



Dr. LaShondra Jones was born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, and as the only child of a single parent, at the age of 17, LaShondra decided to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. On January 2, 1994, she arrived at Parris Island, South Carolina and became a recruit of 4th Battalion, Oscar Company. After being honorably discharged in 1998, she continued her pursuit in academia by completing both her Bachelor and Master's degree at the University of Memphis, in her hometown of Memphis, Tennessee.

In 2010, Dr. Jones relocated to Houston, Texas to pursue her degree in doctoral studies at the Barbara Jordan/Mickey Leland School of Public Policy at Texas Southern University. In 2011, she began working with homeless veterans and found her calling, which was to help veterans to get back on the road to success. Because of her new passion for veterans, she focused her doctoral dissertation on the criminal justice involvement of veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom & Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF). She successfully matriculated and received her Doctor of Philosophy Degree in 2016.

Dr. Jones served as a Policy Associate during the 84th Texas Legislative Session and continues to be actively involved in legislative policy that directly impacts veterans. One of her proudest moments in her advocacy work, was House Bill 867 which created the Texas Women Veterans Program. In addition, she also advocated and testified for Senate Bill 805 which created Texas Women Veterans Day. In 2012, she was selected to serve on the board of the Texas Veteran Commission (TVC) Funds for Veteran Assistance, which funds millions of dollars to non-profit veteran organizations across the state of Texas. Because of her research and advocacy on veteran issues, she has been invited to speak at symposiums and numerous academic panels across the nation.

As a result of her passion for community involvement, she has also participated in numerous protests and marches, in the demand for social justice and equality. In addition, on June 12, 2020, she and other women veterans, drove to Fort Hood, to participate in the first protest that demanded military officials to help locate missing Army soldier and Houston-native, Vanessa Guillen. She later advocated and testified before the Texas Legislature to make September 30th Vanessa Guillen Day in Texas, which not only celebrates the life of Vanessa Guillen, but also raises awareness of military sexual assault in our nation's armed forces. Later that year, the Texas Legislature unanimously voted in favor of the bill, and was signed by Texas Governor Greg Abbott. On September 30, 2023, Houston held the first annual Vanessa Guillen Day, which consisted of Vanessa's family, friends, and veterans that had endured military sexual trauma during their military enlistment.

Currently, Dr. Jones works for the City of Houston Office of Veteran & Military Affairs, where she helps to ensure that active-duty personnel, veterans and their family members, are connected to resources and services earned as a result of their military service. In addition, she is also responsible for creating and maintaining meaningful relationships with community stakeholders, local military units and other non-profit organizations. Last, she also tasked with briefing elected officials on the needs of military personnel and veterans in the local Houston area community, which currently, has the largest population of veterans in the nation. She continues to live by the motto "If not me, then who".

She is a member of Montford Point Marines Association, American Legion Post #316, National Women Marines Association, and current chairman of the Houston Chapter NAACP Armed Forces Committee.