



Irene Trowell-Harris, R.N., Ed.D.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Washington, D.C.

Irene Trowell-Harris, R.N. Ed.D. was nominated to be Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Center for Women Veterans in June 2001 and approved by the White House on October 2, 2001. In this role, she is the primary advisor to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on programs and issues related to women Veterans.

Prior to her appointment, Dr. Trowell-Harris served as Director of VA's Office of Inspector General's Healthcare Inspections Washington DC Regional Office. In this position, she directed a multidisciplinary staff of inspectors responsible for conducting oversight reviews to improve the economy, effectiveness, and efficiency of VA's programs.

Concurrent with her position in VA's Office of Inspector General, Dr. Trowell-Harris served 38 years in the U.S. Air Force/Air National Guard (ANG), retiring as a Major General in September 2001. During her military career, Dr. Trowell-Harris held numerous positions, including chief nurse executive; flight nurse examiner; commander; advisor for nursing and readiness; assistant to the director, ANG; and military representative to the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) for the ANG. She was a 1997 Air Force representative for the Committee on Women in the NATO Forces Conference held in Istanbul, Turkey.



**Director, Center for
Women Veterans**

Dr. Trowell-Harris is an adjunct graduate faculty member at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and serves as an ex-officio member to the DACOWITS and VA's representative on the White House Council on Women and Girls. She also served as a senior policy specialist for the American Nurses Association.

Born in Aiken, S.C., Dr. Trowell-Harris is a graduate of Columbia Hospital School of Nursing, Jersey City State College, where she earned a bachelor's degree with honors in health education. She earned a master's degree in public health from Yale University and a doctorate in education from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Dr. Trowell-Harris was the first African-American female in the history of the National Guard to be promoted to general officer. She is also the first to have a mentoring award and a Tuskegee Airmen, Inc., Chapter named in her honor. Dr. Trowell-Harris is the recipient of numerous awards, most notably the Air Force Distinguished Service and Legion of Merit awards; the Dr. James D. Weaver Society Award, named for the distinguished Pennsylvania Congressman and Air National Guard Flight Surgeon; the Eagle Award from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University for her contributions to aviation; the Air Force Association's National Aerospace Award for Department of Veterans Affairs Employee of the Year 2010, given for the most outstanding performance of duty as a VA employee and her consistent dedication to the well being of our Veterans, the VA Outstanding and Invaluable Service to the Community Award; and numerous Outstanding Performance awards. She is a Distinguished Alumna of Yale University and Columbia University, and was inducted into the Columbia University Nursing Hall of Fame and the Yale University School of Medicine Honor Roll for her dedication to public service. She was honored as one of the "21 Leaders of the 21st Century" by Women's eNews.