

Her Military Time:

1802 - West Point was created when President Thomas Jefferson signed legislation establishing the United States Military Academy as an institution devoted to the arts and sciences of warfare. It was in response to several soldiers and legislators, including Washington, Knox, Hamilton and John Adams, who wanted to eliminate America's wartime reliance on foreign engineers and artillerymen. Jefferson asserted to ensure that those attending the Academy represented a democratic society. That democratic society representation, however took another 174 years before Academy enrollment accepted female cadets. In 1976, the 4,000 Corps of Cadets included 119 women, of whom 62 graduated four years later.

1839 - The Virginia Military Institute was founded on the site of the Lexington state arsenal and was the last US military college to admit women. VMI is a public institution, not private, and taxpayers' dollars, especially women's taxpayer dollars, should never be used to discriminate against women. That said, VMI spent millions of taxpayers dollars to keep out women, arguing that accepting women cadets would destroy its methods and its mission. The 1991 Supreme Court decision that allowed women to attend the all male VMI may be Ruth Bader Ginsburg's most famous case. Attorney Ginsburg reformulated the question before the Court to be, not whether a female can be admitted to the all-male VMI, but whether the government can constitutionally deny admittance to a qualified applicant because of gender. The 1997 first co-ed class consisted of thirty women who were held to the same strict physical courses and technical training as the male cadets until it became apparent that adjustments to the standards had to be made. VMI resisted following other military colleges in adopting gender appropriate physical training standards until 2008 when it was listed as a goal in VMI's 2039 Strategic Plan.

1842 - The Citadel in Charleston and the Arsenal in Columbia, South Carolina were converted into military academies by Governor John P. Richardson through an act of the State Legislature. In his message to the legislature in 1842 the governor spoke eloquently of the educational purpose to be served by converting the State's arsenals to serve educational needs. Three years later they merged into one academy, The Citadel. The first class graduated six male cadets. General Mark Clark, upon his retirement from the Army, became President of The Citadel in 1954. Clark established The Citadel Summer Camp for boys, and revitalized the college's varsity sports programs. Academic programs established in the sixties that continued to serve the educational needs of South Carolina included the undergraduate Evening College in 1966 and Graduate School programs in 1968. But despite the governor's eloquent words of 1842 and subsequent academic improvement programs, The Citadel did not serve the needs of women until 1996 when women were first allowed admission to its Corps of Cadets. It came after two years of legal battles, when The Citadel was forced to enroll Shannon Faulkner whose application they previously had accepted, having assumed Shannon was male.

1850 - The United States Naval Academy became a reality after a history that began during the American Revolution in 1794 when President George Washington persuaded

Congress to authorize a new naval force to combat the growing menace of piracy on the high seas. In 1825, President John Quincy Adams urged Congress to establish a Naval Academy "for the formation of scientific and accomplished officers." His proposal, however, was not acted upon. A Naval School was established in 1845 without Congressional funding at a 10-acre Army post named Fort Severn in Annapolis, Maryland with a class of fifty midshipmen and seven male professors. The curriculum included mathematics and navigation, gunnery and steam, chemistry, English, natural philosophy, and French. In 1850 the Naval School became the US Naval Academy. And in 1933, Congress authorized the Naval Academy to begin awarding Bachelor of Science degrees. The Academy later replaced a fixed curriculum taken by all midshipmen, no midshipwomen, to study a wide variety of elective courses and advanced study and research opportunities. Women were first allowed enrollment to these opportunities in 1976, though it took an act of Congress.

1951 - The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) was established to provide advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment, retention, treatment, employment, integration, and well being of highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. Composed of civilian women and men appointed by the Secretary of Defense, DACOWITS' recommendations have been very instrumental in effecting changes to laws and policies pertaining to military women.

1954 - The US Air Force Academy was authorized by Congress and signed into existence by President Dwight David Eisenhower. The Academy, paid for with male and female taxpayer dollars, kept out women cadets until 1976, after President Gerald R. Ford signed legislation put forth by Congress permitting women to enter the nation's military academies. A statement on the USAF Academy's official fact page reads: Perhaps the most controversial event in academy history was the admission of women.

1998 - The issue of sexual harassment allegations and redress or lack of it in the military drew heavy media coverage regarding a case in Fort Belvoir, VA where women thought they were calling a hotline. A statement from the dean of George Washington Law School, indicated the case, "may make women reluctant...even fear coming forward."

2002 February - A panel was created to help address the problem of sexual assault within the military but the Pentagon let the panel's charter expire. Still known as DACOWITS, the board no longer advises the military on sexual assault.

2003 February - Following decades of sexual harassment incidents reported at all military academies, a major sex scandal at USAF Academy became public. Twenty female cadets said they faced swift punishment after making formal reports while accused male assailants went about their lives, and investigations revealed that nineteen had been commissioned as officers.

2003 March - Five former board chairwomen contacted Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to resist pressure to disband the board from conservative administration advisors who thought it was fostering "radical feminism" and was not needed because

women had been integrated into the military.

Sources: <http://www.usma.edu/history.asp>

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<http://www.citadel.edu/citadel-history/brief-history.html#origins>

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