



PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

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

FEB 22 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: 2018 Department of Defense Women's History Month Observance

The Department of Defense (DoD) is proud to announce the observance of Women's History Month, March 1–31, 2018. Together we recognize all military and civilian women who have served and sacrificed to protect our Nation.

Women have served our military since before the formation of the United States, supporting American troops as early as the Revolutionary War. Dr. Mary Walker was a surgeon who provided medical care to wounded soldiers during the Civil War, and later became the first and only woman to receive the Medal of Honor. While it was not until the last two years of World War I that women were officially accepted into military service, they have risked life and limb and supported operations throughout every major military conflict—some enduring the hardships of prisoners of war captured by enemy forces.

Both in uniform and through the civilian sector, American mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives have selflessly served to defend and protect the land of the free and home of the brave. Even in grim situations and under austere conditions, these women have persevered—standing tall and strong as defenders of freedom, liberty, and justice.

Women remain integral to our national defense and military operations—promoting troop readiness; providing humanitarian relief; helping to deter war, resolve conflict, and promote peace; and supporting civil authorities and missions around the world. Traveling far and wide, withstanding time apart from family, and forfeiting the comforts of home to serve their country and protect their fellow Americans and citizens of the world, women of the Department continue to exemplify the discipline, resolve, and unwavering allegiance to the flag of the most devoted of public servants.

The Department salutes all the patriotic women who have answered the call of duty throughout our Nation's history and those who continue to stand the watch. All DoD personnel are encouraged to join the Department as we celebrate military and civilian women for their service to our country and many contributions to the fortitude of the Total Force. Mr. Norvel Dillard is the DoD point of contact for this observance and can be reached by telephone at (703) 614-3397 or by email at [norvel.l.dillard.civ@mail.mil](mailto:norvel.l.dillard.civ@mail.mil).

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Robert L. Wilkie", is positioned above the printed name.

Robert L. Wilkie

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