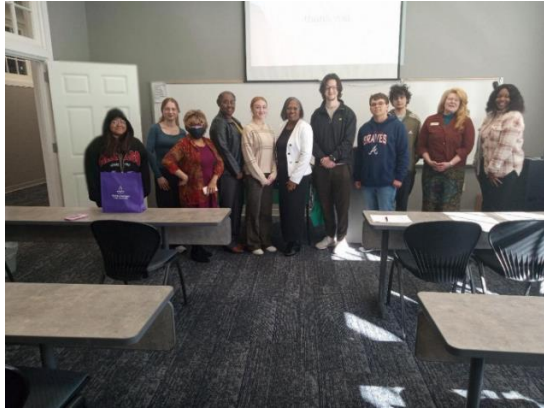


From Editor's Corner G Adams-Square



G. Adams-Square with American Government Class welcoming student veterans in Warner Robins

For Spring Semester 2024, the Political Science Department under the direction of Dr. Grace Adams-Square has been extremely active in paying tribute to our veterans. In February 2024, the Warner Robins American Government class hosted a Welcome to Student Veterans. American Government students assisted and participated in planning the program and menu. This was a collaboration with the MGA Veterans and Military Resource Center under the guidance of Carolyn J Clark, Assistant Registrar/Veteran Certifying Official. Also in attendance was Jeannie Ruggerio, coordinator of Warner Robins Student Success Center (SSC) shared what services were available to student veterans. Although the numbers in attendance were low the enthusiasm and commitment to student veterans remains high.

This Edition of the Student Veterans Esprit De Corp is dedicated to female veterans to celebrate Women's History Month.

Students enrolled in the Spring 2024 online Session II of the Perspective on Diversity class by Dr. Adams-Square contributed to sharing their tributes to female veterans. The first student to pay tribute to female veterans is Andre (Nyessa) Dixon who conducted interviews of several female veterans. It is our honor to share these stories of courage with you.

Contribution to Women's History Month and tribute to women veterans by Andre (Nyessa) Dixon

As my contribution to Women's History Month and tribute to women veterans, I interviewed three African American women to gain insight into their individual experiences in the military. Of the three women, aged between 26 yrs. – 45 yrs., two of the interviewees are associates and the last interviewee is a close relative. While I was reviewing the results of the interviews, I noticed there were major themes of opportunity, isolation, and discrimination. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and reflect on the military experiences of these women and explore the themes examined during the interview process.

One of the most prominent themes or issues that I found these veterans faced and saw around them was isolation. When asked, "Did you have a support network of other women veterans during your time in the military? How important was that to you?", each interviewee describes the different levels of isolation they experienced, at times even with support. The military capitalizes on creating a "unit" or community for their personnel, but there are countless accounts of women not receiving the correct levels of support they need. "Yes and no. A lot of other women were helpless and struggling themselves." – Kel M. answered in her interview, showcasing an example of

the gravity around the vast number of women who are abandoned by the very institution that promised them unity and freedom.



Ilyasha D., U.S. Navy

The most ambiguous theme highlighted within the interviews conducted was the basis of opportunity upon joining the military. Every year, the United States military recruits thousands to hundreds of thousands of individuals in search of change. The chance to leave your current circumstances is the most deliberate reason individuals join the ranks. This is the biggest ploy to play on the desperation of women escaping abusive households or the general knowledge that joining the military for many is a last resort. This need is dotted upon by many, as quoted here by interviewee Ilyasha D., "My decision to join wasn't my own. At a high school job fair, the thing I really wanted to do was work at PetSmart. I was 17 and knew my dad would be upset if I only came back with one pamphlet... (Ilyasha D., interview)." There is, however, another side to this theme of opportunity where benefit is claimed positively. Joining the military has proven to be beneficial to obtaining & maintaining a successful

career and building long-lasting bonds with people who shared the experience with them.



Lekeshia D., Army National Guard

The last and most prominent theme I gathered from the women I interviewed was discrimination and a despicable amount of it. Women are the most at risk for suffering at the hands of others while serving military duty. I hear and see stories daily from women all around social media recounting the vile things they had to endure while in basic training, on the field, and out of it. To gather a better understanding directly from the women veterans that I interviewed I asked, “Did you face any unique challenges or obstacles as a woman in the military? How did you overcome them?”. I was met with answers from them touching on the heavy amounts of sexism and racism they encountered being at the intersection of marginalized communities. “I was the only black girl in my division for a long time and out of 200 people there were about 20

black girls.” – Kel M. answered concisely allowing me to truly see how little representation is given to black women in the military.

To conclude this paper, the results of the interviews conducted proved to be extremely eye-opening and insightful. I was able to capture major themes of opportunity, isolation, and discrimination during the interviews conducted. After reflecting on my interactions with these women, I have been left curious to hear more about others’ experiences and how they were impacted by their time in the military. Each of the interviewees provided mixed answers when asked if they would suggest joining the military to other women. Overall, this paper has helped me to gain a better understanding of the perseverance and discipline African American women must maintain to get through their experience in the military.

Tribute to Women Veterans by

By Njeri Fleming

The woman veteran I chose to honor is Jaime Fox. Jaime Fox is a Native American woman who is from Montana and grew up on the Fort Belknap Indian Reserve.



Jaime Fox

As a young child, she recalls having a lot of her upbringing having to do with the military in some way. Her maternal and paternal sides both have military backgrounds, her grandfather and uncles were all veterans. She recalls when she was younger being able to watch the military planes flying over the reservation onto the military bases. Having all this inspiration around her when she was younger made her fascinated with airplanes.

Jaime Fox decided to pursue an aviation career and joined the Air Force. She joined the Air Force right after graduating high school in 2007 at the age of 17. She started her basic training at Dyess Air Force base in Texas for 6 weeks. Once she finished her basic training, she then moved on to her regular training which was mechanical training at Sheppard Air Force base in Wichita Falls, Texas, and was there for 3 months where she had to do a basic aircraft mechanic class. She then graduated and was selected to go into the b1 bombers at Dyess Air Force. Being able to accomplish all of this at 17 was a lot for her but it was something that she enjoyed and knew she wanted to do.

Jaime was in the military for almost 4 years before she got deployed to Doha, Qatar for 6 months. This would be her first deployment out of the country. While on her deployment she still worked as a B1. She had to get used to working in a different setting, she went from working with 30-35

people to working with about 500 people. Although Jaime had some things that she had to get used to, she describes this deployment as being easy and it being a place where others would go after their deployment for a break.

Once finished with her deployment in Qatar she then stationed at McChord Air Force Base in Washington for 6 months. Once she was stationed at a new base, she then had to start working a new job which was with C17 jets. When Jaime was at Dyess Airbase she became confident in her work, she learned how to do everything about her jet and she knew how to be confident with her new jets she had to have the same confidence in herself. As Jaime was learning her way around on her new base with her new job she then was offered to go to Afghanistan for another deployment. She took the offer because she felt if her higher-up was asking if she was ready to go on another deployment, they must have enough confidence in her to send her. Her deployment in Afghanistan was from November 2011 to June 2012.

Her second deployment was a lot different from her first deployment. One thing she describes as being different is barely being able to Skype with her family because of Wi-Fi issues in Afghanistan. Another issue was it took a long time to receive care packages out there due to more security protocols that had to be done. Aside from those few things she had to deal

with, she enjoyed her time in Afghanistan. While on deployment Jaime had to work 12-hour shifts to maintain the coming and going of C17 planes.

Jaime Fox's deployment ended in 2012, and she was finally able to return home. It's inspiring to know at the age of 17 she had her mind set on joining the Air Force for Aviation and that's exactly what she did. She didn't let any obstacles, or anything stop her from accomplishing her dreams. Thank You Jaime Fox for your service.



Tribute to Female

Veterans by Nicholas Gargiulo

For this assignment I choose to go about completing it by viewing the virtual exhibit of "The Color of Freedom: Honoring the Diversity of America's Service Women" on the Military Women's Memorial's website.

To give some understanding of my background of female veterans, I would like to preface with before viewing this exhibit I had very little knowledge of women who have served in the military. I haven't known any

women in my life who have served in the military. So going through this exhibit I learned a lot about the history of the role women played in military history and how their role has changed over the years. Before this, I had just assumed that women have been involved on an equal level in the military for decades. After going through this exhibit, I was just shocked to realize how recent their roles have been outside of working as nurses. This exhibit focuses on the history of women of color who have served in the United States Armed Forces and currently make up most women in the armed forces. Each section focuses on a different set of women of color who have served different roles in the United States military. I would like to take some time and share about 5 women whom I learned about during this exhibit. The first person I would like to highlight is Jasmin Moghbeli. Moghbeli served 15 years in the Marines as a helicopter pilot. In 2020, she attended and graduated from NASA astronaut training program. She is the only astronaut of Iranian descent.



Jasmin Moghbeli

Next, I would like to talk about Michelle Howard. Over her 36-year career in the Navy, Howard rose to the rank of 4-star admiral. She was the highest-ranking female officer in the armed forces at the time. As the first African American woman throughout her three-and-a-half-decade-long naval career.



Michelle Howard

Hardworking and dedicated members like her are the type of people to break down social barriers and lead the way for others to follow.

Cathay Williams was born a slave in Missouri. After the Civil War, Williams pretended and took on the identity of a man to fight in the American Indian War. She served 3 years with the Buffalo Soldiers before being discovered to be a woman and was ultimately discharged. She is the first woman to ever enlist in the US Army.



Cathay Williams

In 2020 army servicewoman Vanessa Guillen was murdered by a fellow serviceman at Fort Hood in Texas. She had been dealing with sexual harassment in the past but was hesitant to report it due to a fear of retaliation. Later the “I am Vanessa Guillen Act” was introduced, which took sexual harassment cases to be dealt with by a third party outside the military. This incident has shown that the military still has things to work on before things are truly equal in the armed forces.



Vanessa Guillen

The last person I would like to talk about is Tammy Duckworth.

Senator Tammy Duckworth is an Iraq War veteran, Purple Heart recipient, and former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). She was among the first Army women to fly combat missions during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Duckworth served in the Reserve Forces for 23 years before retiring from military service in 2014 at the rank of lieutenant colonel. She was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2016 after representing Illinois’s Eighth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives for two terms. She was injured in Operation Iraqi Freedom where her helicopter was downed causing her to lose both of her legs. Following her 23-year-long career in the army, Duckworth has currently served as a U.S. senator in Illinois since 2016.



Senator Tammy Duckworth (D) Illinois

The next section is an article by Marniweah Harmon. Harmon has interviewed a veteran, and the veteran has chosen to remain anonymous.



Female Veteran Tribute

Interview with a Female Veteran

By Marniweah Harmon

Demographics: 38 y/o, female from Brooklyn, NY, retired Army Private

1. What inspired you to join the military, and how did your journey begin? She was inspired by the desire to branch away from family, grow, and get out independently. She was in a hair salon contemplating a life change when she saw a recruitment commercial on television. It was a way for her to stabilize her life, meet people, travel the world, and go to school. Because of the required commitment level, she knew she couldn't renege- she signed up in early December 2008 and was gone by January 2009.

2. Can you share a significant experience or memory from your time in the military that has stayed with you? While preparing for her first deployment, she suffered a back injury but moved forward with deployment plans. In the last stages, before leaving, there was a mandatory physical where she found out she was pregnant. She wasn't planning on having children, wasn't married, and didn't have a committed partner. She couldn't abort the pregnancy, so she remained behind while her unit was deployed. Not everyone in her unit returned home- she lost 3 friends.

3. What challenges did you face as a female in the military, and how did you

overcome them? She talks about her commander not liking her- she thought it was because he didn't like females in the military. He expressed concerns about their lack of skills and strengths to be proper soldiers.

4. How did your military experience influence your views on leadership? This time helped her understand what good leadership looked like. It also forced her to become a leader. It helped her process her actions and how they affected others. She matured and became a team player—because lives depended on making good decisions.

5. What advice would you give young women considering a career in the military? She emphasized the need for extensive research. Anyone, but especially women, knows what you're getting into. If she could repeat her experience, she would have gone in when she was younger, possibly a different branch, maybe the reserves or National Guard.



We can learn so much about female veterans from a historical

perspective by visiting our local museums in person or viewing a virtual museum as we did during the pandemic.

Learn More About Women Veterans by *Mary Hoskins*

Educate yourself, your children, and those around you. Visit museums and memorials, many of which have specific displays to honor the sacrifices and triumphs of women veterans. Warner Robins, Georgia has an Air Force Museum. Local libraries have exhibits.



Today I decided to visit my local Tubman Museum located in Macon, Georgia.



I've learned from going to this museum the pain that it took for our women to be seen as someone worthy of a job, pictured as a human being, someone who is described as strong and independent, and someone worthy of opportunities. Our women took on a leap of faith to save our culture and existence. There's one woman who will always be remembered by me and many others because of her passion for others to be free have freedom that would be Harriet Tubman. Today I learned that Harriet Tubman served in the Union

Army during the Civil War as a nurse.



Most of the nurses lacked training and still comforted soldiers and civilians during that war. They also made forty cents a day. The Civil War nurses were responsible for duties far beyond the care of their patients' bodies. They helped wounded and dying soldiers write letters home to their families. Those impeccable women made a difference in today's world, and I wish they knew the effect they have on me. I am forever thankful for every one of those women. I hope you have learned more than you knew about Harriet Tubman and what she went through while serving the army as a black woman of color.

Tribute to Female Veterans:

Elizabeth A. Allen

By: Haley Lopez

In 1965, Elizabeth A. Allen graduated with her Masters in Psychiatric Nursing. Her main objective was to get her boots on the ground in Vietnam. She had two brothers that were already fighting. In 1966, she was shipped off to Vietnam and worked closely with both civilians and wounded soldiers. As one of the very few African American Army Nurses, Allen offers a unique perspective of the Vietnam War.



Elizabeth A. Allen

Allen was sent to the only hospital in Cu Chi, a rural area of Ho Chi Minh. She was assigned to this outpost because she was the only Black woman and stayed for six weeks with Vietnamese patients. She would treat members of the Viet Cong, pregnant women, children who came missing limbs, and babies suffering from

various diseases such as tuberculosis.

She took all of this in stride since

“[She] takes life as life is.” Allen

worked tirelessly to offer as much as

she could to alleviate the pains of

anyone in need. It was reported that

some nurses offered preferential

treatment to soldiers, but not Elizabeth.

As a Black woman in the United States

Allen was all too familiar with the

subpar healthcare offered compared to

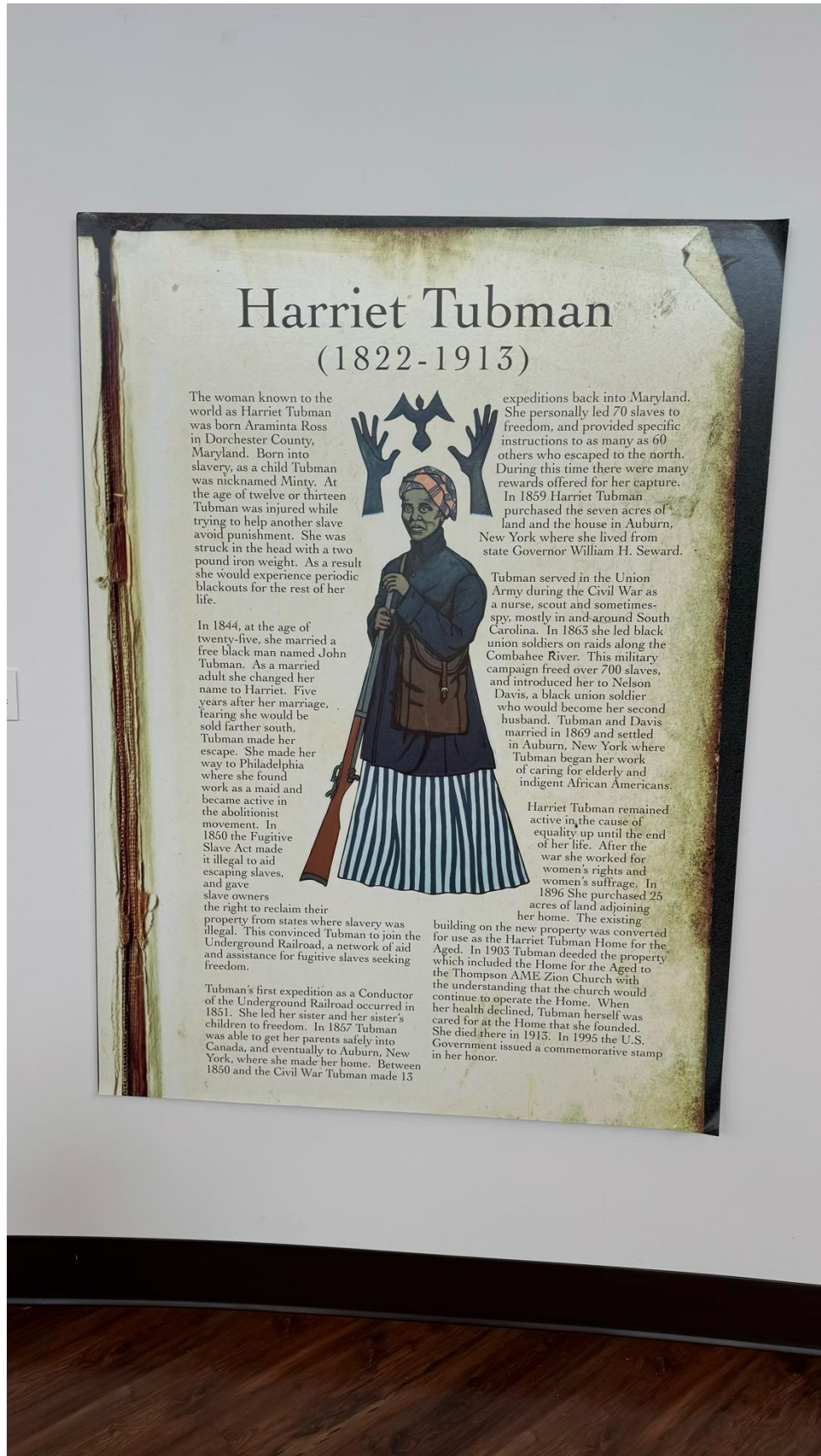
white people. If she were to do the

same in Vietnam she was just as bad as

they were. Allen also quickly became

familiar with the sound of an

‘incoming’ throughout her deployment.



Her life revolved around providing the best care to injured soldiers in her new post even during heavy fire. Hopping on med-vac at a moment's notice to even being told she might have to be left in an active combat zone were some of the intense situations Elizabeth found herself in. During her time in Vietnam, she experienced the scariest moments of her life but was also left with an abundance of educational and philosophical learning.

Tribute to women veterans.

By: *Clifford Mace*

I had the privilege of interviewing a local veteran business owner, Mrs. Lisa Hollis.



Lisa Hollis, owner Silloh Blu Boutique
Hollis owns Silloh Blu Boutique. Lisa is originally from Elizabethtown Kentucky. Leaving in 1982 at the age of 17 to join the army. She and her mother were driving along one Friday not long after graduating high school and pulled into a recruiter's office, after taking the ASVAB test that very same day she left for boot camp just three

days later, on Monday. I would say mighty brave for someone who's only 17.



Hollis said there were two main reasons for deciding to join the army. One is that in Kentucky if you didn't own and raise horses there weren't many other jobs besides working in a factory, and secondly the desire to travel. Well, joining the military allowed her to travel. She started in Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where she attended boot camp. Hollis was also stationed at three other bases during her time in the army, Fort Bliss in Texas, Camp Humphreys in South Korea, and Wiesbaden Army Airfield in Germany. Wiesbaden was her favorite duty station by far. Hollis did two enlistments in the army for a total of eight years of service to our country. On her first enlistment, she was a

patriot missile crew member first class, Hollis was part of the first battalion that worked on the patriot missile when it was first introduced. Fun fact, Hollis helped create the training video for the patriot missile, and 20 years later when her son enlisted in the army he went into the same field as his mother and got to watch the training video she helped create. During Hollis' second enlistment, she was an executive administrative assistant for general officers, and she ended her service in the military as an E5. Her military life didn't end there though as her husband was also in the army which he retired from. As mentioned earlier she had a son in the army, also had a son who was in the Air Force, and she has a daughter that is in college.

After her time in the army, Hollis continued serving her country as a civilian working for the federal government. Hollis retired from Robins Air Force Base on December 31, 2020; she worked in human resources. She didn't retire long though, because on August 2nd, 2022, she opened the doors to her boutique here in Warner Robins.



Lisa Hollis, owner Silloh Blu Boutique

The name of her boutique was created in what I think is a cool way, Silloh is her last name spelled backwards. The reason she opened her boutique comes from her love of shopping and meeting new people. Although it has mostly been what she expected owning her own business can be a bit challenging at times, she said. What helps Hollis through those challenging times is the resilience and resourcefulness she learned while in the military. In closing, Lisa Hollis left me with some advice for any young woman thinking about joining the military. Do it, you will learn resourcefulness, independence, and self-reliance.

Tribute to Female Veterans

By Tyler McCook

I decided to pay tribute to



Jennifer Marshall. During her time in the Navy Marshall was a logistic specialist, and aircraft handler and participated in her ship's sexual assault victim intervention program. Marshall's career changed heavily after her service in the Navy. Marshall highlighted her adaptability for change by pursuing a career as an actress, landing multiple roles through post-service career, the most recent role of hers being Susan Hargrove in Netflix's *Stranger Things*. Marshall has not forgotten the importance of serving your country as she continues to advocate for veterans' rights and mental health awareness throughout the nation, using her platform as an accomplished actress to highlight these important issues. Jennifer Marshall embodies nothing but respect both on and off the

screen, inspiring others with her proud commitment and I am proud to have researched the excellent and brave Jennifer Marshall.

Tribute To Female Veterans

Lt. Commander Holly Harrison

By Juan Noria



Lieutenant Commander Holly Harrison

Harrison's story isn't just about her doing great things in the military; it's about her showing bravery, and leadership, and making history as the first woman in the U.S. Coast Guard to earn the Bronze Star for her continued and dedicated efforts in the Iraq war. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, she led a small team on the Aquidneck cutter. Their job was to patrol a dangerous river between Iraq and Kuwait, making sure no weapons or oil got through that could be affiliated to terrorism at the time. It was tough because the river was shallow, had hidden mines, and wasn't mapped well all while in the middle of a war. Although it was hard it allowed

friendly vessels to safely travel the waters.

What impresses me the most about Harrison's story is how she never gave up, even when things got hard. She had to make tough decisions to keep her team safe and complete their mission. It wasn't just about doing her job; it was about being responsible for everyone's safety. But what's impressive is that Harrison's story isn't just about medals and awards. It's about the human side of things. Imagine the pressure she felt, knowing that everyone was counting on her. Yet, she stayed strong, built trust with her team, and showed them what real leadership looks like, I'm sure her team was proud to have her as commander.

Thinking about Harrison's journey teaches me that no matter how tough things get, you can't give up. True leadership isn't just about giving orders; it's about being brave and inspiring others to do their best. It's also about accepting orders, after 9/11 her orders changed, and sent to these locations for this mission which she took on without question. Now, as the executive officer of the Maritime Law Enforcement Academy, Harrison is still inspiring others. Her story reminds us that with determination and courage, we can overcome any challenge and make a difference in the world. We thank her for her service so that we can continue to enjoy our freedom in this great nation.

Tribute to Female

Veterans *By Susan Proffitt*

I went to the Museum of Aviation in Warner Robins, GA to learn more about women veterans. There were only two areas in the museum that showed the history of women veterans. I didn't realize it would be that hard to come up with the history of women veterans but after a little more reading and research, I understand why.

Historically, women in the military served primarily as nurses or secretaries.



Nurses have served with American military forces since the Revolution. During World War II, they served on land, sea, and in the air. If women served on land, they arrived within days of the first U.S. troops. Women experienced the same dangers and hardships with

the troops on the frontlines. Many nurses were captured by the Japanese as Prisoners of War. Women couldn't care for the military patients but continued to care for the sick or injured in the camp. The U.S. Army Nurse Corps suffered the highest number of casualties of all of WWII women's components with over 200 killed. More than 1600 women received medals for their service in action.



Later, the Women Airforce Service Pilots was formed (WASP). Ann Baumgartner became the first woman to fly the Bell YP-59, America's first fighter jet.



Ann Baumgartner

Her assignment as a fighter flight test pilot ended in December 1944 when

WASPS became demobilized. Congress refused to militarize the program, so it ended. Thirty years later, females joined the training program of all three services. Another woman I learned about is Ruth Lee Spitz.



Ruth Lee Spitz, from basic training

She was captured by the Japanese and was sent to a Shanghai prison camp. Released in a prisoner exchange in 1943, she joined the Army Nurse Corps and served as a nurse and interpreter until the end of the war. She retired as a major in 1964.



Ruth Lee Spitz Photographed Thursday, Aug.

14, 2014. (Pioneer Press: Jean Pieri)

Of the women veterans I have read about, these two amazed me. They were both courageous in their careers in their ways. I couldn't imagine being captured and then staying in the military till you retired. It would also be neat to be Baumgartner and be able to say I was the first woman to fly the first fighter jet. Baumgartner and Spitz are both inspirations for any woman out there because they show anything is possible for women.

Here is a fascinating interview *by Shakia Sargent*

1. What is your full name?
Darlene Christian

2. What month/year did you enlist? What were your emotions like that day? How did you mentally prepare for the change? April 10, 1981, I was very excited and nervous, and I had no idea what was ahead for me.

3. What were some of the reasons that you joined the military? How did you choose your branch of service?
During that time, I was very close to graduation with no plans or finances for college. There was a commercial on TV about joining Uncle Sam. So, I took a chance and called the recruitment phone number.

4. How did you tell your family and friends that you were joining the military? I screamed I have joined the Army, and no one can stop me.

5. If you deployed overseas, how did you tell your loved ones you were being deployed? Overseas was my first deployment and when I had received my papers, I told them, and of course, they were very afraid for me. I was sixteen when I graduated.

6. What was your ranking and how long did it take to get there? My rank was E4 specialist, and it only took 2 years.

7. Did you meet your husband while in the service? No

8. Did you have children while serving in the military? No.

9. Is there someone you served with that you remember fondly? Of course, several people helped shape my career and caused me to stay within professional development. They will always be in my remembrance.

10. What are 2 of your most memorable moments while being enlisted? Bootcamp and serving in Frankfurt Germany learning their culture.

11. Did you pursue an education while enlisted? No, I wish that I had.

12. When you finally decided to step away, what was your mindset at that time? I was afraid of the wars that the United States began to engage in. A lot of my friends volunteered to go to Iran.

13. Do you think serving has affected you somehow? Yes, my resolve and discipline from serving have helped shape who I am today. Now I believe that in any journey the paths of life take a person, we have what it takes to embrace them with courage.

14. What did the military teach you about yourself? I am stronger than the little girl who began and now I am stronger than anything I face in life.

15. Would you encourage your children, family, or strangers to enlist? Is there anything you wish civilians understood about military service? Yes, I wished they

understood that it takes unity to conquer an enemy, and the Armed Forces are a family unit forged in honor.



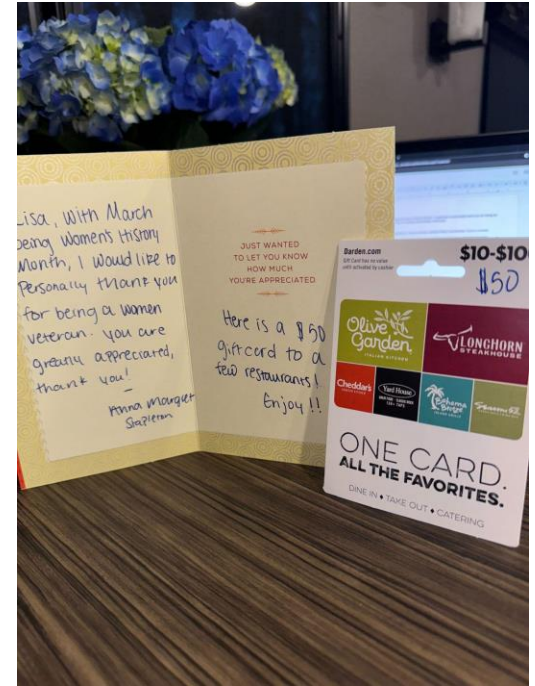
Darlene Christian

WE ARE GOING TO CONCLUDE OUR
TRIBUTE TO FEMALE VETERANS
WHERE A STUDENT CHOSE TO
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX AND GO
THE EXTRA MILE TO EXTEND ACTS
OF KINDNESS.

By Anna Stapleton

I chose to thank a family friend, Lisa Rowley. Lisa is a female veteran who served our country. She was stateside here in Georgia, and although she wasn't overseas, she still played a big part in keeping our country safe. I am thankful for Lisa's role in the U.S. Army, and I appreciate all the female veterans. To show my appreciation, I wrote a

"Thank You" card, and I gifted Lisa a gift card to Longhorn Steakhouse.



To all our readers keep reading. Let's continue to remember our troops: those who are currently serving. You may not be able to send a care package but a card or a letter of kind words and encouragement speaks volumes. Always remember those who have served and those who gave their lives for us to enjoy life and the pursuit of happiness. We hope our tribute to female veterans during Women's History Month 2024 is a reminder to veteran students how valuable to MGA each of you enriches us. Our mission is to assure you that we are here for you. May peace, safety, and wellness surround each of you and your family! Thank you for your service. We look forward to serving you in our next edition in fall 2024.

This spot is for you! If you were missing from our March edition, 2024, we can help. We invite you to share your military-to-college experience with us. For consideration in the Fall 2024 issue, please submit your story and pictures to grace.adamssquare@mga.edu