

behind every NUMBER

"The Veterans represented by these numbers share two remarkable similarities: they offered their lives to protect America, and they survived."

Numbers tell stories. Those stories are particularly meaningful with the understanding that each represents a very real, incredibly unique human being.

The Veterans represented by the numbers in this study share two remarkable similarities: (1) Each offered his or her life for America following the attacks of September 11, 2001, and (2) each found a way to survive.

For our post-9/11 Veterans who became homeless, the decisions and actions that helped them survive frequently came with painful consequences.

Many lost their connections with **all** of their family and friends -- isolating, fleeing, sometimes purposefully throwing away every relationship, every potential witness to confusion and despair, until they became utterly alone -- toiling at the edges of life without the sense of belonging that had been a hallmark of their service experience.

Many self-medicated with whatever substances they could obtain.

Many struggled to find or keep jobs.

Many racked up debts they couldn't pay, borrowed money they couldn't return, and found their credit ruined. Many fell victim to predatory lending and scams of all shapes and sizes targeting the people who could least afford to be victimized.

Many came in contact with law enforcement, including charges, arrests, and jail.

Many seriously considered or actively tried to die by suicide.

The very survival of these resilient men and women is a testament to their lives.

How we honor our sacred trust to those who have borne the battle and their loved ones will be a lasting testament to our own.

Respectfully.





_INTRODUCTION

Purpose Built Families Foundation is a nationally accredited nonprofit delivering preventative and reparative services to overcome foundational barriers to the quest for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Reparative services are delivered through (1) the agency's Operation Sacred Trust ("OST") collaboration disrupting and ending homelessness for thousands of Veterans and (2) Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills ("PAIRS") classes offered nationwide under the "PAIRS Essentials" and "Warrior to Soul Mate" brands helping couples overcome marital instability.

Operation Sacred Trust

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

Operation Sacred Trust ("OST") was established in 2011 to end Veteran homelessness in South Florida. The OST collaboration began when South Florida was a primary hub of Veteran homelessness in the United States. Since 2011, OST has prevented and ended homelessness for thousands of very low-income Veterans in Broward and Miami-Dade counties.



Public-Private Partnership. HUD Secretary Dr. Ben Carson, center, joins local, state and federal leadership in Miami, Florida to announce that Miami-Dade County had achieved HUD benchmarks to declare an end to chronic Veteran homelessness, August 2018.

In 2018, Miami-Dade County became among the largest urban communities in the nation to achieve HUD benchmarks to declare an end to chronic Veteran homelessness.

Operation Sacred Trust is unique in that it combines proven traditional outreach and case management best practices with novel nontraditional service delivery methods. From inception, funding has been awarded by the Veterans Administration Supportive Services for Veteran Families program.



O KEY DATES -

1977

Northern Virginia Marriage and Family Therapist Lori Heyman Gordon creates semester-long, 120-hour PAIRS ("Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills") class as comprehensive educational approach to preventing divorce through skills training.

1983

Virginia Satir launches PAIRS training for mental health professionals.

1996

Family Therapy publishes longitudinal study indicating "Intimacy is a skill that can be learned."

1999

Brief PAIRS courses offered that can be facilitated by educators, clergy, and paraprofessionals in one-day, weekend, and multi-week formats, significantly reducing costs and expanding accessibility.

2003

Building Intimate Relationships: Bridging Treatment, Education and Enrichment through the PAIRS Program published by Routledge.

2006

Department of Health and Human Services provides \$5 million grant through Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood initiative for five year pilot to deliver and evaluate PAIRS impact among low-income couples and teens.

2008

Research validates efficacy of PAIRS brief programs, suggesting majority of marital breakdown is preventable through skills training, highlighting impact on symptoms of anxiety and distress, and correlating relationship pleasure with scientific measures of dyadic adjustment.

2009

Department of Veterans Affairs chaplains and social workers at **Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center** in Augusta, Georgia launch privately sponsored PAIRS weekend retreats for couples impacted by OEF/OIF.

2010

NA recognizes PAIRS as Best Practice in Marriage Enrichment.

2011

Operation Sacred Trust launched as collaborative public-private partnership to end Veteran homelessness in South Florida.

2012

PAIRS partnership with San Diego VA Health Care Recognized with Spirit of Planetree Award. "PAIRS" branded as "Warrior to Soul Mate" for expansion throughout VA system with support from Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation.

2019

VÁ White Paper encourages national integration, highlighting impact on suicide prevention, family resiliency, and whole health.

>>> People overcoming foundational barriers to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Relationships: the Lifeblood of Living

Clyde Angel, DMin., BCC, LPC, VHA-CM

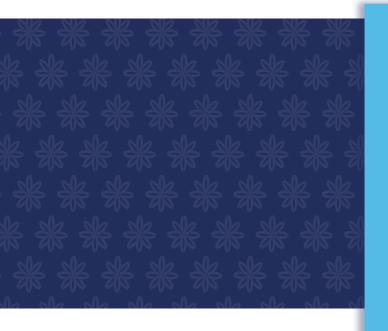
Executive Vice President
Purpose Built Families Foundation

In 14 years of serving post-9/11 Veterans as a VA Chaplain, I frequently saw the consequences of heroic servicemen and women who were unable to reconnect with self and others through their transition from active duty to civilian life.

Working extensively with Veterans and their significant others through the Warrior to Soul Mate program, I saw firsthand that helping them understand the vital role of bonding and learn skills to create and strengthen that bond measurably contributed to their recovery.

Emotional openness and physical closeness, including skills that promoted vulnerability, confiding, listening with empathy, proactive problem solving, and understanding feelings provided a path to healing. Veterans were able to learn usable tools to express emotions and feelings that were difficult due to the symptoms of emotional numbing.

The ability to strengthen significant relationships provides an important supportive component to deter suicide.





STUDY AUTHOR

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"What it means to be a military veteran in the United States is being shaped by a new generation of service members. About one-in-five veterans today served on active duty after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Their collective experiences – from deployment to combat to the transition back to civilian life – are markedly different from those who served in previous eras."

PEW Research Center, "The American Veteran Experience and the Post-9/11 Generation," September 10, 2019.





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"For many veterans, combat experiences strengthened them personally but also made the transition to civilian life difficult."

PEW Research

THE ISSUE

In September 2019, PEW Research Center released "The American Veteran Experience and the Post-9/11 Generation". The report details how post-9/11 Veterans - defined as Veterans who enlisted and served on or after September 11, 2001 - were affected by their experience in the military, compared to their pre-9/11 predecessors. Overall, PEW reported they were more likely to experience financial, mental, and physical hardships upon re-entering civilian life. Compared to their peers from earlier service eras, a higher proportion of post-9/11 Veterans experienced deployment - including multiple deployments - and combat experience.



Purpose Built Families Foundation ("PBFF") is a nationally accredited nonprofit based in Pembroke Pines, Florida. The foundation provides a range of direct services to very low income Veterans in South Florida through its Operation Sacred Trust ("OST") Supportive Services for Veteran Families ("SSVF") program. PBFF also oversees Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills ("PAIRS") programs globally. PAIRS is a curriculumbased, educational approach for promoting better relationships and works with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to disseminate this curriculum to Veterans nationwide as the Warrior to Soul Mate Program ("W2SM").

Following PEW's report, PBFF looked to more fully identify and understand differences between pre- and post-9/11 homeless Veterans served by the agency's SSVF program between FY 2012 and FY 2019. The aim was to examine key characteristics that could improve understanding of how and why Veterans of any era experience homelessness and how this could inform the efforts of those who work with Veterans of any background. This summary reviews the methods and findings of the ensuing study.



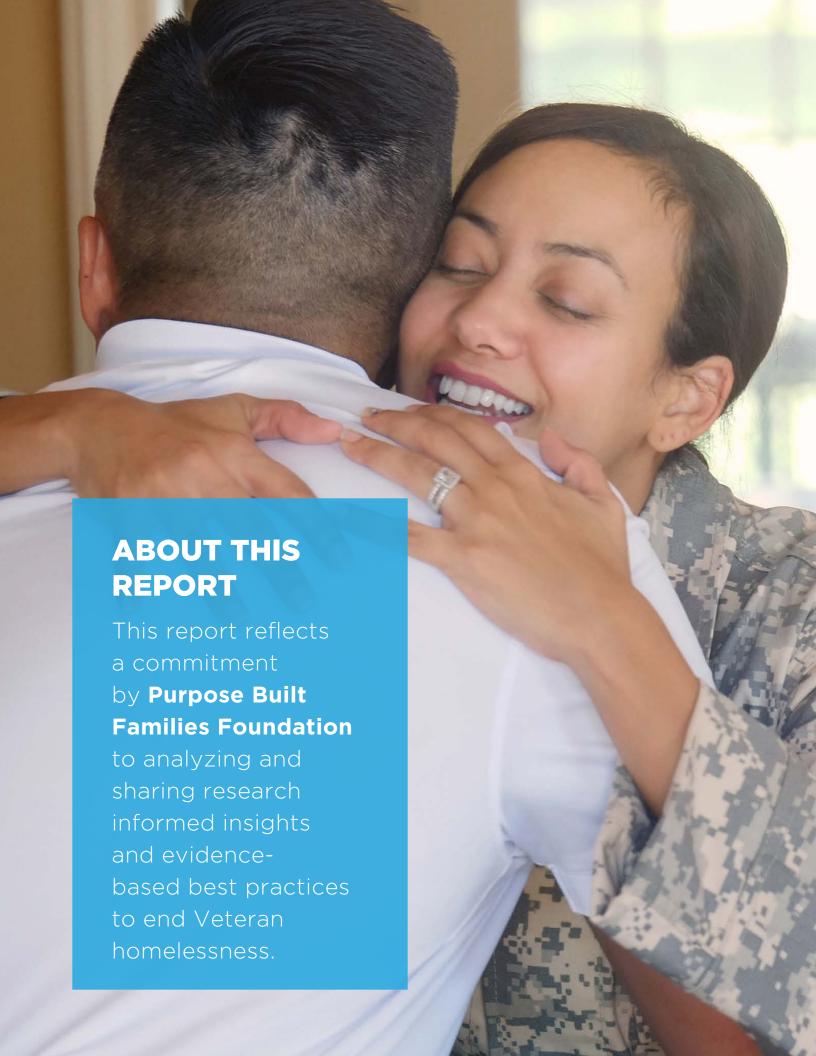
OUR VISION

A safer, saner, more loving world.



OUR MISSION

Help people overcome foundational barriers to the quest for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.



METHODS

September 11, 2001 changed everything for the United States, not least of all for our soldiers.



The full data set consisted of 3,018 individuals. Each is or was a homeless Veteran living in Broward or Miami-Dade counties who qualified for OST's services based on eligibility criteria established by federal funding and legislation. We looked at key demographics (gender, age, race) and other important characteristics (military branch served, combat veteran status, chronic homelessness, use of VA services upon program intake) and how these were distributed throughout the data set. We compared population proportions using Chi-squared goodness of fit tests, along with appropriate other statistical tests as required, to determine how the population's characteristics differed from the following sets: the overall Veteran population, the overall homeless population, and the overall homeless Veteran population. For each, we also looked at available national, state, and local data.

Data from the VA's Bureau of Veteran Statistics and Analysis, the Census Bureau's American Community Surveys, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Exchange, and various non-profits working with the homeless and/or Veterans was used in creating comparisons. For consistency with the OST data, we averaged out numbers of the general populations between 2013-2019; however, not all of the years were always available for all factors or at all levels. The intent was to create a snapshot of what the population looked like for that period to be used for comparison with the OST population.



The fact that this was not a randomized sample provided the advantage of gaining insight into the effectiveness, reach, and impact of OST's very deliberate method of engagement of outreach: recruiting people directly from the streets.

Any personal identifying information was removed in the use of this data set to maintain confidentiality of OST participants.



DEFINITIONS

Title 38 of the Code of Federal Regulations states that a Veteran is a person who has served on active duty in any branch of the military and was discharged under any condition except "dishonorable".

For the purposes of this study, a pre-9/11 Veteran is an individual who enlisted in the military prior to September 11, 2001, and,

upon exiting the military, met all the federally established criteria for Veteran status. Conversely, a post-9/11 Veteran is a Veteran who enlisted and served on or after September 11, 2001.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: MIAMI-DADE/BROWARD COUNTIES



Post-9/11 Homeless Vets More Likely to Engage

Compared to South Florida (Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties, collectively), Florida, and national Vet population proportions, OST serves a statistically **significantly higher proportion of post-9/11 Vets** than would be expected (**21.54% vs. 12.80%**).



Chronic Homelessness Less Frequent

Compared to the South Florida, Florida, and national Vet population proportions, OST serves a statistically significantly higher proportion of chronically homeless individuals (in this case, any individual who has experienced chronic homelessness at least once).

Based on OST data, pre-9/11 Veterans are far more likely to be chronically homeless at least once. The average age of all OST Veterans is 53.8, with ages spanning between 20 and 96. The median age is 57, suggesting that OST Veterans tend to be on the younger side. This fits with the higher proportion of post-9/11 Veterans served.



Homelessness Does Not Discriminate by Gender

OST data shows an increase in the proportion of women who enlisted post-9/11 across all races, suggesting an increase in diversity in both race and gender. There are 2.4 times more men than women post-9/11, versus 9.8 times more for pre-9/11. This is likely due to changes in military policy regarding women in combat.



No Difference in Likelihood to Use VA Services

Use of VA services at the time of intake was roughly the same across the two groups (96.26% for post-9/11, 96.02% for pre-9/11). This number remained consistent when breaking down and accounting for gender and race. These numbers likely reflect referrals from the VA, at least in part; we also recognize that others qualify for OST's services, but not the VA's.



Higher Proportion of Army Vets Receiving Help

Pre-9/11 OST Vets are more likely to have served in multiple branches.

- A higher proportion of OST Vets served in the Army than the national average proportion for the same period of time (2013-2019) (57.5% vs. 46.6%).
- A higher proportion of **post-9/11 OST Vets** served in the Army (**62.25%**) than their pre-9/11 counterparts (**56.26%**).
- Based on OST data, it appears that those Veterans from the Air Force and Navy are less likely to experience homelessness.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: POST-9/11 HOMELESS VETS



Combat Exposure Not Major Factor in Homelessness

- According to OST data, a significantly higher proportion of post-9/11 Vets have been deployed to at least one war zone than their pre-9/11 counterparts. Post-9/11 Vets are also more likely to have served in more than one war zone.
- Looking at OST as a whole, it does not appear that having served in at least one war zone makes it more or less likely to experience chronic homelessness than serving in no war zones. It also does not appear that having served in multiple war zones makes it more or less likely to experience chronic homelessness than serving in one or no war zones.
- However, this changes when comparing pre-9/11 and post-9/11 OST Vets: post-9/11 Vets are more likely to experience chronic homelessness at least once if they served in one or more war zones.



Multiple Disabilities Less Likely

Nearly 2/3 (60.07%) of all OST Vets have at least one **disability** (based on HUD's definition).

 The proportion of pre-9/11 OST Vets with multiple disabilities was more than double that of post-9/11 (13.34% vs. 6.23%). This was statistically significant at the 99% confidence level.



Lasting Stability More Likely for Post-9/11 Vets

About half of all cases for OST spans **92 days** from date of initial intake to last date exited case status.

• 57% of all post-9/11 OST Vets took 92 days or less between initial intake and last exit from case status, compared to 47% for pre-9/11 OST Vets. This difference is statistically significant at the 99% confidence interval. This indicates that pre-9/11 OST Vets are more likely to fall back into homelessness and return to OST.

Preliminary findings suggest VA's SSVF public-private partnership approach makes it more likely post-9/11 Veterans will access community-based services to exit homelessness, do so faster, and are less likely to fall back into homelessness.

__IMPORTANCE OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS







DISAGGREGATION OF DATA

Not all homeless Veterans are the same, and the data collected at the local, state, and national levels needs to reflect this. Data on homeless Veteran age, race/ethnicity, branch(es) served, combat status, and disability status should all be included in data collection. While it is challenging to collect so much data, it would go a long way towards identifying and targeting those most in need. It is also useful for looking at how military and Veteran demographics have changed over time.

DISCHARGE DIFFERENCES

Every military base has

its own procedures for discharging soldiers. These findings would suggest that, in terms of providing support from transition from active duty soldier to Veteran, Army bases might need to reassess their procedures; the Navy and the Air Force have much lower rates of homelessness, suggesting a higher level and quality of transitional support.

OST ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH PERFORMANCE

These findings can be used as an indicator of how

Operation Sacred Trust has conducted engagement and outreach. The statistically significant higher proportions of Veterans served who are post-9/11, minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and chronically homeless indicate that OST is conducting extensive, quality engagement and outreach.

"Not all homeless Veterans are the same, and the data collected at the local, state, and national levels needs to reflect this ... This study will enable us to understand what factors contribute to re-entry and what interventions can be implemented."





RE-ENTRY INTO HOMELESSNESS

Keeping in mind that one of the goals of OST is to serve our homeless Veterans so that they have housing, employment, and a sense of security and being cared for, we need to always look at what areas we can work on. Understanding that pre-9/11 **OST Veterans** are more likely to re-enter homelessness can go a long way into understanding how and why they do. It will enable us to understand what factors contribute to re-entry and what interventions can be implemented.

USE OF VA SERVICES UPON INTAKE

There is a consistent proportion, hovering around **96%**, across enlistment periods (pre- and post-9/11), genders, and races for use of **VA services**. In spite of this, homelessness and chronic homelessness continue to persist. It would be worthwhile understanding which services individuals tend to use at the VA as a way to assess where the VA might be able to make improvements.



__APPENDIX: DATA TABLES

Veterans by Military Branch: OST vs. U.S. Count (% of total population)*	Post-9/11 OST	Pre-9/11 OST	Unknown / Refused	Total OST**	U.S. Average Veteran Count (2013-2019)	U.S. Average Veteran Proportion (2013-2019)
Air Force	47 (1.57%)	290 (9.68%)	4 (0.13%)	341 (11.39%)	3,475,896	18.25%
Army	399 (13.32%)	1,312 (43.81%)	11 (0.37%)	1,722 (57.50%)	8,877,673	46.61%
Coast Guard/ Other	9 (0.30%)	37 (1.24%)	1 (0.03%)	47 (1.57%)	2,212,431	1.14%
Marines	70 (2.34%)	261 (8.71%)	1 (0.03%)	332 (11.09%)	4,265,322	11.61%
Navy	116 (3.87%)	432 (14.42%)	5 (0.17%)	553 (18.46%)	217,369	22.39%
Total	641 (21.40%)	2,332 (77.86%)	22 (0.73%)	2,995 (100.00%)	20,097,984	100.00%

^{*}Note: State and local disaggregation of Veterans by branch was unavailable at the time of this report.

^{**}Note: 37 individuals either refused to say their dates of service or it was not recorded, 23 for their branch(es) of service. 16 served in more than one branch and are counted under "Coast Guard/Other".

Total OST vs. U.S.	Observed N (OST)	Expected N (U.S. Average Proportion)	Residual	Chi-square	p-value	Statistically Significant at α = 0.05?
Air Force	341	547	-206			
Army	1,722	1,396	326			
Coast Guard/Other	47	34	13	179.675968	n < 0.00001	YES
Marines	332	348	-16	1/9.6/5968	p < 0.00001	TES
Navy	553	671	-118			
Total	2.995	-	-]		
Post-9/11 OST vs. U.S.	Observed N (OST)	Expected N (U.S. Average Proportion)	Residual	Chi-square	p-value	Statistically Significant at α = 0.05?
Air Force	47	117	-70			
Army	399	299	100			
Coast Guard/Other	9	7	2	01 557247	n < 0.00001	VEC
Marines	70	74	-4	81.557247	p < 0.00001	YES
Navy	116	144	-28			
Total	641	-	-]		

Pre-9/11 OST vs. U.S.	Observed N (OST)	Expected N (U.S. Average Proportion)	Residual	Chi-square	p-value	Statistically Significant at α = 0.05?	
Air Force	290	426	-136				
Army	1,312	1,086	226				
Coast Guard/Other	37	27	10	110 070007	m < 0.00001	VEC	
Marines	261	271	-10	110.039097	p < 0.00001	YES	
Navy	432	522	-90				
Total	2,332	-	-				

Served in a War Zone?											
		POST-9/1	1					Р	RE-9/11		
Combat Veterans and Chronic Homelessness (CH) Status*	Yes, 1 only	Yes, 2 or more	No	Unknown / Refused	Total Post- 9/11	Yes, 1 only	Yes, 2 or more	No	Unknown / Refused	Total Pre- 9/11	All
CH at time of Intake at OST, but not before	12	6	12	1	31	21	2	122	1	146	178
CH before, but not at time of Intake at OST	10	2	11	0	23	22	2	100	2	126	152
Never	188	28	239	3	458	246	25	24	19	1,354	1,830
Refused/ Unknown CH Status	8	0	2	0	10	6	0	8	0	14	25
CH both before and at time of Intake at OST	46	8	63	6	120	101	12	559	26	699	833
Total	264	44	327	7	642	264	44	1,854	48	2,339	2.981

^{*}Note: 37 individuals either refused to say their dates of service or it was not recorded.

% experiencing CH at least once and served in multiple War Zones (both pre- and post-9/11)	39.53%	
% experiencing CH at least once and served in one or no War Zones (both pre- and post-9/11)	37.96%	NOT Statistically Significant at α
z-statistic	0.2955	= 0.05
p-value	p = 0.76418	

POST-9/11

% of post-9/11 experiencing CH at least once and served in at least one War Zone	13.08%	
% of pre-9/11 experiencing CH at least once and served in at least one War Zone	6.88%	Statistically Significant at α
z-statistic	5.0675	= 0.05
p-value	p < 0.00001	
% of post-9/11 experiencing CH at least once and served in multiple War Zones	2.49%	
% of pre-9/11 experiencing CH at least once and served in multiple War Zones	0.73%	Statistically Significant at α
z-statistic	3.7719	= 0.05
p-value	p = 0.00016	

OST Veterans and Disability*	Post-9/11 OST	Pre-9/11 OST	Total
No (HUD)	291	898	1,189
Refused/Unknown	1	2	3
Yes, 1 or more (HUD)	350	1,439	1,789
Yes (number not known)**	200	735	935
Yes, 1 only (HUD)	112	403	515
Yes, 2 or more (HUD)	40	312	352
Grand Total	642	2,339	2,981

^{*}Note: 37 individuals either refused to say their dates of service or it was not recorded.

^{**}Note: These 935 individuals admitted disability status but either did not reveal the kind(s) of disability they had or it was not recorded.

% of post-9/11 with at least one disability, as defined by HUD	54.52%		
% of pre-9/11 with at least one disability, as defined by HUD	61.52%	Statistically Significant at α	
z-statistic	-3,2071	= 0.05	
p-value	p = 0.00132		
% of post-9/11 with multiple disabilities, as defined by HUD	6.23%		
% of pre-9/11 with multiple disabilities, as defined by HUD	13.34%	Statistically Significant at α	
z-statistic	-4,9449	= 0.05	
p-value	p < 0.00001		

Case Duration for OST Vets (Median: 92 days)*	# Resolved in 92 days or less	Total
Post-9/11	351	615
Pre-9/11	1.074	2.238
Total	1.425	2.853

^{*}Note: Some of the date information was not recorded, so the total in this case is 2,853.

% Post-9/11 solved in 92 days or less	57.07	
% Pre-9/11 solved in 92 days or less	47.99%	Statistically Significant at α
z-statistic	3.9931	= 0.05
p-value	p = 0.00006	

OST Vets Using VA Services Upon Intake (Count	Post-9/11		Pre-9/11		All OST	
(% of respective total)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
			GENDER			
Male	433 (96.22%	17 (3.78%)	2,037 (96.18%)	81 (3.82%)	2,470 (96.18%)	98 (3.82%)
Female	184 (96.34%)	7 (3.66%)	205 (94.91%)	11 (5.09%)	389 (95.58%)	18 (4.42%)
Transgender	1 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (80.00%)	1 (20.00%)	5 (83.33%)	1 (20.00%)
			RACE			
American Indian or Alaskan Native (HUD)	2 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	16 (88.89%)	2 (11.11%)	18 (90.00%)	2 (10.00%)
Asian (HUD)	5 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	11 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Black or African American (HUD)	374 (95.90%)	16 (4.10%)	1,273 (96.37%)	48 (3.63%)	1647 (96.26%)	64 (3.74%)
Native/Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (HUD)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	9 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	9 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)
Other (HUD)	6 (100.00%)	0 (0.00%)	8 (80.00%)	2 (20.00%)	14 (87.50%)	2 (12.50%)
White (HUD)	231 (96.65%)	8 (3.35%)	934 (95.79%)	41 (4.21%)	1,165 (95.96%)	49 (4.04%)
			ALL			
ALL OST	618 (96.26%)	24 (3.74%)	2,246 (96.02%)	93 (3.98%)	2,864 (95.62%)	117 (4.38%)

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