

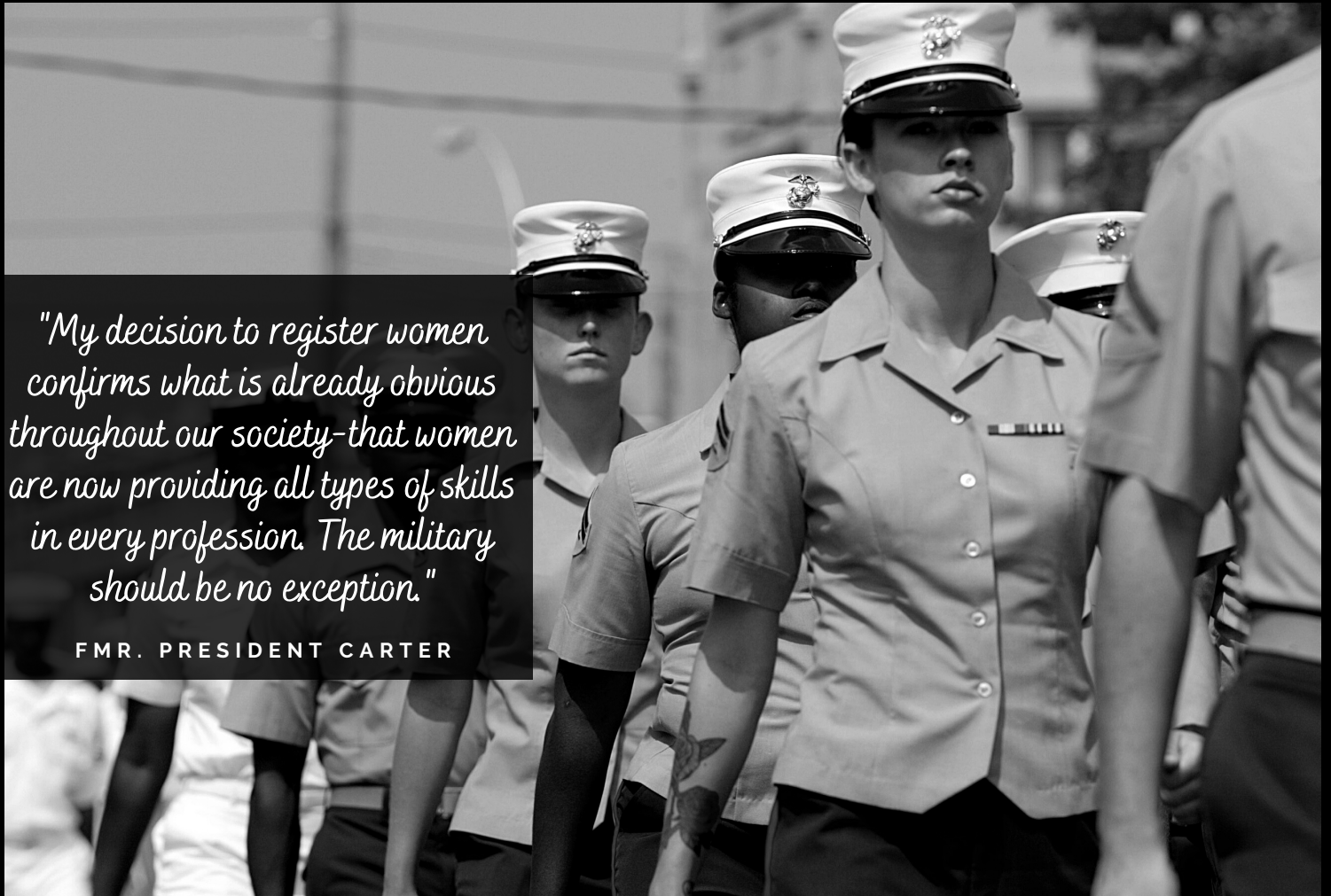


CUYAMACA
COLLEGE

THE CUYAMACA VETERANS CENTER CELEBRATES

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

MARCH 2021



"My decision to register women confirms what is already obvious throughout our society—that women are now providing all types of skills in every profession. The military should be no exception."

FMR. PRESIDENT CARTER

SINCE THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR women have been proudly serving and making important contributions to the U.S. military. Here are just a few of their stories.

1782

Deborah Sampson disguises herself as her deceased brother and becomes the first woman to enlist in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

1861

During the American Civil War, an estimated 750 women served in the military as soldiers, disguised as men.

1863

Harriet Tubman would become the first woman to lead an armed military operation in the United States in what became known as the Combahee Ferry Raid.

1901

The U.S. establishes the Army Nurse Corps as a permanent part of the Army. It would remain all-female until 1955.

1917

During World War I, Army Nurses Edith Ayers and Helen Wood became the first female military members to be killed in the line of duty aboard the USS Mongolia.

HOW THE MILITARY'S PERSONIFICATION OF WOMEN HELPED SHAPE GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE U.S.

Recruitment posters since the age of the pin-up girl have been used to entice men into joining the armed forces with a promise of becoming more desirable to women. While this may have worked for enlistment numbers, it solidified how the U.S. viewed the women of this country. Portraying them in a sexual manner was meant to excite men and to remind women of their place. These portrayals suggested that a woman does not have a place IN the military, but does have a place in boosting the morale of the male service members. This ideology is one that fueled antiquated gender norms and perpetuates the treatment of many women today.



Photo to the left: World War I Navy recruitment poster.

Photo below: World War II Army Air Corps recruitment poster.



Current societal views of women in the military are indicative of the views during the world wars; women have been viewed by many as objects meant to serve the men that serve, and not as sisters-at-arms. There is no better example of this than the occurrences of military sexual trauma against female service members: In 2018 alone, 13,000 female service members were sexually assaulted, not including the vast majority that went unreported. The rate of [military sexual trauma](#) between 2016 and 2018 jumped to its highest level since 2006. 64% of those who report their attack suffer retaliation from their attacker, and 1/3 of survivors are discharged with "other than honorable". More times than not, the attacker will not face charges but will simply be reassigned.



[Rosie the Riveter](#) is a cultural icon of the World War II era, depicting the strength of women entering the workforce while the majority of working-age men were off to war. Although as the years passed, Rosie the Riveter would become a symbol of strong and independent women, it was never intended to empower women passed the war. Rosie was meant to persuade women into working temporarily while the war was ongoing, and subsequently fade gracefully back into the homemaker role as the men returned.

The U.S. military fiercely underestimated the power of this propaganda and the will of women. Rosie the Riveter, and all that she represented, paved the way for what would later become a gender revolution, and the ever-present fight for gender equality that surges on today.

1942

The U.S. Army establishes the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. In 1943 the name changes to the [Women's Army Corps](#). 150,000 women would serve in WWII.

1945

Under the command of [Major Charity Adams](#), the [6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion](#) becomes the first all-female, all-Black battalion to serve overseas.

1973

The landmark Supreme Court Case [Frontiero v. Richardson](#) decided that benefits given by the military to the family of service members cannot be given differently on the basis of sex.

1976

West Point admitted its first 119 female cadets. 4 years later, 62 would graduate; only 2 were Black women: [Joy Dallas](#) and [Pat Walker Locke](#).

1978

The Woman's Army Corps is dissolved and its members are integrated into the regular Army.

BREAKING "BRASS" CEILINGS FOR DECADES

ANGELS OF BATAAN 1942



Also known as the "Battle Belles of Bataan", this group of nurses were members of the Army Nurse Corps and the Navy Nurse Corps, stationed in the Philippines at the onset of the Pacific War during World War II. During the Battle of the Philippines, when Bataan and Corregidor fell, 77 nurses were captured and imprisoned in Manila along with American troops.

Imprisoned at Santo Tomas Internment Camp, the [Angels of Bataan](#), led by [Lt. Josie Nesbit](#), would continue to work around the clock, caring for the injured. The Japanese Imperial Army fed them only 700 calories a day, so the nurses began cooking flowers and roots in creams to sustain the prisoners. They were finally liberated in 1945. All 77 nurses made it out alive.

PUERTO RICAN WOMEN OF WWII 1944

When the U.S. entered into World War II, Puerto Rican women were not allowed into the Women's Army or Navy Nurses Corps. At this time Puerto Ricans were citizens not protected by the constitution. However, in 1944, the Army sent recruiters to the island to recruit no more than 200 women for a segregated unit in New York which would plan international shipping of goods.

That same year, the Army Nurse Corps decided to allow Puerto Rican women to join to handle the language barriers in hospitals. Among them were [Carmen Contreras-Bozak](#) who became the first Hispanic interpreter in WAC, and [LTJG Maria Rodriguez Denton](#) who would become the first Puerto Rican female officer in the U.S. Navy.



CAPTAIN VERNICE ARMOUR, USMC



After her commission as a 2nd Lieutenant, [Captain Armour](#) would attend flight school in Corpus Christi, Texas and Pensacola, Florida, earning her wings 2001 and becoming the Marine Corps first Black female pilot. From flight school she would be stationed at USMC Camp Pendleton, CA.

In 2003, she flew with HMLA-169 during the invasion of Iraq and there she would become the U.S. Armed Force's first Black female combat pilot. Captain Armour would go on to complete two combat tours in the Gulf. Hoorah.

2009

2010

2015

2016

2019

The first all-female U.S. Marine Corps team conducted it's first mission in southern Afghanistan.

The Department of the Navy announced authorization of women to begin serving aboard submarines. In 2012 [Lt. Britta Christianson](#) would be the first female submariner in history to receive her [dolphins](#).

[1st Lt. Shaye Haver](#) and [Capt. Kristen Griest](#) earned their Ranger tabs, making them the first women to successfully complete U.S. Army Ranger School.

Defense Secretary Ash Carter permits all women to apply for combat positions beginning Jan. 1, 2016. This shift opened the opportunity for all women to fill 220,000 military combat positions.

The U.S. Marine Corps integrates men and women in basic training at [MCRD Parris Island, SC](#). In 2021, they would integrate [MCRD San Diego, CA](#).