



# MILITARY TRANSITION SUMMIT ITINERARY

# SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023

## 9:30AM - 2:00PM

**WELCOME TO CITI FIELD FOR THE 3RD ANNUAL NEW YORK METS MILITARY TRANSITION SUMMIT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN'S SERVICES! THE DAY WILL INCLUDE:**

### **WELCOME ADDRESS:**

9:30am - Colin Cosell - PIAZZA CLUB

**KICKOFF PANEL:** 9:45am - 10:15am

**MODERATOR** Colin Cosell

- **PANELIST 1:** Department of Veteran Services Commissioner James Hendon
- **PANELIST 2:** Department of Emergency Services Commissioner | Zach Iscol
- **PANELIST 3:** Department of Corrections Commissioner Louis Molina

### **PANEL DISCUSSION**

- Panelists will tell stories of their transition.
- Panelists will speak to merits of building community/ camaraderie through joining Veteran service organizations, Post 9/11 organizations, mentoring groups and more.

### **SUITE PRESENTERS & PANELS:**

10:20am-12:10pm - On 4th Floor Suite Level

### **AUDITORIUM:**

- **EDUCATION PANEL:** Auditorium 10:30-11:30 (150 capacity)
- **JOB PREP & SEARCH PANEL:** Auditorium 11:30-12:30

#### **4TH FLOOR SUITES:**

##### **INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES** (25 capacity)

Suite 214

10:20am-11:10am

11:20am-12:10pm

##### **VETERAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP** (25 capacity)

Suite 220

10:20am-11:10am

11:20am-12:10pm

##### **WOMEN VETERANS & CAREGIVER SUPPORT** (25 capacity)

Suite 219

10:20am-11:10am

11:20am-12:10pm

##### **PEER TO PEER SUPPORT** (25 capacity)

Suite 218

10:20am-11:10am

11:20am-12:10pm

##### **VA RESOURCES** (25 capacity)

Suite 217

10:20am-11:10am

11:20am-12:10pm

##### **VA HEALTH PACT ACT TOXIC EXPOSURE SCREENING & ENROLLMENT**

(25 Capacity)

Suite 216

10:30am-12:00pm

##### **PHOTO HEADSHOTS**

Suite 215

10:30am-12:00pm

#### **IN PIAZZA CLUB:**

CAREER & EDUCATION NETWORKING TABLES

available 12:00pm-2:00pm

##### **LUNCH AVAILABLE**

12:00pm-2:00pm

##### **TOURS OF CITI FIELD**

Every 15 minutes starting at 12:00pm

# BIOGRAPHIES FOR PANELISTS METS TAP



## **Commissioner James Hendon**

James Hendon is the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Veterans' Services. Previously, Commissioner Hendon served as Director of the NYU Veterans Future Lab, a small business incubator for practicing and aspiring entrepreneurs who are US Military Veterans or Veteran Spouses. A Veteran entrepreneur himself, Commissioner Hendon worked in the energy sector founding his own small business, operated as the

COO for BlockPower, and helped successfully develop other small green energy-related business ventures. Prior to that, Commissioner Hendon worked as an Associate in the Real Estate Investment Banking Group at Deutsche Bank.

Before entering the civilian workforce, Commissioner Hendon spent seven years in the US Army as an Active Duty Infantry Officer where he deployed as a Mortar Platoon Leader and Battalion Public Affairs Officer to Iraq (2005), worked as an Admissions Officer for West Point (2006-2007), and served as the Senior Advisor to the Afghan Border Police in Afghanistan (2007-2009). Commissioner Hendon is a 2002 graduate of West Point, a 2012 graduate of Harvard Kennedy School and Columbia Business School, and a 2015 graduate of the Earth Institute's Program in Conservation and Environmental Sustainability.

Commissioner Hendon also served as a Mayoral appointee on the New York City Veterans Advisory Board. He has volunteered as a longtime mentor for the Eagle Academy for Young Men in the Bronx. Commissioner Hendon has participated in various fellowships, including: Council of Urban Professionals (2014), Truman National Security Project (2016), Environmental Leadership Program (2016), and Presidential Leadership Scholars (2022). As a drilling US Army Reservist, Commissioner Hendon, a Lieutenant Colonel, currently serves as the Battalion Commander for 1st Battalion, 411th Regiment, 4th Cavalry Brigade—a logistics support battalion.

## **Dr. Jennifer Friedberg**

Jennifer Friedberg, Ph.D., is the Women Veteran Program Manager at VA New York Harbor Healthcare System, Margaret Cochran Corbin Campus. She has worked at VA New York Harbor since 2006 and has been the Women Veteran Program Manager at the Margaret Cochran Corbin (Manhattan) Campus since 2016. She obtained her doctorate in Clinical Psychology (Health Emphasis) from Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology of Yeshiva

University. She served as the Co-Principal Investigator on a grant from VA Women's Health Services to create a sustainable group education program in preventive health care for women Veterans, and previously had grant funding from VA HSR&D's Career Development Program and the American Heart Association.





### **Commissioner Zach Iscol**

A crisis tested leader, Zachary Iscol has led in settings ranging from combat operations in Iraq to the frontlines of COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricane Sandy here in New York. His experience includes building a pioneering nonprofit mental healthcare provider, leading one of the premiere military journalism outlets, and serving as a strong advocate for immigrants and underserved communities. Two of his former commanding officers cited

him as the officer they would personally select to lead their sons into combat. As a Marine, he served two tours in Iraq and on other assignments throughout Africa and the Middle East. During his second tour of duty, he led a combined unit of US Marines and Iraq soldiers in some of the heaviest fighting of the Iraq War during the Second Battle of Fallujah, where he was awarded a Bronze Star for valor. He later helped build many of the components of the Marine Corps' first special operations command and deployed on one of the first MARSOC teams to deploy overseas.

Over the past decade, Iscol has built and led businesses and a nonprofit mental healthcare provider, the Headstrong Project. The Headstrong Project now cares for over 1,000 veterans a week in 30+ cities and counting to provide world-class, cost, and bureaucracy free mental healthcare veterans and service members need to recover from hidden wounds and get back to the best versions of themselves.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York City, Iscol led over 40 federal, state, and city agencies as the deputy director of Joint New York Medical Station, one of the largest and only successful COVID field hospitals in the country.

A 2001 graduate of Cornell University, he was the youngest recipient of Phillips Exeter Academy's John Phillips Award, a member of the 2013 Team USA for USA Triathlon, and a grand marshal of the 2019 New York City Veterans Day Parade. In 2007, while still on active duty, he testified before the United States Senate about the need to protect Iraqi refugees, especially translators and others who put their lives in danger to help US forces.



### **Principal Noah Angeles**

Dr. Noah Angeles currently serves as the Principal of York Early College Academy, a Title I Early College public school located in South Jamaica Queens. Through collaboration with the City University of New York's York College and the Early College Initiative, Noah has been successful in developing an accelerated academic program that provides students with an opportunity to earn up to 60 college credits by the time they graduate

from high school. York Early College Academy was recognized as a New York State Rewards School for two consecutive years and currently holds a 98% graduation rate.

Noah is also a Military Veteran and successfully served his country during Operation Iraqi Freedom. As a Sergeant assigned to the 595th Transportation Group, Noah participated in one of the largest transportation movements since World War II. He is a recipient of the Army Commendation Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.



### **Tom Murphy**

Director, Human Resiliency Institute at Fordham University For 25 years, Tom developed training programs for airports and airlines throughout the US. After 9/11, he interviewed his aviation colleagues in Boston, New York and Washington to learn how they were charting personal paths to recovery. That “journey” became a book,

“Reclaiming the Sky: 9/11 and the Untold Story of the Men and Women Who Kept America Flying,” that tells a story about the courage of aviation’s front line employees. All profits go to aviation charities.

The book led Tom to join with Fordham to create the Human Resiliency Institute to put the themes of resiliency from the book into action.

The institute’s lead program, Edge4Vets, teaches veterans how to do what business leaders say they need most, and that is, translate their military skills into tools for civilian success. The program began for vets in NYC in 2011 and since then has trained more than 2500 veterans in eleven states. Up to eight out of ten vets who taken the program have gotten jobs.

Tom has served as a university vice-president and worked as a newspaper editor in Queens in addition to being the president of the Service Institute and now Director of the Human Resiliency Institute at Fordham.

He has a degree in English from the University of Wisconsin and a Masters in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia.

Regiment, 4th Cavalry Brigade—a logistics support battalion.



**Ryan Graham** is an Air Force and Iraq War Veteran from Queens, New York. Enlisting after the 9/11 terror attacks, Ryan’s military service spanned six years from the 52nd Fighter Wing in Germany, working within the A4 directorate of the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) headquarters at Hurlburt Field, Florida, the Logistics Support Center under Air Combat Command (ACC) headquarters at Langley AFB, Virginia, as well as

deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to Camp Sather, Baghdad International Airport.

Since coming home, Ryan has been active in the Veteran community and the VFW. Among his various roles, Ryan served as the Queens County Council VFW Commander from 2014 to 2018, representing 2,000 members throughout 20 Posts. Until today, Ryan continues serving through policy initiatives as the Chairman of the Legislative Committee for District 1, as well as the Assistant Chair for Legislative Affairs for the Department of New York VFW. Locally, Ryan is the Commander of the Flanders Field VFW Post 150 in Corona, serves on the Veterans Advisory Council for Queens DA Melinda Katz, and served on Queens Community Board 10.

Professionally, Ryan has more than 20 years of experience in the supply chain management and operations industry including the military, corporate, and aerospace sectors. He holds a BS from St. John’s University, and an MBA from Syracuse University. When he isn’t working, Ryan and his wife travel and he is currently at work on several writing projects, including a novel and memoir on service.



### **Dennis Torres**

is a highly accomplished individual with a distinguished military background and a strong commitment to serving fellow veterans. With eight years of service in the Selective Marine Corps Reserve, including two combat tours in Iraq, Dennis has acquired extensive experience in the communications field.

While serving in the corps, Dennis demonstrated his dedication to personal growth by earning a Bachelor of Arts in Labor Studies from Hofstra University and a Master of Arts degree in Industrial Psychology from Adelphi University. Dennis is currently a Ph.D.-candidate in the CUNY Graduate Center's Social Welfare program.

After completing his military service, Dennis joined New York City's Workforce1 - Veteran Priority1 program as a Veterans Specialist. Over two-and-a-half years, he provided valuable assistance to veterans and their spouses in their employment search, leveraging his expertise and knowledge to make a positive impact.

Driven by a desire to continue supporting veterans, Dennis sought an opportunity to contribute to an organization that shares his mission. CUNY-Queens College has provided him with the ideal platform to give back while utilizing the skills he gained from his master's degree. In his role within the Veterans Support Office, Dennis brings ambition, energy, and a deep commitment to helping veterans, military personnel, and dependents achieve their academic and civilian career goals. Under his guidance, the office has experienced significant growth and success.

Outside of his professional pursuits, Dennis takes pride in being a devoted father and uncle to nine nieces and nephews. In his free time, he enjoys playing indoor soccer and cycling, embracing an active and fulfilling lifestyle. Dennis Torres embodies the values of dedication, service, and compassion, making him an invaluable asset to the Queens College community.



### **Jack Fanous**

is the co-founder and CEO of JobPaths, the technology company that created the powerful VetConnectPRO platform that the NYC Department of Veteran Services provides to veterans residing in New York City. The company's robust tools include resume building, job searching, civil service exam information for citywide positions, career training, skills translation, and personalized dashboards connecting veterans to

opportunities and resources in their area that fit their skills and needs. In addition to his work at JobPaths, Jack is the co-founder and CEO of GI Go Fund, a nonprofit that provides military veterans nationwide with job training and employment opportunities, as well as access to healthcare, benefits assistance, and connections to housing. Jack has also testified before the United States Senate Veterans Affairs Committee regarding veteran issues in 2008 and serves as the co-chair of the VA's Community Veterans Engagement Board (CVEB) Newark, NJ chapter. His dedicated work has led to multiple awards, including the top prize from the Newman's Own Awards, the Russ Berrie Award for Making a Difference, and the Employment and Training Award by the American Legion.



### **Ebonnie Goodfield**

grew up in New York and was awarded the VFW Spokesperson for Freedom award before graduating High School. She then enlisted into the United States Navy and served on two Western Pacific deployments earning her the Global War on Terror Expeditionary Medal. Following her enlistment, she was recruited to work as a deployment resource coordinator for the New York

Air National Guard where she was recognized as the Service to the Armed Forces Hero by the American Red Cross in 2018. Ebonnie was admitted to Columbia University in Fall 2019, and was soon appointed to serve on the Military Veterans of Columbia University 501c(3) executive board and recently completed her second elected term as the first female Vice President. At Columbia, she is a published author and two time recipient of the Change Agent Award from Columbia School of General Studies, co-creator and fellow of the Intrapreneurial Leaders Fellowship Program between the School of General Studies and Barnard College, coordinator of Dean's Women Veteran Roundtables and was recently named a Columbia Alumni Association Scholar for Columbia School of General Studies. Outside of her student role, Ebonnie is a mother and commutes to school from her residence in Suffolk County, New York, which is home to the largest population of veterans in New York State. Her dedication to country and school is emulated in her commitment to her community as an active member of VFW Post 5350, her son's Boy Scout pack and PTA where she spearheads or assists care package projects, holiday toy drives and referrals for military and families. Her service has been highlighted by USAWarriorStories, WarriorsRock concert and WLIW Heart of the East End radio. The City University of New York tapped Jessica Funes, an experienced advocate and alumna, to serve as the first-ever coordinator for inclusion for the CUNY Office of Veterans Affairs (COVA), continuing an effort launched in recent years to expand and enhance support services for a highly diverse group of student-veterans and military-connected students. Funes is a three-time CUNY graduate and Army veteran who sustained a traumatic brain injury while serving in Iraq and lives with multiple disabilities. COVA supports CUNY's 2,400 veterans and military-connected students including those on active duty, reservists and their spouses and dependents.



### **Colin Cosell**

Mets Public Address Announcer Colin Cosell has worked in radio, television, film, and stage over nearly 25 years, spending the latter half in sports broadcasting.

A 3-time Emmy Award winner, Colin has done everything from anchoring to sideline reporting, writing to production.

Colin also works as the PA Announcer for the New York Riptide and a host of NCAA D1 colleges, as well as the occasional game for the Brooklyn Cyclones. A born-and-raised Stamford, CT native, Colin and his wife, Julia, and newborn daughter, Eloise, currently reside in Westchester, NY with their dog, Bagel.



**Louise Jerline Nixon** is the daughter of the late Gilbert and Eleanor Nixon. She grew up in Deer Park, New York, and received her formal education through the Deer Park School system, graduating from Deer Park High School. Ms. Nixon is a graduate of Pilgrim Psychiatric Center School of Nursing, Brentwood, NY. She also received her AAS degree from Suffolk County Community College, Selden, NY. She then later obtained a Bachelors Degree in

Nursing from The College of Mount St. Vincent, Riverdale, NY and a Master's Degree in Health Service's Administration from Central Michigan University, distant learning center located at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, NY.

Petite in stature and feisty in spirit, Major Nixon found her "activist voice" while in high school. She organized student awareness for the need of a Black Studies program. The students finally achieved this goal in their senior year of high school. That same year, she was crowned Queen of the Deer Park/Wyandanch Branch of the NAACP Autumn Leaves Cotillion. It was the first year that all of the debutants wore Afrocentric attire. During her nursing studies, then Governor, Hugh Carey determined as a cost-saving measure, to close all New York State funded nursing programs. Again, Major Nixon raised her voice and rallied with many nursing students across New York State. They traveled to Albany and made a successful plea to state officials the importance of continuing state-funded nursing education programs. The program remained in place for the next five years.

As a new registered nurse, Major Nixon's first job was at U.S. Public Health Hospital, Staten Island, New York. Five years later the hospital was sold and renamed Bayley Seton Hospital. While employed there for 24 years, she held various nursing and administrative positions and continued to do so after merging with what was formerly known as St. Vincent's Medical Center, Staten Island, NY. Always striving for nursing excellence, Major Nixon became active in the inception of the Richmond County Nurses Association as Bayley Seton Hospital's first chapter president.



### **Tiana Sloan**

is an experienced professional serving as the Director for the Office of Veteran and Military Services at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. With a career spanning 25 years in the nonprofit sector, Tiana has devoted the last 11 years to higher education, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to empowering student veterans and facilitating their successful transition from military service

to academic and post-collegiate life. In her current role, Tiana is spearheading the College of Mount Saint Vincent's efforts to provide comprehensive support programs tailored specifically for student veterans, leveraging her extensive experience to ensure their seamless integration into the academic environment. She serves as Chair of the James J. Peters Student Veterans Coalition, which works to reduce the incidence of suicide by connecting and supporting student veterans to a supportive network conducive to their holistic development and care. Notably, Tiana's passion for her work is deeply rooted in personal experience, as she is the proud wife of a U.S. Army Veteran.



**Louis A. Molina** assumed the role of Commissioner of the New York City Department of Correction on January 1, 2022. He is a veteran public safety leader with experience in military, law enforcement and corrections.

Commissioner Molina most recently served as Chief for the City of Las Vegas' Department of Public Safety, where he oversaw the city's jail, deputy city marshals and other public safety officials. In 2018, Commissioner

Molina served as the first deputy commissioner for the Westchester County Department of Correction. From 2016-2017, he served as Chief Internal Monitor and Acting Assistant Commissioner of the Nunez Compliance unit at NYC DOC. He started his career in law enforcement as a police officer in the NYPD and rose to the rank of Detective.

Commissioner Molina has experience modernizing correctional systems through robust programming, building staff capacity and making strategic investments that improved conditions for staff and people in custody. He has also built strong partnerships with faith-based and community leaders, and nonprofit organizations working with justice-involved people.

Commissioner Molina is a native New Yorker from the Bronx and a decorated veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from Chaminade University, a Master of Public Administration from Marist College School of Management, a Master of Arts degree in Human Rights Studies from Columbia University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and studied abroad at the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom. He was a U.S. Department of Justice/Office of Justice Programs National Institute of Justice Scholar and most recently received a scholarship from the Harvard Business School Fund for Leadership & Innovation. Commissioner Molina also has completed the Harvard Business School General Management Program.



### **Aman Mckeon**

Aman Mckeon is the Owner-operator of Chick-fil-A Jackson Heights / 82nd Street. He was born in Tigray, Ethiopia (Africa) and immigrated to the United States in 1986 at the age of eight with his family. He grew up in Connecticut with both parents, an aunt, and four siblings. Prior to becoming a Chick-fil-A operator, Aman worked in a number of industries including finance and

real estate, as well as owning a number of his own businesses. In finance he's worked at a few of the leading investment banks including UBS, Goldman Sachs, and JP Morgan, which is where he also made the transition from finance to commercial real estate lending. He then joined Greystone, a Real Estate Finance and Investment Company. While working at these firms, he also pursued several entrepreneurship ventures including a barbershop and a tattoo shop. Aman's passion for business and entrepreneurship largely came from watching and working with his parents as he was growing up. His parents went from working in a factory (father) and as a prep cook (Mother) to eventually running their own businesses. They ran a convenience store for twelve years, to a deli for 10 years, to a full-service restaurant for the past 5 years. From an early age those experiences of working with his family instilled in him the meaning and value of hard work, and to seek out opportunities to grow financially but also serve the community.



**Kathy Roth-Douquet** is a non-profit executive, author, commentator, strategist, and attorney. As Co-Founder and CEO of Blue Star Families, she is a national spokesperson for military-connected families. Kathy is a commentator on patriotism, civil-military affairs, the value of service, and the experience of military families. She has appeared on the Today Show, Fox and Friends, NPR, CNN, and other media outlets. Her work has appeared in magazines and newspapers across the country. She is a frequent speaker at universities, policy forums, military audiences, and civic groups. She is the co-

author of two books, including *AWOL: The Unexcused Absence of America's Upper Classes from Military Service and How It Hurts Our Country*, (HarperCollins, 2006), with Frank Schaeffer.

Kathy has served in the White House and in the Department of Defense. In the latter role, as Principal Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Acting), she received the Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service for her work on defense reform. She is also a recipient of President George H. W. Bush's Daily Point of Light Award, and received the Chief of Staff of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Award. She has served on a number of boards including Princeton University's Board of Trustees, and was named the first nominee into the Ford Hall of Heroes at the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

She currently holds appointments to three government boards or commissions - the Reserve Forces Policy Board at the Department of Defense reporting to the Secretary of Defense, the Commission to select the Under Secretary of Benefits for the Department of Veterans Affairs, reporting to the Secretary of the VA, and an advisory board to the Export-Import Bank of America, reporting to the Chair.

Kathy is also a military spouse of 24 years, four deployments, and 9 moves. She lives with her husband and two children in Northern Virginia.



#### **James Fanous**

is COO and co-founder of JobPaths, working alongside NYC Department of Veteran Services members to provide the powerful VetConnectPRO to veterans and agencies throughout the city. James is also COO and co-founder of GI Go Fund, helping the organization grow to prominence nationwide as a leader in providing the best services to veterans and their loved ones. His work with the organization has led to GI Go Fund receiving the Top-Rated Award from

GreatNonprofits three years in a row. James holds a Juris Doctorate from Villanova University School of Law, as well as a Bachelor's Degree from Rutgers University, and has provided expert knowledge regarding legal and veteran issues since 2006.



#### **Mr. Edgard Hernandez**

for over 18 years, has been performing activities related to diversity in the public and government sectors by providing support, guidance, capacity training, and mentoring to government agencies, prime contractors, and socially economically disadvantaged individuals (businesses). He is currently the Director of the Veteran Business Leadership Association, funded by the New York City Department of Veteran Services, and Executive Director of Atlas Co. His passion and commitment to the community have translated to

over \$800 in government contracts awarded to mostly MWBEs and Veterans in the Tri-State area. Mr. Hernandez has developed a network of government agencies, prime contractors, small businesses, and resources to serve our Veteran Business Community better.

## **ORGANIZATIONS TABLING:**

Americas VetDogs  
AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP  
Assurance Wireless, T-Mobile  
Borough of Manhattan Community College  
Bridging the Gap for Veterans (501c3)  
Bronx VA Medical Center  
Center for Global Affairs, NYU School of  
Professional Studies  
City University of New York-Welcome Center  
CON EDISON  
CUNY Central  
Department of Citywide Administrative Services  
Department of Veterans Affairs - New York Harbor  
Health Care System and Vet Centers  
DVS  
Ernst & Young (EY)  
FDM Group  
FDNY  
Fiserv  
Forge Health  
GI Go Fund  
God's Love We Deliver  
John Jay College, Military and Veteran Services  
Military OneSource  
National Cemetery Administration - Long Island  
National Cemetery  
New York Presbyterian Military Family Wellness Center  
NYC Emergency Management  
QUEENS VET CENTER  
Schroders  
SkillStorm  
Steven A. Cohen Military Family Center at NYU Langone  
Health  
Stress Is Gone  
T-Mobile  
Vaughn College  
Workforce1