



**Starlyn Lara**  
***Veterans Service Officer***

Starlyn served nearly 12 years on active duty in the U.S. Army from 1995-2007, achieving the rank of Staff Sergeant and was assigned to multiple duty stations, as well as deployments that included Operation Joint Forge in Bosnia and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq. Starlyn was awarded the Combat Action Badge and two Meritorious Service Medals for her service. Upon completion of her active duty commitment, she earned a BA in Business Management with an emphasis in Organizational Communication from California State University, East Bay.

Starlyn now serves as a Veteran Service Officer (VSO) for Washoe County, Nev. and works with Nation's Finest. She is accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs aiding veterans, their dependents, and survivors. This includes not only applying for federal and state benefits but also providing resources related to the following: Compensation and Pension, Health Care, Education & Training, Employment, Burial & Survivor's Benefits, Housing, Transportation and Military Records (as well as requests for discharge upgrades and reviews).

Prior to working with Nation's Finest, Starlyn served as the Women Veteran Program Manager and Community Educator for the San Francisco-based veteran service organization, Swords to Plowshares. She developed and deliver the Institute for Veteran Policy's (IVP) Combat to Community curriculum, a series of cultural competency trainings for community partners including clinicians, faith-based communities, law enforcement, attorneys, judges, social service providers and others to address the common gaps in understanding military culture and the challenges veterans face. Starlyn has been a guest lecturer and a presenter as well as panelist at many conventions and conferences discussing her personal and professional experiences.