



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives

Since 1987, Women's National History Month has commemorated the diverse contributions women have made, and continue to make, to our nation.

1862



Sisters of the Holy Cross served aboard USS Red Rover, the Navy's first hospital ship.

1908



Women officially began serving in the Navy with the establishment of the Nurse Corps in 1908. They were called "The Sacred Twenty" and served as the first Navy nurses.

1917



To fill severe clerical shortages caused by WWI, the U.S. Navy approved the enlistment of women in 1917. The Navy's first enlisted women more commonly referred to as Yeomanettes, served in clerical positions, translators, draftsmen, fingerprint experts, ship camouflage designers and recruiting agents.

After a 23 year absence, women returned to general Navy service as Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) in early August 1942 for WWII.

1942



1974



The sky is not the limit: six women earned their wings and became the first naval aviators.

1978

In 1978, Congress approved a change to Section 6015 of Title 10, U.S. Code, which allowed women to begin filling sea duty billets on selected non-combatant ships.



1994

Opportunities were later expanded in 1994 to include service on combatant ships and squadrons following the repeal of the Risk Rule which had been in place since 1988.



2012



Submarine warfare officers earn their "dolphins."

2014



The first set of 4-star shoulder boards for women made for Vice Admiral Michelle Howard following confirmation as the 1st woman 4-star admiral.

2015



Enlisted women can serve on submarines.

TODAY

women in our Navy make up

17%

of the active and Reserve forces.

59,000
ACTIVE DUTY

More than
9,000
NAVY RESERVE