

NATIONAL WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH 2017

Honoring
Trailblazing
Women

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration.



Six years later, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Throughout history, women have broken barriers, through legitimate channels and otherwise, to serve in the military and defend our nation.



However, women were not integrated into the military until 1948, when President Harry Truman signed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



HONORING TRAILBLAZING WOMEN
WHO HAVE PAVED THE WAY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



This year's Department of Defense theme, *Honoring Trailblazing Women*, highlights women who have successfully broken down barriers and changed the role of women in not only the military but the government sector.

This presentation features four women: The Honorable Dr. Sheila Widnall, Command Master Chief Evelyn Banks (retired), Major General Loretta Reynolds, and Ms. Tracey Pinson.

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In 1993, Dr. Sheila E. Widnall became the 18th Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) and the first female to hold that position.

As the SECAF, she was responsible for Air Force readiness to accomplish its missions. She oversaw the recruiting, training and equipping of the 380,000 men and women on active duty, 251,000 members of the Air National Guard and the Air Reserve, and 184,000 civilians of the Total Force. She was responsible for planning, justifying and allocating the Service's annual budget. Her other responsibilities included logistical support, maintenance, research and development, and welfare of personnel.

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In previous positions with the Air Force, Widnall served on the USAF Academy Board of Visitors, and on advisory committees to Military Airlift Command and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

A professor of aeronautics and astronautics, she is internationally known for her work in fluid dynamics, specifically in the areas of aircraft turbulence and spiraling airflows. She has served on many boards, panels and committees in government, academia and industry. The Tacoma, Washington, native is the author of some 70 publications. Widnall has concentrated on quality of life issues, modernization and acquisition reform, and scientific and technological development.

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Retired Command Master Chief Evelyn “Vonn” Banks enlisted in the Navy in 1984 at the age of 29. During her 30 years of service, she earned an Associates of Arts in General Studies Management from the University of Phoenix. She also graduated from both the Air Force Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Academy as well as the Navy Senior Enlisted Academy.

Her first Command Master Chief billet was at the Navy Support Facility, Diego Garcia. Following a tour at the Senior Enlisted Academy, she assumed duties as the Command Master Chief for Carrier Air Wing 14 in Lemoore, CA.

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In 2003, she became the U.S. Navy Recruiting Command's first female Command Master Chief. Four years later, Banks went on to become the first female Command Master Chief of the U.S. Naval Academy in 2007.

Among her other many accomplishments, she is a highly decorated sailor, earning gold and bronze stars, was a Surface Warfare Specialist in the North Arabian Gulf, and won the coveted Ramage Award for the best Aircraft Carrier/Carrier Air Wing team on the USS Abraham Lincoln.

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In 2011, for the first time in its 96-year history, a woman, Brig. Gen. Loretta Reynolds, took command of the famed Marine Corps training depot at South Carolina's Parris Island. Parris Island graduates about 20,000 Marines annually and is the only site where female enlisted Marines are trained to enter the Marine Corps.

She was also the first female Marine to ever hold a command position in a battle zone. While serving a yearlong tour of duty in Afghanistan, she oversaw five Marine battalions and military company from Bahrain. While there, she improved a base that fed, housed and equipped more than 10,000 Marines and expanded it to handle an additional 10,000 Marines and sailors.

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As a one-star general, Reynolds became the third female general officer in the 200,000-member Marine Corps. The Service has only two female major generals, one in the active duty ranks and another in the Marine Corps Reserve.

On August 5, 2016, she received her second star and now serves as Commanding General Marine Corps Cyber Command at Fort Meade, Maryland.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Ms. Tracey L. Pinson became the Director for the Office of Small Business Programs, Secretary of the Army in May 1995. Ms. Pinson advised the Secretary of the Army and the Army Staff on all small business procurement issues and was responsible for the implementation of the Federal acquisition programs designed to assist small businesses.

Ms. Pinson provided management and oversight for the Army's Mentor-Protégé Program as well as the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI) program, and developed policies and initiatives to enhance HBCU/MI participation in Army-funded programs.

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Until her retirement in June 2014, she was the highest-ranking female civilian in the Army's acquisition career field. She won the Department of the Army Award for Meritorious Civilian Service in 2014.

Ms. Pinson died December 14, 2014. The Department of the Army Office of Small Business Programs issued this statement, *“The small business community has lost a tremendous advocate; we have lost a dear friend and mentor; The thousands of small businesses that have found success due to her tireless efforts are a testament to her legacy.”*

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Women continue to challenge gender roles and pave the road for future generations.



Lt. Col. Christine Mau— In 2011, she was part of the first all-female combat sortie over Afghanistan. In 2015, she became the first female pilot of an F-35 jet.

Capt. Kristen Griest— In 2015, she was one of the first three women to earn the Ranger tab. In 2016, she became the Army's first female infantry officer.

Chief Culinary Specialist Dominique Saavedra— In 2016, she became the first enlisted woman to earn the Navy's "silver dolphins."

Private First Class Cristina Fuentes Montenegro— In 2013, she was one of the first three women to earn her USMC infantry qualifications.

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The women featured represent many diverse backgrounds and each made her mark in a different field. While each woman is extraordinary, each is also ordinary in her own way, proving that women and female leaders can—and should—be considered the norm.

Their lives and their work inspire girls and women to achieve their full potential and encourage boys and men to respect the diversity and depth of women's experience.



NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

As we reflect on the triumphs of the past, and celebrate Women's History Month, we must also look to the limitless potential that lies ahead.

Women are critical members in the defense of our nation and the achievement of our nation's objectives, the next decade promises to be an exciting one for women.

For Women's History Month facts go to:

<https://www.deomi.org/SpecialObservance/WHM2017.cfm>

RESOURCES

- <http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/Biographies/Display/tabid/225/Article/105248/dr-sheila-e-widnall.aspx>
- <http://www.sellingtoarmy.info/content/remembering-ms-tracey-pinson-tireless-advocate-small-business>
- https://www.army.mil/article/122259/From_paint_chipper_to_command_master_chief__Navy_veteran_shares_her_story_at_Belvoir_Women_s_History/
- <http://www.citadel.edu/root/whm2013-features/nancy-mace/241-women-s-history-month/20740-brigadier-general-lori-reynolds>
- <http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/2015/05/06/first-air-force-female-f35-pilot/70894940/>
- <https://www.armytimes.com/story/military/careers/army/officer/2016/04/27/meet-armys-first-female-infantry-officer/83591066/>
- http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=96017
- <http://www.marines.mil/Photos.aspx?igphoto=2000782847>

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