



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, April 1, 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR: Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies

FROM: Kay Coles James, Director

Subject: Honoring America's Women Veterans

As Women's History Month 2003 comes to a close, I ask you to join the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in remembering and honoring - throughout the year - a very special group of women: those serving in our Armed Forces. Our Nation has taken a bold and courageous step to advance the war against terrorism with the commitment of over 200,000 of our finest. Many of these brave Americans are women.

Over the years, Women's History Month has celebrated the lives of women who have led and won struggles for equality, civil rights, and educational and employment opportunities. Today, we have another generation of women leading a different kind of struggle — the struggle for freedom, from Afghanistan to Iraq. These women have temporarily left their families and their careers to defeat tyranny today so that freedom may prevail tomorrow.

The theme of Women's History Month 2003 is "Women Pioneering the Future." As I reflect upon this year's theme, I cannot think of a more deserving group of honorees than the women who have answered duty's call to defeat evil. In every sense of the word, these brave women are helping to pioneer a safer, brighter, and freer tomorrow. They have earned our support and unwavering gratitude, not just this month, but every day of the coming months and years.

When these brave women return from their campaigns against tyranny, many will be seeking Federal jobs, and I urge you to join me in extending every effort to hire them. Though these women may be seeking employment long after Women's History Month has past, we can carry on the spirit of this proud observance by endeavoring to recruit and hire our women veterans.

Since its inception in 1987, Women's History Month has celebrated many great Americans. What began as a grass roots observance of the role women have played throughout history has blossomed into a month-long series of activities and events commemorating the achievements and accomplishments of women in our culture, and I am proud to have the opportunity to honor the service of our women in uniform.