Ten years ago our country was attacked on the 11th of September, changing our lives forever. Members of the Army Women’s Foundation are proud of the service and sacrifice of Army women in support of our nation’s security. Their heroic actions have permanently changed the role of women in the Army.

This year the Board of Directors has been expanding activities to honor the history and service of Army women. After organizing and funding the construction of a new wing for the Army Women’s Museum at Fort Lee, we are continuing that support, but are looking beyond that traditional association to seek other ways to honor Army women. Recently we gave a grant to the Fort Des Moines Museum. Fort Des Moines hosted the first training center for the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in 1942. Additionally, we co-sponsored the Janey Comes Marching Home exhibit at the Women’s Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery. We will continue to broaden our contributions to honor Army women and preserve our history.

Recognizing that education is key to advancement in the Army and success in the civilian world after service, we are expanding our Legacy Scholarship program. These scholarships support the educational efforts — whether at a community college or in a university — of Army women and their children.

Building on positive responses we received for the Army Women in Transition Symposium on Capitol Hill in March, your Foundation has already received substantial corporate and individual financial sponsorship for the fourth Symposium to be held in March 2012. This event has become a powerful tool for informing the business world, law makers, and government administrators of issues of importance to Army Women. To extend this important informational event to our soldiers and veterans, the Symposium is being videotaped, thanks to a major grant by Booz Allen Hamilton. The Symposium proceedings now will be available to a world-wide audience.

To connect with today’s soldiers and veterans, we are using social media to communicate. Join the Foundation by “friending” the Army Women’s Foundation on Facebook. We will also have a booth at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Convention in Washington, D.C. in October. Please stop by our booth and become better acquainted.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Best regards,

Dee Ann McWilliams
Major General, USA (Retired)
President
I joined the Army in 2001 shortly after 9/11. I can’t say this was a patriotic choice; frankly, I’d been struggling in school and the recruiting commercials following the horrific events opened my eyes to a different path – one I never thought I would consider. After a few years, I ended up boots-on-ground in the middle of Iraq. I will say this: Iraq was a life-changing experience, which I expected, although I never imagined it would be as altering as it was. Yeah, I saw stuff. So did everyone else.

I came home late 2006, immediately jumped into college and absolutely loved it. I was confident in my ability to cope with what I had seen and done in Iraq. I was truly interested in the education I was receiving and was thrilled to have the support of my family and my friends.

Everyone began to take notice and they all began to let me know, “Hey, Meg, you need to get your act together here.” A soldier sat me down one day on Reserve weekend and said, “Listen, Sergeant Krause, here are the signs and symptoms; you’re exhibiting all of them; you’re not really helping this unit out too much right now; I think you need to go get help.” Sirens blared.

I landed face first in a pigpen, thinking insurgents might have been six or seven and each one was their Mom was in the Army. They explained she had some time off right now before going back to Afghanistan. I mentioned that my work was for Army women. They smiled, looked at my crutches, and very matter of factly asked if I was injured in Iraq and for what I can teach you about yourself and how to succeed. I would not be where I am today had I not stumbled into the Army, deployed into an unimaginable hell, struggled to transition, or had the help of so many. This is not a story of struggle but of success and I hope you can see how to get there in your own way. Our generation is knocking down barriers so others can walk through them. When you hit your own, in the words of some guy I deployed with, “Blow in place!” Don’t just leave them for the next generation to find. Set up a support network you can rely on for encouragement; they will be your fire team when you are most in need. Use them.

So I worked. Hard. I had an entire semester of school to catch up on, a job search that should have been finished before I began, and relationships to patch up. Courtesy of my therapist, I began addressing stuck points from my service and stuck points from the hole I had dug in my civilian life. Determination was sparked by the inspiration I had from all around and I suddenly found the drive to succeed.

It began with apologies, begging for forgiveness and demonstrating motivation to change. Tears, laughter, listening. My parents always answered the phone, despite the hour, and I began to ask for their advice. I used my experiences to help traditional students in my classes, whom I’d previously shunned for what I improperly perceived to be stupidity, understand new points of view. Thanks to the actions of a phenomenal staff and faculty at Penn State, I graduated with honors, receiving a bachelors of arts in public relations and a minor in political science. My first job offer came, despite a falling economy, directly after seeking help and beginning to lean on my vital support system. I began working to develop support systems for other service members and veterans in mental health, education and employment. This triad has been the underpinning I find I need to continue to be successful in my own life and I can’t imagine where I would be had that groundwork not been laid for me.

Today, I volunteer as a spokesperson for the DoD Real Warriors campaign, telling my story and encouraging others to seek help and set their own support system in place. I currently work at the American Council on Education as associate director for military programs, helping colleges and universities develop programs to better serve their student veteran population. I continue my service as a medic in a civil affairs unit and have recently been accepted to Johns Hopkins University to begin my graduate studies. I now know there is no barrier I cannot hurdle. When I hit one, I find creative ways to leverage my network so I can blow through it. I hope this leaves an opening for others to follow rather than having to hurdle it themselves.

To the women who came before me: Thank you. If it wasn’t for your setting the standard of commitment, service and sacrifice, I may have never been inspired to keep trudging to succeed. You are my heroes; I only hope my story honors yours.

To the women who will follow: This is your story too. Cherish every moment, good and bad, for what I can teach you about yourself and how to succeed. I would not be where I am today had I not stumbled into the Army, deployed into an unimaginable hell, struggled to transition, or had the help of so many. This is not a story of struggle but of success and I hope you can see how to get there in your own way. Our generation is knocking down barriers so others can walk through them. When you hit your own, in the words of some guy I deployed with, “Blow in place!” Don’t just leave them for the next generation to find. Set up a support network you can rely on for encouragement; they will be your fire team when you are most in need. Use them.
IN MEMORIAM

SERGEANT MAJOR

MARThA J. McBRoom

Sergeant Major Martha J. McBroom of Anniston, AL, died at the age of 74 on August 16, 2011 at the Veteran’s Hospital in Birmingham, AL. During her 23 year military career she was promoted to every enlisted grade from Private to Sergeant Major. Upon completion of basic training and graduation from Clerical Training School at Fort McClellan, subsequent assignment to Heidelberg, Germany. In 1960 she was assigned to the U.S. Army Recruiting Service and served in Dallas, TX, Elizabeth, NJ, Fort Sam Houston, TX, and Fort McClellan, AL. Upon promotion to Sergeant Major, she was in charge of all recruiting and reenlistment for the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX. She retired at Fort Hood in November, 1978.

Sergeant Major McBroom’s awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Good Conduct Medal, 7th Award and the National Defense Service Medal. She served as the President of the local Heritage Chapter 62, Women’s Army Corps Veterans’ Association and from 1990 to 1992 was the President of the National Women’s Army Corps Veterans’ Association. She was also a Heritage Chapter 62 representative to the Veterans’ Administration Volunteer Services in Birmingham. In addition to these services and accomplishments, SGM Martha McBroom also served on the Board of Directors for the Army Women’s Foundation and at the time of her death served as a Director Emeritus. We honor her memory and her dedication to Army Women.

LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Legacy Scholarships are available for assistance at the community college level or four-year academic institutions.

Community College Legacy Scholarships are in the amount of $4,000.

College/University Legacy Scholarships are in the amount of $2,500.

Applications must be postmarked by February 1, 2012.

For full details, application criteria, and to download an application for the Legacy Scholarship program, please visit our website.

AWF GRANT GIVING

The Army Women’s Foundation recognizes the importance of preserving the history of Army women and telling their stories. To that end, the Foundation is expanding its grants program to museums that honor and preserve the history of Army women.

We continue our support to the Army Women’s Museum at Fort Lee, VA and at the Museum’s request, we are supporting their efforts to update exhibits. We will keep you informed of our continued support to the Army Women’s Museum as they determine their needs.

President Dee McWilliams visited the Fort Des Moines Museum last summer and had the opportunity to hear about their plans for expansion and an exciting opportunity available to them. In 2009, the Museum received a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in support of the project “Collecting, Preserving, and Telling the Story of the Women’s Army Corps at Fort Des Moines.”

Fort Des Moines Museum is working to fulfill their vision of preserving the history of African American women, the leadership skills women developed and how they used them later in life, and most importantly, the story of courage in the face of segregation.

The Foundation is proud to support the Fort Des Moines Museum on this important project while continuing to support the Army Women’s Museum. Check our Facebook page and our website for continued updates on these grants and for progress on the Museums efforts.

To learn more about both museums and their programs, please visit their websites! Fort Des Moines Museum - www.fortdesmoines.org U.S. Army Women’s Museum - www.awm.lee.army.mil
UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 7-8, Ontario, CA
California Women Veterans’ Conference
http://www.calvet.ca.gov/WomenMinority/Confer ence.aspx

Oct 10-12, Washington, D.C.
AUSA 2011 Annual Meeting & Exposition
http://www.ausa.org/meetings/2011/annual/Pages/annual2011-02.aspx

Oct 21-23, North Oxford, MA
Honoring the Path of the Women Warrior: Retreat for Women Veterans
http://www.projectnewhope.ma.org

Oct 26, Arlington, VA
Female Veteran Internship Fair
http://www.finalsaluteinc.org/18.html

Nov 3, Boston, MA
Women Are Veterans Too! Event

Honoring Service and Sacrifice
While visiting our website, check out our online giftshop!
http://www.awfdn.org

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 27-28, Arlington, VA
WREI/AND Women in the Military Conference

Oct 28-30, New Braunfels, TX
F7 Lone Star Women’s Retreat 2011
http://www.f7group.com/?page_id=404

Nov 3, Arlington, VA
Women Are Veterans Too! Event
http://www.awfdn.org/?pageID=datemidwinter1-02&L=3&L1=Women+Veterans&L2=Honoring+Women

Nov 4, Arlington, VA
Honoring the Path of the Women Warrior: Retreat for Women Veterans
http://www.projectnewhope.ma.org

Nov 27-29, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Disabled American Veterans Mid-Winter Conference

Ongoing, Nationally
Hiring Our Heroes
http://www.uschamber.com/veterans/events

Nov 27-29, Arlington, VA
AUSA’s ILW Winter Symposium and Exposition
http://www.ausa.org/meetings/2012/symposia/Winte r/Pages/2012winter.aspx

Dec 7-8, Ontario, CA
Honoring the Path of the Women Warrior: Retreat for Women Veterans
http://www.projectnewhope.ma.org

Dec 10-12, Arlington, VA
California Women Veteran’s Conference
http://www.projectnewhope.ma.org

Dec 21-23, North Oxford, MA
Honoring the Path of the Women Warrior: Retreat for Women Veterans
http://www.projectnewhope.ma.org

Dec 28, Arlington, VA
Female Veteran Internship Fair
http://www.finalsaluteinc.org/18.html

F7 Lone Star Women’s Retreat 2011
http://www.f7group.com/?page_id=404

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