



HONORING SERVICE & SACRIFICE

The Flagpole

Fall 2013 The Newsletter of the U.S. Army Women's Foundation Volume LXIV No. 2

REVERE WOMEN'S MEMORIAL



Veterans' Representative Morris Morris, Army Women's Foundation President MG (Ret) Dee Ann McWilliams, and World War II veteran and memorial founder Eileen Merullo.

The Army Women's Foundation last summer had the pleasure of celebrating the contributions made by US military women who served during World War II.

Army Women's Foundation President MG Dee McWilliams, USA Ret., was the special invited speaker at the unveiling of a women's military veteran memorial in Revere, Mass., near Boston.

Revere's Women Veterans World War II memorial honors the city's 150 women who served in the military during that war. Their names recently were preserved in the stone memorial that was put in place on August 17 on the American Legion lawn, located on Broadway. The unveiling ceremony of the memorial took place Saturday, Sept. 7.

MG McWilliams learned of plans for the memorial in a handwritten letter from Eileen Merullo. Mrs. Merullo, a Revere resident and World War II veteran who worked with amputees at the old Walter Reed hospital, spearheaded the effort for the memorial. It is the only monument in Revere dedicated to women who served in World War II.

"I was honored to attend the dedication of the monument recognizing the service of the women from Revere who served in World War II," MG McWilliams said. "It has been a distinct pleasure to work with Mrs. Merullo to ensure the completion of her project. Because of her determination and hard work, those pioneer women will never be forgotten."

Mrs. Merullo researched names to identify the veterans and then launched a fundraising campaign.

The memorial cost \$10,000. The Army Women's Foundation donated \$1,000, and Foundation supporters contributed an additional \$1,500.

When Mrs. Merullo came up with the idea for the memorial, she had complete faith that the mission would be accomplished. Revere is a close-knit community, and many of the memorial supporters wanted to honor a relative who had served. Donations of various amounts came in from current and former residents across the generations.

"I happen to know a lot of people in the community. They are very, very generous," Mrs. Merullo said. "From January to the beginning of August, we were able to raise more than \$10,000, ... including the very, very generous donation from the general and her association."

The unveiling ceremony was open to the public. ★

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an exciting time to be a woman in the Army! Never before have there been so many opportunities to excel.

With the lifting of the combat exclusion, women are moving into new careers.

We've seen our first women Bradley Fighter Vehicle mechanics and our first female noncommissioned officer for the 13M, Multiple Launch Rocket System. We now have women artillery mechanics, and a woman chaplain for the 101st Airborne Division, Screaming Eagles.

Army women also are making strides in other, non-combat jobs, providing leadership in the Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserves.

We continue to proudly support the soldiers of today and yesterday. We have been able to share stories of their contributions by engaging and broadening our audience. We've gone into corporate boardrooms and praised our women veterans in speeches from City Hall steps. And we've shared their triumphs and challenges through stories posted on our online virtual community through our growing followers on Facebook.

In recent months, I've had the honor of meeting a World War II Army veteran who continues to serve her community. Eileen Merullo decided that there should be a memorial to the 150 women from her hometown of Revere, Massachusetts, who served in the military during that war. Revere had memorials for men, but not for women veterans. Her hard work paid off, and in September, I represented the Army Women's Foundation during the unveiling of the memorial in the town's center.

Also this summer, I had the honor of representing you before the board of the Home Depot Foundation, a strong partner. We discussed civilian employment, and the need for childcare, affordable housing, and healthcare. Female military veterans are more likely to be homeless than are women who did not serve in the military, and are more likely to be homeless than male veterans. We also discussed the work that the Army Women's Foundation is doing to address those issues through our annual symposia on transition, and our growing Legacy Scholarship Program.

At my last writing in the spring, we had just concluded our annual Symposium, our Hall of Fame Induction luncheon, and scholarship awards. Now, half a year later, we are planning another strong program for our annual event scheduled for March, Women's History Month. This year's symposium topic: Resiliency: On the battlefield and the home front.

None of this is possible without your support, and I am grateful. Your contributions help support the growing number of Army women, veterans, and their families.

We hope to see you at the annual AUSA meeting in October, and hear from you through Facebook, or the old fashion way, a hand-written letter.

Warmest Regards,

Dee Ann McWilliams
MG, USA (Ret)
President, Army Women's Foundation

COMING IN MARCH OF 2014

**Army Women's Foundation
2014 Hall of Fame Induction Reception**

In conjunction with the

2014 Army Women's Foundation Summit

Army Women: Resilient & Ready

Further details coming soon! Watch our website www.awfdn.org and Facebook page!

To view podcasts from last year's Symposium and Hall of Fame event, visit <http://podcast.awfdn.org/>.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September. Children are back in school. Congress is back in session; and Washington traffic has returned to gridlock. Studies have given the D.C. area a failing report card on its traffic. We hear daily of Congress’s poor performance, meriting Ds and lower. The school children do not yet have their report cards, but have them to look forward to. Our Foundation? What kind of report card can we give ourselves? What can we say about ourselves? I give us a B+, a very good grade, but room for improvement. Let me break that down a bit.

Sets and Meets Goals. Our Board of Directors has set some very lofty goals for the Foundation during the last year. One of the goals was to increase “our digital footprint.” In order to reach out more to today’s soldiers, and to our supporters, the Board voted to expand our presence in the increasingly dominant digital world. To start, we focused on Facebook. We successfully have broadened our reach, and increased our stories to our viewers, who are reading and responding. A recent post had thirty four responses in less than one hour! We want more “Likes” and comments from you, our readers and supporters. Make the Army Women’s Foundation one of your “Likes” or “Groups.” Grade: B. Room for Improvement: Twitter.

Works Well with Others. Another of our goals was to expand our influence for Army women by leveraging our resources, contacts and expertise; in short, by working with others. There are many organizations out there ready

and willing to help Army women. We have established partnerships with some of America’s largest corporations, nonprofits, government offices and educational institutions. We are expanding our networks and ability to carry out our mission for Army women. Grade: A-. We have done well, and can continue to do more.

A Positive Influence. Do we help others in our “classroom?” We surely do. Our Legacy Scholarship program is an example, as it has grown exponentially. We now have recipients from over 25 states. The initial Legacy Scholarships were only for four-year academic institutions. The Board then recognized that if one is deployed to Afghanistan or elsewhere, it is difficult to attend a bricks and mortar institution, so we expanded the scholarships to include on-line degree programs. The Board also saw a significant shift towards community colleges and implemented awards there. Many applicants had a tremendous amount of experience in the Army but perhaps lacked a certificate, a necessary credential, and we began awarding scholarships for accredited certificate programs. This past year we had many deserving sons and daughters of Army women to whom we could award scholarships. From two scholarships our first year to twenty-nine this year! And next year, we are piloting scholarships for graduate school.

We have reached one-half of the country with our scholarships — let’s reach that other half. Grade: a solid A! All the information you need to apply and/or spread the

word about the Legacy Scholarships in on our website at www.awfdn.org.

Physical Ed. We do get our “exercise.” Foundation President MG (Ret) Dee McWilliams has shown up at numerous events and speaking engagements. From Massachusetts to Georgia to Florida to our booth at AUSA, Dee is on the road and is scheduled into 2014. Others also have represented the Foundation from New Jersey to Florida to D.C.

Grade: B+ Next year we plan to implement a “Speaker’s Program” to increase the reach of the Foundation.

Comes Prepared. We have able leadership, but cannot do our work without the dedication, tenacity and creativity of our staff at Fort Lee. They are responsive to our supporters and go well beyond the scope of their jobs. Their technical support and dedication to our programs is commendable. Grade: A.

Maybe this report card is not entirely objective. But it shows how busy we have been and points to where we might go. As always, I invite your input; there is always room for improvement. The Foundation strives to be relevant, sustainable and mission-focused. We can only maintain this with your help. Hooah!

Peggy Trossen
Executive Director

IN MEMORIAM

LTC (R) IRENE MICHELS SORROUGH
A Tribute by LTC (R) Jenelle Roberts

My friend LTC (R) Irene Michels Sorrough died on May 22 at the age of 98. I met her after a Sisters in Service luncheon two years ago. We had been at the luncheon together and long after it was over, I noticed her sitting on a couch in the Army Navy Club Lobby all by herself. I went up and asked her if she needed any help and she responded in her brisk and often abrupt New York manner,” no” she was waiting for her ride. So I asked her if she minded if I waited with her and she said that would be very nice...and so the relationship began, we became fast friends. I realized during our initial conversation that Irene was partially blind (macular degeneration), had severe loss of hearing (wore two hearing aids), had COPD (carried an oxygen tank), lived alone, and took public transportation (her ride). I promised her from that meeting on, if I were able, I would take her wherever she needed to go, and



I did. We saw each other often and I learned that she was the daughter of Belgian immigrants, she lost her father at age 12, and her mother worked as a seamstress in the Garment District in New York City. She put herself through college during the Depression at the City College of New York while working full time as a bookkeeper. A student for seven years, Irene stopped short of a degree to enlist in the WAAC, and was later awarded a degree in absentia, becoming the first WAAC to receive that honor, when she graduated from the WAAC Officer Candidate School in 1942. We would go to lunch or sip wine on her couch and she would tell me stories from her WAAC training, her WAC years at the Pentagon or her assignment in Occupied Germany. She would throw around names like Generals Eisenhower or MacArthur and Eleanor Roosevelt in casual conversation. I was completely fascinated by her clarity and wit. I had held similar jobs at the Pentagon and in Germany during my career so we compared notes. After Irene retired in 1968 with 26 years of service, she travelled the world extensively. She was a member of the Friends of the Smithsonian and showed a deep commitment to the museums, the National Zoo, pet shelters, and VA programs. She attended the WAC reunions, was a member of this foundation and regularly visited the Army

Women’s Museum. Despite her disabilities, she continued to have a very full life, continued to travel, and maintained an active interest in her charities, her friends, and the military. She loved to go out, eat at nice restaurants, visit places, and to be with people. Forty-five years after her retirement, she still wore the Pallas Athena around her neck. She was a fierce spirit. Irene was buried in her dress blue uniform, with full military honors at Arlington Cemetery. At her funeral someone said to me that Irene was lucky to have had me...on the contrary, I was lucky to have had her. Not only was she a trailblazer for my career, she was an inspiration in my life. And I miss her.

LTC (R) Roberts retired from the Army in 2006 after 22 years of service. She is a board member of the Army Women’s Foundation. ★



VISIT US AT AUSA’S ANNUAL MEETING AND EXPOSITION



Be sure to visit AWF at Booth Number 826 at AUSA’s Annual Meeting and Exposition being held October 21-23 at the Washington D.C. Convention Center. We are grateful to AUSA for their continued support of AWF and look forward to growing our partnership with them. This is a significant event for us to get out and meet our supporters and make new friends. We always look forward to it and will post photos and updates on Facebook throughout the event! For more information about the Association of the United States Army and their events, please visit their website at www.AUSA.org. ★



VISIT www.AWFdn.org
TO VIEW OUR MINI-
DOCUMENTARY VIDEO
ABOUT THE ARMY
WOMEN’S FOUNDATION!



Are you part of the social media craze? If so, **become a fan of the Army Women’s Foundation page on Facebook!** We hope to hear from you soon!



FACES OF THE FALLEN



SPC EMBER M. ALT
SPC Ember M. Alt, 21, of Beech Island, S.C. died June 18, in Bagram, Afghanistan along with three other soldiers, from wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked their unit with indirect fire. She was assigned to the 32nd Transportation Company, 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 43rd Sustainment Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

She graduated from Killeen High School in 2009 where she excelled in track. One of her crowning moments was when she helped lead her team to the State finals during her senior year.

Alt joined the Army in May 2011 and was deployed to Afghanistan for the first time on Nov. 26, 2012. She served as a wheeled vehicle mechanic. During the course of her military career, she was awarded the Army Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and the Army Service Ribbon.

Ember is survived by her parents; Chuck Alt of Killeen, Cynthia Merchant of Gulfport, MS, and Rick and Jennifer Owens of Killeen. She will also be missed by her siblings; Kayla and Jacob Alt, and Bryce and Evan Owens as well as her grandparents, godparents, and many aunts, uncles, and cousins. ★



MAJOR JAIMIE E. LEONARD
Major Jaimie E. Leonard, 39, of Warrick, N.Y. died June 8, 2013 in Sharana, Afghanistan of injuries suffered from small arms fire. She was assigned to the Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.

From a young age she dreamed of serving in the military and achieved this ambition with over 16 years of honorable service in the US Army. A brilliant and committed officer, Jaimie was respected and beloved by those with whom she served. She was an inspiration to all.

Jaimie grew up in Warwick, NY and graduated from Warwick Valley High School in 1992. After attending Marion Military Institute on a merit-based scholarship, she entered United States Military Academy at West Point, commissioning in 1997 as a Military Intelligence Officer. As a selectee to the highly competitive, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense Intern Program, Jaimie earned her M.A. in Public Policy from Georgetown University in 1997. Her dedicated service included assignments to South Korea; Germany; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; the Pentagon; Fort Drum, New York, and multiple deployments, to include three combat tours — one in Iraq and two in Afghanistan.

Her exemplary service to her country yielded award of three Bronze Stars, two Meritorious Service Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, three Army Commendation Medals, the Valorous Unit Award, the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, three Afghanistan Campaign Medals, two Iraq Campaign Medals, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, five Overseas Service Ribbons, the NATO badge, Parachutist Badge, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

She is survived by five siblings, numerous nieces and nephews, three godchildren, and Stepmother. ★

LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Army Women’s Foundation Legacy Scholarship Program continues to evolve as we address the changing needs of today’s Army women in transition! To help our Army women accomplish their educational goals, we have expanded the Legacy Scholarship Program this year to include graduate work in addition to the Community College, Certificate Program, and Four-Year Institution scholarships already available.

The Foundation’s Legacy Scholarship Program is available to all Army women – active duty, retired, National Guard, Reserve and their children. The Legacy Scholarship program offers financial support in four areas: Technical Certificate programs, Community College coursework, Undergraduate Degrees, and Graduate Degrees. Scholarships are awarded only to coursework from accredited institutions and are based on merit, academic potential, community service, letters of recommendation, and need.

The Legacy Scholarships are available for tuition assistance for technical certification, coursework at community college level or four year academic institutions and graduate schools.

- Community College and Technical Certificate Program Legacy Scholarships will be awarded up to \$1,000.
- College, University, and Graduate Program Legacy Scholarships will be awarded up to \$2,500.

Applications must be postmarked by January 15, 2014. Criteria, details, and scholarship forms are available online at www.AWFDN.org. ★



WHERE ARE THEY NOW — LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS

SGM Andrea Farmer, USA Retired was one of the very first recipients to receive the Legacy Scholarship back in 2008 when our scholarship program first began. She has served in a variety of roles throughout her Army career ranging from G-4 Sergeant Major to Brigade Sexual Assault Response Coordinator. SGM Farmer, a native of North Carolina, recently retired in May 2013 after thirty years of service. As we begin to follow-up with some of our scholarship winners, we will share some of their updates and insights with you through our Flagpole and website!

SGM Andrea Farmer, USA Retired 2008 Legacy Scholarship Winner



Stats: Graduated in 2009 from University of Oklahoma with a Masters in Human Relations and a Masters in International Relations.

Current employment: Part-Time Adjunct Professor at Central Texas College and enjoying retirement!

How did your education benefit you? Your career? My formal education benefited me by sharpening my intellectual skills and introduced me to learning opportunities that I would not have experienced elsewhere. It also qualified me for the

teaching position that I currently hold because the minimum requirement was to hold a Master's Degree and 5 years’ experience. As far as my career, my education had a definite impact on my promotions from Sergeant to Sergeant Major.

On the importance of education: I feel as if education is very important-knowledge is power. Attaining the highest level of education helps prepare you for your future and sharpens your skills while serving in the Army.

Advice for Army women: I recommend that Army Women set goals to complete their education to the highest degree possible. When I was in high school, I was discouraged to attend college by my guidance counselor as she felt as though I was not “college material”. So I joined the Army and while I was in the Army I was encouraged to further my education by my leaders and family members. “Don’t let anyone tell you what you can’t do — You can obtain higher learning.”

It is with sincere gratitude that I once again thank the AWF for the kindness, professionalism, and support shown to me. ★



WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARTNERS!

The Army Women’s Foundation is proud and excited to create new partnerships with the following organizations:

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

The NVTC Veterans Employment Initiative is a new program to connect veterans to employment opportunities within Virginia’s technology community. Through this initiative, NVTC will provide tools and resources to match veterans with jobs, internships, mentorships and certifications, while also providing support to member companies in their efforts to hire, train and retain qualified veteran employees. In tandem, NVTC is collaborating with state and federal policymakers to expedite legislative and/or regulatory action that enhances companies’ ability to hire and train veterans on any federal contract.

For more information log onto www.nvtc.org/veterans.



HELMETS TO HARDHATS

Helmets to Hardhats is a national, nonprofit program that connects National Guard, Reserve, retired and transitioning active-duty military service members with skilled training and quality career opportunities in the construction industry. The program is designed to help military service members successfully transition back into civilian life by offering them the means to secure a quality career in the construction industry.

For more information log onto www.helmetstohardhats.org or call 866-741-6210 for assistance.



HEROES WORK HERE

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The Walt Disney Company is proud to present our Veterans’ Initiative, “Heroes Work Here.” At Disney we recognize the hard work, dedication and loyalty it takes to serve your country honorably, no matter what point and time in your life it may be. Our veterans and their families have given so much to us, and we want to continue to give back.

For more information, visit <http://disneycareers.com/en/working-here/heroes-work-here/>. ★





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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 21-23, Washington, DC
AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition
www.ausa.org

November 7, Boston, MA
Women Are Veterans Too! Event
www.mass.gov/veterans/women-veterans

November 9, Janesville, WI
2013 Women Veterans Expo
dva.state.wi.us/womenvets.asp

November 9-11, Washington, DC
Vietnam Women’s Memorial 20th Anniversary Celebration
www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org/upcoming.php

November 9-11, National Harbor, MD
2013 Veterans Day Celebration
www.womenveteransinteractive.org

November 11, Washington, DC
“Women Veterans ROCK!” Rally & Veterans Day Celebration
www.womenvetsrock.org

November 14-17, Louisville, KY
Farmer Veteran Coalition Empowering Women Veterans Conference
www.farmvetco.org/our-programs/farmer-veteran-events

December 14, Nationwide
Wreaths Across America
www.wreathsacrossamerica.org

February 19-21, Huntsville, AL
2014 AUSA Winter Symposium and Exposition
www.ausa.org

February 23-26, Arlington, VA
DAV Mid-Winter Conference
www.dav.org

March 2014, Washington, DC
2014 Hall of Fame Induction Reception in conjunction with the 2014 Army Women’s Foundation Summit. Stay tuned for more details!
www.awfdn.org

ARMY WOMEN’S FOUNDATION

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SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION!

An annual contribution of \$25 or more entitles you and/or your Friend to receive our semi-annual newsletter, notices of events and reunions, and program updates.

Name: _____	Address: _____
Rank (if any): _____	City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: _____	Email: _____

Donation Amount: \$ _____, **directed as follows:** (Check one, or if more than one, specify amounts for each.)

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_____	Museum Support

*Bronze Plaque Memorial Fund offers the opportunity to permanently honor deceased members of the Armed Forces, their friends and family, and the fallen heroes of current conflicts by placing their name on a bronze plaque that is located at the U.S. Army Women’s Museum at Fort Lee, Virginia. The plaques are cast bi-annually, and once the required minimum of \$100 for the individual is reached, all proceeds from the Bronze Memorial Plaque program will be used to further the mission of the AWF and its programs. We are currently accepting names for Plaque XVII through December 31, 2014.

Person to be Acknowledged:

(Recipient of Friend’s gift or next of kin for Memorial Fund)

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Phone: _____
Email : _____
Relationship to honoree: _____

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☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

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Exp. date: _____
Verification Code: _____ (on back of card)

The U.S. Army Women’s Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization and your contributions are tax deductible. Thank you for your support!

Mail or fax this form to: U. S. Army Women’s Foundation / P.O. Box 5030 / Fort Lee, Virginia 23801-0300 / **FAX:** (804) 734-3077

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