



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

FEB 26 2024

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: 2024 Department of Defense Women's History Month Observance

The Department recognizes March 1, 2024 to March 31, 2024, as Women's History Month. This year's theme, "Women Who Made Great Achievements," recognizes the achievements of military and civilian women, past and present, whose contributions to the mission continue to serve as positive examples for others.

We celebrate the resilience and triumphs of women, reflecting on the incredible progress the Department has made toward gender equality, while acknowledging the challenges that still lie ahead for women to achieve their full potential. Women nationally represent nearly 50 percent of the workforce, whereas women in DoD comprise 17.3 percent of the active duty military force and 33 percent of DoD civilian employees. These statistics suggest that the journey towards equal opportunity for women in defense occupations is ongoing. Sustained commitment and vigilance are vital to ensure reaching the most senior levels is attainable for all qualified individuals.

We are honored to amplify the voices and recognize the inspiring stories of women who have significantly contributed to the ongoing progress being made within the Department. Trailblazers such as Senator Tammy Duckworth, a combat veteran of the Iraq War who served as an Army Helicopter pilot; Ms. Stephanie Easter, the first civilian and woman to serve as the Director of the Navy Staff; Air Force Colonel Eileen Collins, the first woman to command a space shuttle mission; and Vice Admiral Yvette Davids, the first Hispanic American woman to command a Navy ship and the first woman to lead the United States Naval Academy, all exemplify the leadership necessary to sustain our progress and freedom.

I remain committed to promoting a workforce that fosters dignity, respect, and an inclusive environment for all Service members and civilian employees. Removing barriers and recognizing capabilities regardless of gender is essential. During this month, the Department celebrates and honors the contributions of women who have and continue to strengthen our mission readiness. For resources and help with leading and organizing observances, visit <https://www.deomi.mil/Special-Observances/#womens-history-month>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashish S. Vazirani".

Ashish S. Vazirani
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