HOOAH! WE DID IT
Contributed by Gail Howell

Thanks to the generosity of you, the friends and supporters of the Army Women’s Foundation, we completed the expansion of the U.S. Army Women’s Museum after many years of planning, discussions and fundraising. We did it!

It was a proud day for all on March 19th when Major General Dee McWilliams, USA Retired, President of the Foundation, and Peggy Trossen, Executive Director, unveiled the dedication plaque in the atrium of the new expansion. The plaque acknowledges the contributions of our friends and supporters, in particular the Rasmuson Foundation and the Estates of Colonel Ann B. Smith, Sergeant Major Julia Bennett, Lieutenant Colonel Anne O’Sullivan, and Colonel Shirley Minge.

The ribbon cutting ceremony was the centerpiece of Ft. Lee’s celebration of Women’s History Month and an overflow audience of active duty soldiers and Army veterans were in attendance. Several supporters of the Foundation were present to celebrate this milestone event and witness the plaque unveiling.

Thank you to all who helped make this expansion a reality. We did it!

For more about the event, please visit our Foundation web site at www.awfdn.org.

Francoise Bonnell, Army Women’s Museum acting director; William Moore, deputy to the commanding general, Combined Arms Command and Sustainment of Excellence; retired Command Sgt. Maj. Michele S. Jones, special assistant to the Secretary of Defense White House Liaison; Maj. Gen. James E. Chambers, CASCOM, SOCoL; and Fort Lee commanding general; retired Maj. Gen. Dee McWilliams, Army Women’s Foundation president; Brig. Gen. Jesse R. Cross, Quartermaster School commanding general; and Peggy Trossen, Army Women’s Foundation executive director (image courtesy of the U.S. Army).

Psident’s Message

This month has truly been “March Madness” for the Army Women’s Foundation. Here are the highlights:

• On March 17th, we held our second symposium on Capitol Hill with a focus on the transition of Army women into the workforce – from the perspectives of education, career development, and the work place.

• At our Hall of Fame luncheon, we honored the Honorable Tammy Duckworth and Brigadier General Wilma Vaught, USAF Retired. Additionally, Legacy Scholarships (again, thanks for your donations), were awarded to four deserving female soldiers and dedicated to the three fallen women soldiers from the Ft. Hood incident.

• On March 19th, we cut the ribbon on a new wing of the Army Women’s Museum, expanding the dream of a few committed WACs who, over 40 years ago, wanted to establish a museum to showcase the history of Army women. Today’s museum at Fort Lee is the only one in the world dedicated to Army women and tells our story from the American Revolution to Iraq. The new addition provides flexible space for training today’s soldiers and supporting local community activities. The museum addition was funded entirely by the Foundation. Your generous contributions to the Forward March Fund have been used for a great cause—honoring your service.

The Foundation continues to grow relationships with corporate, education, and government leaders. Our outreach has resulted in relationships with and financial support from companies such as Tri West, Booz Allen Hamilton, Healthnet Services, Microsoft, Raytheon, Cisco, Lockheed Martin, and Oshkosh. Educational leaders from George Mason University, Devry, and University of Richmond are increasingly engaged with our work. The Association of the United States Army continues to provide financial and in-kind services support. Government leaders from Congress, the Veterans Administration, and the Department of Labor have increased their interest and engagement. Most importantly, our connection to our veterans and active duty soldiers continues to grow. They are ultimately at the heart of our efforts. Our work is dedicated to them.

I want to personally thank every supporter, volunteer, board member, Director Emeritus, and members of the Leadership Circle who have been faithful to our mission and contributed to all we do. Finally, my sincere thanks to Peggy Trossen and her staff—their skills and dedication keep us on track and moving forward.

Let’s be proud of what we have accomplished together.

Best regards,

Dee Ann McWilliams
Major General, USA (Retired)
President
LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Contributed by Nanette White

The Foundation’s Legacy Scholarship program recognizes the importance of education by providing financial support to Army women and their lineal descendents. Scholarships are based on merit, academic potential, community service and need. For more information, visit www.awfdn.org.

Four deserving women, selected from an applicant pool from across the country, received the Army Women’s Foundation 2010 Legacy Scholarship. Congratulations to Tamara Aguillera, Sergeant Sarah Norton, Specialist Sharoyal Roach and Specialist Anne Stewart.

College tuition is on the rise and financial resources are declining, making scholarships even more critical to students today. The Army Women’s Foundation Legacy Scholarships provide $2,500 for education related expenses.

Consideration is given to applicants submitting an essay, transcripts of grades, recommendations, related expenses. Legacy Scholarships provide $2,500 for education to students today. The Army Women’s Foundation recognizes the importance of education by providing financial support toward undergraduate degrees to students.

The Foundation’s Legacy Scholarship program is to open a facility where she can work with women and children dealing with substance abuse issues. Her scholarship was sponsored by the Army Women’s Foundation.

Sergeant Sarah Norton joined the Army National Guard in her senior year of high school. She excelled as a flight operations specialist, soldier and non-commissioned officer. During her National Guard training, Sarah was selected to complete the lifesaver course and it was here that she discovered her hidden talent for medical care. Sarah enrolled in and completed a certified nursing assistant program. She currently attends the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee and will receive her degree in Nursing in December 2010. Sarah will be deployed to Afghanistan in June. TriWest Health care Alliance sponsored this scholarship.

Tamra Aguillera A Persian Gulf War disabled veteran is a junior at Appalachian State University pursuing a bachelor’s degree in social work. She is the single mother of four, working full-time at the VA Clinic in Hickory, NC. Tamra also volunteers at a local homeless shelter and her goal is to open a facility where she can work with women and children dealing with substance abuse issues. Her scholarship was sponsored by the Army Women’s Foundation.

Specialist Sharoyal Roach, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom is currently in the U.S. Army Reserves and works with the Department of Defense in Nashville. A student in the online program at the University of Phoenix, Sharoyal is studying Human Services Management; she will earn her BS Degree in August 2010 and continue her education pursuing her Masters Degree in Business Administration. Sharoyal plans to work in Human and Social Services. Her scholarship was sponsored by Oshkosh.

At 17, Specialist Anne Stewart joined the National Guard and after two years joined the active duty army. Anne was deployed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and is currently stationed in Germany. Anne is enrolled in the American Military University in Intelligence Studies. After completing her BS degree, Anne plans to further her education earning a Masters Degree in International Relations. Her scholarship is sponsored by Booz Allen.

WHAT THE ARMY MEANS TO ME

Contributed by Diana Huron, SGM, USA, Retired

I joined the Army in 1980 after a short semester of college. The Army at the time had the phrase, “Be All You Can Be.” After leaving an athletic scholarship behind, I saw my future with little hope of success. It wasn’t until after I squandered the best educational opportunity I had as a young Mexican woman did I realize I had made a mistake. Times were different then in San Antonio, Texas so the realization hurt me deeply. It wasn’t until after I left school that I realized I had quit. That would be the last time I would ever do that. I knew I never wanted to feel that again.

As I figured out what would come next, I kept hearing that Army commercial over and over again. It was speaking to me and it finally caught my attention. By April of 1980, I had enlisted. My plan was to seek out job training by joining as an MP. (Military Police) I figured three years should be enough to allow for some training in law enforcement. Three years turned into twenty-three years culminating with my advancement to Sergeant Major. In the Army, I fulfilled my goal of my education by completing an Associate’s Degree, Bachelor’s Degree and a Master’s Degree in Security Management while always looking back at the time I quit college.

I thought the Army was the best thing that happened in my life. Nearly seven years removed from the Army, and I still believe it offered me the best training in the world in leadership and management. I draw from my experiences in the Army to lead and manage a federal security program at the Department of Homeland Security. I enjoy my life now as a civilian while I mentor and coach civilian supervisors and managers. I use the same principles of leadership and lean on Army values to guide me in my role as a Unit Chief.

I succeeded in the Army and the same is happening again as a civilian. The only explanation I have is that I learned from my parents to have a strong work ethic. Having grown up as the youngest of twelve children with very modest means, I saw what my parents went through to get by in life. They worked hard and they provided me with food and shelter but more importantly with a great childhood. It wasn’t until I left home that I realized how poor we were. My parents provided me with everything I needed and sacrificed all for me and my siblings.

My family is proud of my accomplishments and I am starting to understand that I have done well for myself. I have my family and the Army to thank for my success. As a new member of the board, I hope that I can inspire others to accomplish their goals in life whatever they might be. I consider my life as an example of how dreams can come true.

I am extremely honored to accept a role as a member of the Board of Directors with the U.S. Army Women’s Foundation. Someone along the way provided me with opportunity after opportunity; I hope to be able to do the same for other Veterans.

THE ARMY WOMEN’S MUSEUM: 1955 TO 2010

Contributed by COL Patricia Jernigan, USA Retired

The Army Women’s Museum at Fort Lee, Va. is a “one of a kind” institution: it’s the only museum in the world dedicated to the history and accomplishments of women soldiers. It’s the direct descendant of the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) Museum opened in May 1955 at the newly established WAC Center at Fort McClellan, Ala. Center commander, Lt. Col. Eleanore C. Sullivan, directed the opening of the museum so that the WAC history, as shown by photographs, uniforms and memorabilia, could be displayed. The first museum occupied one room in the WAC Training Battalion headquarters; its operation was an additional duty for WAC Center personnel until a civilian curator was hired in 1966.

As the museum grew, it became obvious that a building was needed to house the artifacts and archives. Since government funding was not available, the private WAC Foundation was formed in 1969 to oversee fund raising, develop building plans, and supervise construction. Led by long-term Foundation president, retired colonel Bettie J. Morden, and with the innovative efforts of Wacs, veterans and friends, the new museum, built entirely with private donations, was dedicated in May 1978.

Although the WAC Branch was officially dissolved in October 1978, the museum remained an active part of the Fort McClellan community until the post was closed in 1999 as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process. Officials at the time considered permanently closing the WAC Museum, but decided instead to change the mission and move the museum to Fort Lee. The mission was expanded to include all Army women, from all components, and all branches. The new museum building, built with government funds, received strong support from the late Petersburg congressman, Norman Sisisky, and from Fort Lee authorities. Ground was broken in 1999; the museum was dedicated in May 2001.

The museum exhibits illustrate the expanding role of women soldiers as well as trace the history of women’s service from the Revolutionary War to the present.
The U.S. Army Women’s Foundation hosted its 2nd Annual Army Women in Transition Symposium on Capitol Hill on March 17. It was very appropriate that it was held in the Cannon House Caucus Room during the month we celebrate Women’s History. After all, in 1981, the Senate and House cosponsored the first Joint Congressional Resolution proclaiming a “Women’s History Week.” And in 1987, Congress expanded the celebration to the entire month of March. Since then, the National Women’s History Month Resolution has been approved every year with bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The U.S. Army Women’s Foundation mission “to heighten awareness and promote public interest in U.S. Army women and veterans”...and “being a dynamic advocate for recording the history of Army women,” is in keeping with this year’s Women’s History Month theme of “Writing Women Back into History.” The place and the time set the scene for a very memorable event.

The symposium was opened by AWF President retired Maj. Gen. Dee Ann McWilliams who welcomed all attendees and highlighted the theme for the symposium, “Army women, past and presently serving, have sacrificed a lot to safeguard our country. The Foundation’s Army Women in Transition in Symposium helps to focus on our Army women as they move from the Army to civilian life. Army women have much to offer as they enter civilian life, and we need to better recognize their capabilities and leadership skills.” General McWilliams recognized U. S. Representative Patrick McWilliams, D-VA, student soldier and President of American Women’s Veterans; Raymond Kelly, National Legislative Director American Veterans (AMVETS); and Dr. Randy Plunkett, National Director of Military Affairs at DeVry University. Discussions centered on the uniqueness of the veteran student. Mr. Plunkett addressed the cultural change and the need for support when entering an academic environment from the military. He described it as the “abruptness of leaving the culture of “we” and entering a culture of “I.” Veterans ask “where is my battle buddy...where are the other veterans?” Once the support group is established, all agreed that veterans have higher retention rates and GPAs because they are self-policing group and won’t let each other fail. The panel highlighted the challenges in the institution of identifying veterans, particularly women veterans, and the lack of resources to support them.

Members of Panel 1 – Combat to Classroom were Michael Johnson, Director of the Military and Veterans Office at George Mason University; Staff Sergeant Genevieve Chase, USA, student soldier and President of American Women’s Veterans; Raymond Kelly, National Legislative Director American Veterans (AMVETS); and Dr. Randy Plunkett, National Director of Military Affairs at DeVry University. Discussions centered on the uniqueness of the veteran student. Mr. Plunkett addressed the cultural change and the need for support when entering an academic environment from the military. He described it as the “abruptness of leaving the culture of “we” and entering a culture of “I.” Veterans ask “where is my battle buddy...where are the other veterans?” Once the support group is established, all agreed that veterans have higher retention rates and GPAs because they are self-policing group and won’t let each other fail. The panel highlighted the challenges in the institution of identifying veterans, particularly women veterans, and the lack of resources to support them.

Panel 2 Members of Panel 3 – Combat to Corporate were Lieutenant General John McDuffie, USA, (Ret), currently Vice President, North American Services, Sales, Microsoft; Debra Frett, CEO, Business and Professional Women’s Foundation; and Angela Messer, Senior Vice President, Boul Allen Hamilton. The Corporate panel members picked up where the Career Panel members left off. They all agreed that women veterans understand teamwork and are team oriented, that leadership is natural and they possess a winning spirit...all highly prized traits in the corporate culture. However, Ms. Frett said that the biggest problem is contact with women veterans because they are less “self identifying” than their male counterparts. Networking was the message from the corporate panel. Start networking while you are still on active duty, build lasting relationships, value yourselves and talk about it.

And on that note, the symposium was concluded. General McWilliams thanked General Foote and the panel members for their participation. She thanked the attendees for their time and attention. Those in attendance walked away with a sense of hope for the directions these programs are moving in and an appreciation for all of the people that work so hard to keep them moving.

Mary Coleman Spring commenting on the importance of lifelong learning.
The Second Annual Hall of Fame Luncheon and Awards

Contributed by CSM Cindy Pritchett, USA Retired

The history and accomplishments of women in the military has not been well documented. In 2009, the Army Women’s Foundation established its Hall of Fame in an effort to tell the story and recognize those women who have made a difference and significant contributions to Army Women.

This year the Foundation honored the contributions and sacrifices of two distinguished service women, Brigadier General Wilma Vaught, USAF, Retired and Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth with their induction in the Army Women’s Hall of Fame.

As you learn of their stories you will notice that Brigadier General Vaught retired in 1985 and The Honorable Duckworth began her service in 1992. Brigadier General Wilma Vaught is one of the most highly decorated military women in United States history, but her most lasting contribution will be her successful efforts to establish the Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation Inc; the first major national memorial honoring women who have defended their country.

Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth is the daughter of a U.S. Marine who fought in Vietnam. She was commissioned in the United States Army Reserve in 1992 and chose to fly helicopters because it was one of the few combat jobs open to women. In November 2004, while serving in Iraq as an Illinois National Guard pilot the cockpit of her helicopter was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade and she lost both her legs and partial use of one arm.

Both women are thrilled and, of course, honored to be mentioned in each other’s company. Vaught called being recognized alongside a true hero like Duckworth a “double honor.” “This is really an award that’s not just for me, but for them as well,” Duckworth said on behalf of all Army women.

Retired Maj. Gen. Dee Ann McWilliams presented both recipients with the specially designed crystal Hall of Fame award and said that the choice to honor both women was simple.

Thanks to Our Sponsors

Many thanks to our sponsors, without whom the event would not have been possible.
The past few months have been quite extraordinary for the Foundation. We have reached a milestone in our mission by adding a new wing to the U.S. Army Women’s Museum at Fort Lee. Long-time supporters will know what a journey it has been to reach this point.

We all must thank Foundation President Dee McWilliams for her vision and leadership in keeping us focused on our mission and reaching the goal of creating the new wing. Many individuals on the Board of Directors rolled up their sleeves and stayed on point. Staff spent hours reviewing plans and walking the site. Our project manager, John Pignatore, and the team at SMBW Architects and Trent Construction ensured that we complied with all Post requirements, and enabled us to complete the wing on schedule, something of a wonder in the construction world! You, our supporters, funded this new wing. We did this together!

Of course, this has been just one aspect of our mission. We are continuing to build our Foundation, in partnership with you and others such as George Mason University, the Association of the U.S. Army, and many corporate supporters.

Our focus remains the same—to continue to be the premier center for research and the dissemination of information supporting and honoring women in the Army, the national network for today’s Army women and a dynamic advocate for telling the history of Army women.

We have mobilized to spread the word about, and support Army women. We are strengthening our infrastructure and adding programs to fulfill the mission. As we move forward, we can only do this together. I ask for your ideas and your support.

It is my privilege to work with you.

Peggy Trossen
Executive Director
UPCOMING EVENTS

May 12-Summer 2010, Washington D.C.
When Jenny Comes Marching Home Exhibit – Sponsored by The
Army Women’s Foundation in partnership with The
Women’s Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery

May 13-15, Fort Lee, VA
Come Home to Your History Homecoming
www.awm.lee.army.mil

May 17-21, San Antonio, TX
AUSA’s ILW Army Medical Symposium & Exposition
www.ausa.org/news/meetings/medcom2010/

May 19-22, Las Vegas, NV
June 22-24, Richmond, VA
AUSA’s ILW Army Sustainment Symposium & Exposition
www.ausa.org/news/meetings/sustainment2010/

May 25, Bloomington, MN
Women Veterans Program From Bootcamp to Veteran V
www.dva.state.mi.us/Docs/Bootcamp2VeteranV-
05210.pdf

May 27-31, Washington DC
Washington DC Retreat for Veterans, Service Members & Families 2010
www.cominghomeproject.net/event/washington-
do_retreat_veterans_service_members_families-
2010

June 19, Worcester, MA
Massachusetts Conference for Women Veterans
www.mass.gov/?pageID=veteranshomepage&L=:
Lo-Home&sid=Eveterans

June 22-24, Richmond, VA
AUSA’s ILW Army Sustainment Symposium & Exposition
www.ausa.org/news/meetings/sustainment2010/

July 19-22, Fort Worth, TX
AUSA’s ILW Army Fires Symposium and Exposition
www.ausa.org/news/meetings/10_ArmyFires/

Aug 19-22, Tampa, FL
WAC Veterans’ Association 2010 Annual Convention

BECOME A “FRIEND” OF 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: ___________________________ Rank (if any): ___________________________
Address: ___________________________ City/State/Zip: ___________________________
Phone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

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

☐ Program Support & General Operations
☐ Bronze Plaque Memorial Fund* (Name of honoree: ___________________________
☐ Museum Support

*Individuals or organizations may establish a memorial fund for a specific person. The deceased individual’s name is placed on a bronze memorial plaque once the minimum $100 donation is reached. The Memorial Plaque is dedicated every two years—the current plaque will run from Jan. 1, 2009–Dec. 31, 2010; you may add names of persons who died in an earlier period.

Person to be Acknowledged:

(Recipient of Friend’s gift or nest egg for Memorial Fund)

Name: ___________________________
Address: ___________________________
Phone: ___________________________

Method of Payment:

☐ Check (payable to U.S. Army Women’s Foundation)
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

Credit Card #: ___________________________
Name on card: ___________________________
Signature: ___________________________
Exp. date: ___________________________

Email: ___________________________

Relationship to honoree: ___________________________

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

Peggy Trossen (ptrossen@awfdn.org)
Chief Administrative Officer
April Booth (abooth@awfdn.org)
Administrative Associate
Brenda Armitage (barmitage@awfdn.org)

U.S. Army Women’s Foundation
P.O. Box 5030
Fort Lee, VA 23801-0030

Phone: (804) 734-3078
Fax: (804) 734-3077
Email: info@awfdn.org
Web: www.awfdn.org

© U.S. Army Women’s Foundation except where credit is otherwise noted.

The Flagpole is published by the U.S. Army Women’s Foundation. Views and opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Army or Defense. Department of Defense.