



Moderator

Barbara Faulkenberry, Major General, USAF Retired (WFC Member)

Barbara is a senior executive with significant and diverse accomplishments across sectors ranging from aerospace/defense to transportation/logistics to executive/leadership development. Beginning her military career at the USAF Academy, Barbara qualified as a KC-135 navigator. Throughout her 32-year career, Barbara's diverse responsibilities spanned leading the Air Force's leadership development course, providing airlift support across the Pacific, handling logistics for US military operations across Africa, and responsibility for airlift/air refueling/aeromedical evacuations throughout Afghanistan and Iraq. Her final assignment was leading a 37,000-person global air logistics operation. Barbara currently serves as an independent director for two public companies and five non-profit organizations including the global International Women's Forum's Leadership Foundation.

Panelists

Lt. Gen Susan Helms (Ret.), 5-time astronaut (WFC Member)

Lt Gen (R) Helms was commissioned from the US Air Force Academy in 1980, the first class to admit women into the ranks of the cadet corps. Upon graduation, she served as an F-15 and F-16 weapons separation engineer and a flight test engineer. Following completion of her Masters of Aeronautics and Astronautics at Stanford University, she served on the Faculty of the US Air Force Academy in the Department of Aeronautics. She was subsequently selected to attend the USAF Test Pilot School, Flight Test Engineer Course, Edwards AFB, CA, completing the year long school as a Distinguished Graduate. As a flight test engineer, Lt Gen (R) Helms has flown in 30 types of U.S. and Canadian military aircraft.



Selected by NASA in January 1990, Lt Gen (R) Helms became an astronaut in July 1991. On Jan. 13, 1993, then an Air Force major and a member of the space shuttle Endeavour crew, she became the first U.S. military woman in space. She flew on STS-54 (1993), STS-64 (1994), STS-78 (1996) and STS-101 (2000), and served aboard the International Space Station (ISS) as a member of the Expedition-2 crew (2001). A veteran of five space flights, Lt Gen (R) Helms has logged 211 days in space, and accomplished a spacewalk of eight hours, 56 minutes, a world record that stands today.

Over the next 12 years, she served in numerous staff positions and commanded the 45th Space Wing at Cape Canaveral AFS, FL. Lt Gen Helms retired from military service in 2014 and has since spent her time on Board work, consulting and speeches. She has established her own consulting company, Orbital Visions, LLC, in Colorado Springs, CO.

Kathryn (Kate) Smith

Kate served as an acquisition officer in the United States Air Force after graduating from the Air Force Academy in 1982. She's a proven leader and problem solver and has worked primarily in aerospace and telecommunication industries. Currently, Kate is facilitating small group sessions to 'bridge the gap' between Cops and Kids in forums across Denver, and advising a cadet squadron on ethics and honor. She is a member of the Truman National Security Project, the Director of Advocacy of ZASA (Zoomies Against Sexual Assault) and an Emerge Colorado alum. She is a Notre Dame Lawyer.

MSgt. Heather Ruhlman

MSgt Ruhlman entered the Air Force in July 2004 as a Security Forces Member where she deployed three times in support of Operation Iraqi



Freedom. In 2010, she retrained into the Paralegal career field where she deployed to Qatar in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant Ruhlman now works as the Superintendent of the Peterson Air Force Base Legal office. Married to Army Sergeant First Class Andrew Ruhlman, they have two daughters, Lyla (9) and Leah (2).

Representative Elissa Slotkin is honored to serve the residents of Michigan's 8th Congressional District, a district that includes Ingham, Livingston, and North Oakland Counties.

Rep. Slotkin has spent her career in national service. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which took place during her first week of graduate school in New York City, Rep. Slotkin knew that national service would define her career. She was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to be a Middle East analyst and went on to devote her career to protecting the United States from national security threats. In her role at the CIA, Rep. Slotkin worked alongside the U.S. military during three tours in Iraq as a militia expert. In between her tours in Iraq, Rep. Slotkin held various defense and intelligence positions under President Bush and President Obama, including roles at the White House and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. In 2011, Rep. Slotkin took a senior position at the Pentagon and, until January 2017, she served as Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. In this role, Rep. Slotkin oversaw policy on Russia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa at the Pentagon and participated in negotiations on some of the country's most pressing national security issues.

Rep. Elissa Slotkin

It is this same mission-focus that Rep. Slotkin brings to issues affecting citizens of Michigan's 8th congressional district. For Rep. Slotkin, this means ensuring that everyone has access to healthcare they can afford, lowering the price of prescription drugs, protecting access to clean water



and Michigan's Great Lakes, and returning decency and integrity to politics. Rep. Slotkin's background in national security contributes to the urgency and passion she brings to increasing government integrity and accountability and passing campaign finance reform. To learn more about Rep. Slotkin's legislative priorities, [click here](#).

A third-generation Michigander, Rep. Slotkin spent her early life on her family farm in Holly, Michigan. The generations of Slotkins before her worked in the family business, Hygrade Foods, which was headquartered in Detroit and produced iconic foods loved by Michiganders, like the Ballpark Frank first sold at Detroit's Tiger Stadium. The values that made the family business successful instilled in Rep. Slotkin an enduring commitment to integrity, decency, and hard work that guided her to a career of service. The Slotkin family business is well represented in Rep. Slotkin's office, with hot dog figurines and artwork proudly displayed. Rep. Slotkin attended Cornell University (BA) and Columbia University in the City of New York (MA).

Rep. Slotkin's home is her family farm in Holly. Rep. Slotkin's husband, Dave, is a retired Army colonel who served for 30 years as an Apache helicopter pilot. Her two stepdaughters have pursued their own lives of service, one as a physician and the other as a new Army officer.