OBSERVANCE

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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'VISIONARY WOMEN:
CHAMPIONS OF PEACE
& NONVIOLENCE
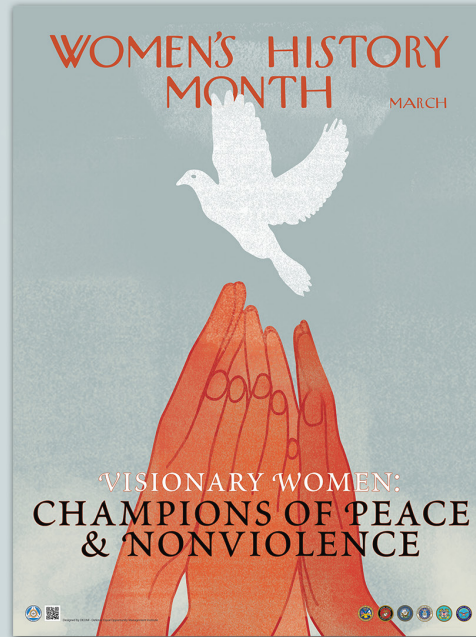
FACTS

Growing out of a small-town school event in California in 1978, Women's History Month honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of women throughout the history of the United States.

In 1980, the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8th as National Women's History Week was issued. The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration.

In 1987, at the request of the National Women's History Project, also known as NWHP, Congress expanded the week to a month, and Congress has issued a resolution every year since.

This year's theme is: Visionary Women: Champions of Peace & Nonviolence.

From the beginning of our nation's history, women have championed the use of inclusive, democratic and active means to reduce violence, achieve peace, and promote the common good. By enabling our environment—through legal defense and public education, to direct action and civil disobedience—their influence is undeniable.

In 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security Act was signed into law. The act strengthens the continuing efforts to prevent, mitigate, and resolve conflict by increasing women's participation in negotiation and mediation processes to advance stability.

Research on the effectiveness of including women in military peace-building and conflict resolution negotiations found that peace agreements between civil society groups are 64 percent more likely to succeed — and 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years — than agreements that did not include the female perspective.

To promote these findings, the Department of Defense is taking the necessary steps to be a global leader by setting a key example for international partners.

Throughout history, women have driven humanity forward on the path to a more equal and just society, contributing in innumerable ways to our character and progress as a people. Today's world requires a diversity of qualifications and resources to ensure that peace and security are achieved and maintained.