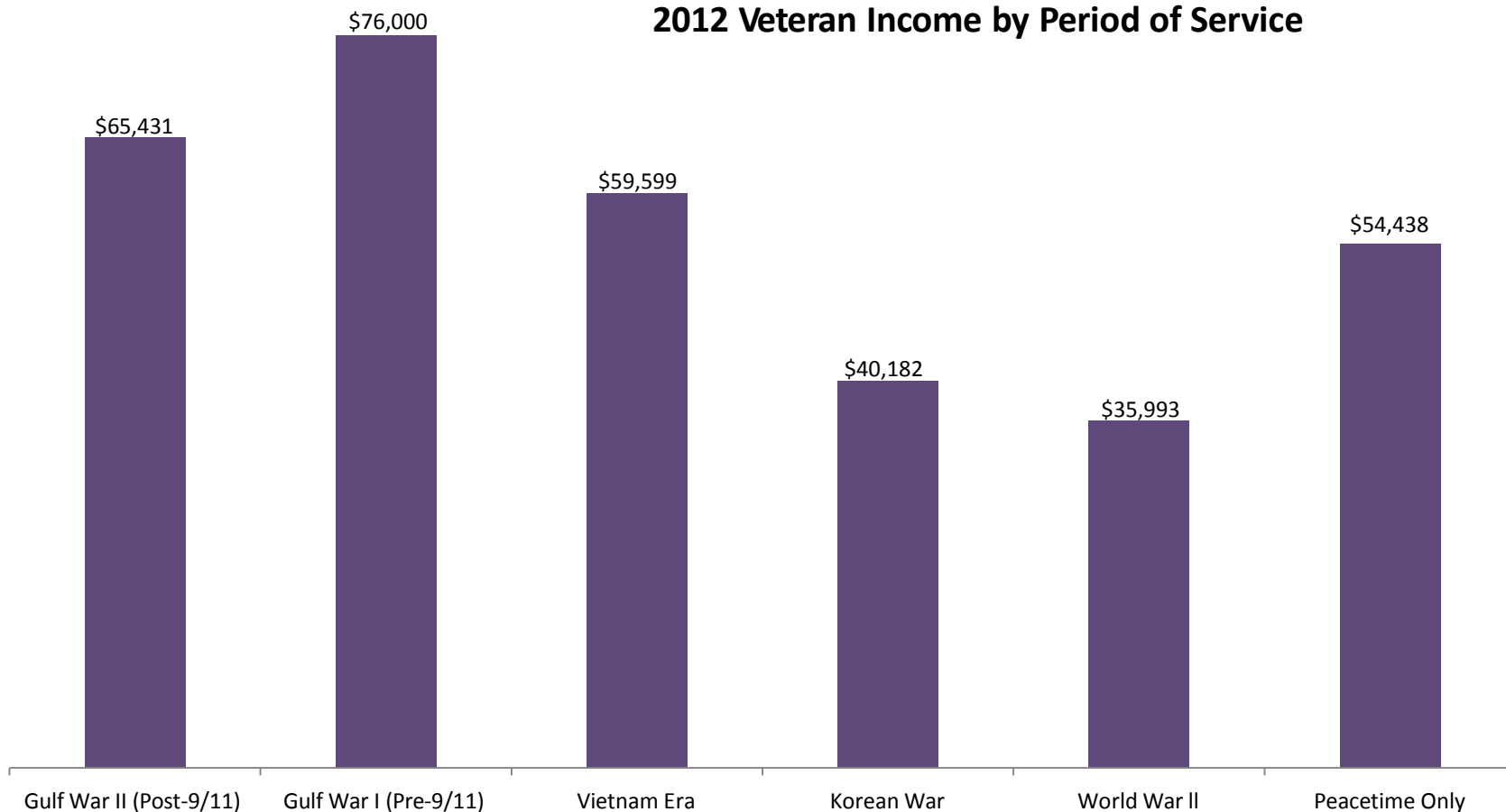
Gulf War Veterans have higher poverty rates in comparison to other periods of service except for peacetime.

Veteran Poverty by Period of Service

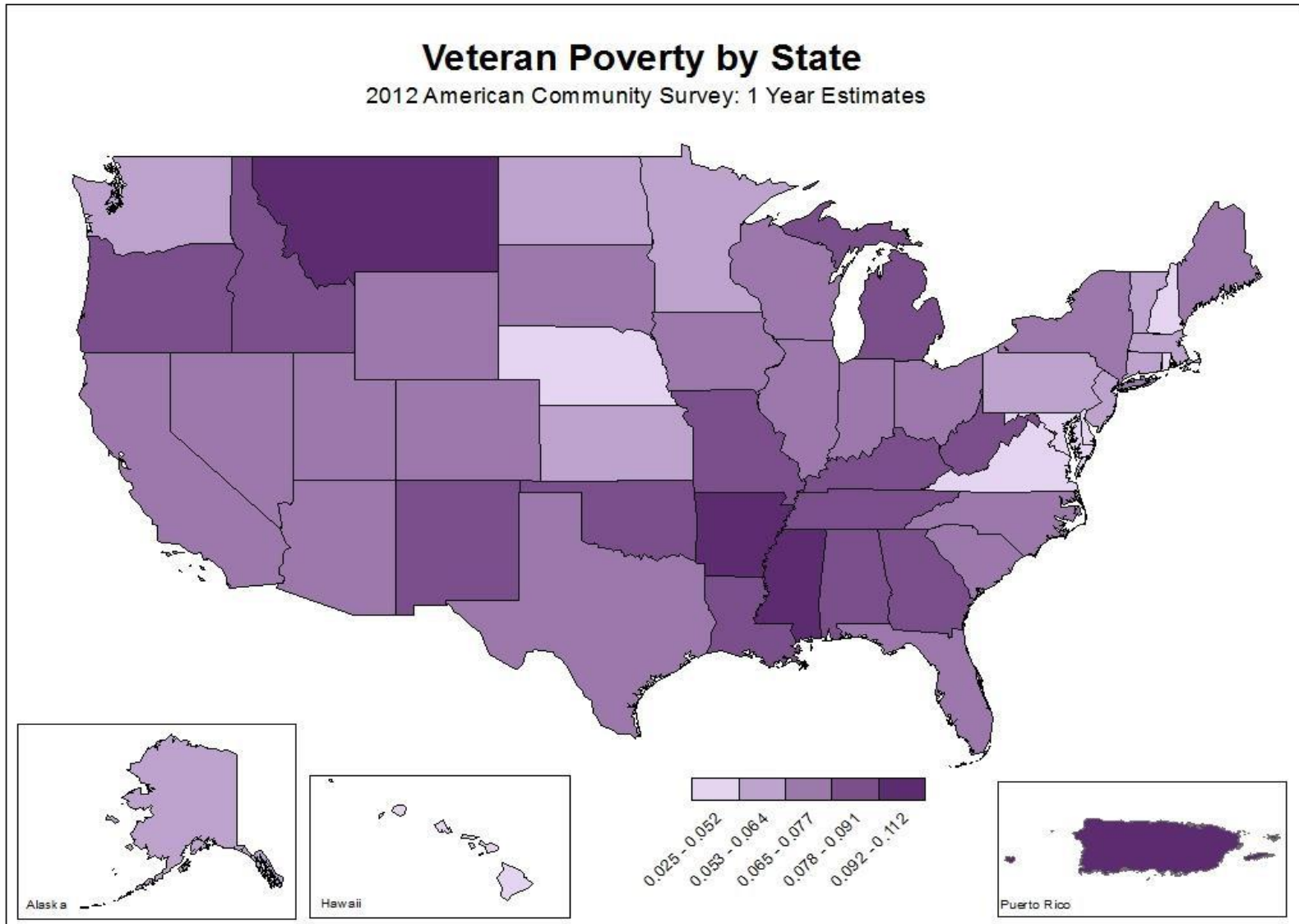


Median incomes are shown to present a more complete economic information for each period of service. Gulf War Veterans have the highest median incomes. Variations are likely due to age and labor force participation.

2012 Veteran Income by Period of Service



Veteran poverty rates are not uniform across the United States but clustered in high poverty rate states in the Northwest and Southeast.



Summary

- Veterans have lower overall rates of poverty than Non-Veterans.
- The Veteran poverty growth rate is less than that of Non-Veterans; however, Veteran poverty is rising.
- The poverty rate for Veterans between the ages of 18 to 34 are higher than all other age groups.
- Disabled Veterans have higher poverty rates than disabled non-Veterans for all age groups except over age 65. Veteran poverty trends need monitoring due to higher poverty rates in disabled Veterans.
- The rate of Veterans living in households in receipt of SNAP benefits is lower than that of Non-Veterans, however, the growth rate of Veterans in SNAP households is increasing sharply.
- Higher rates of poverty in Gulf War Veterans are notable.
- Service-connected disabled Veterans have significantly lower rates of poverty than disabled non-Veterans.
- Veteran poverty is not uniform across America and is clustered in states located in the Southeast and Northwest United States.

Contact Information

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