



A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

On behalf of all Marines, I am honored to join the Women Marines Association in celebrating 80 years since our Nation stood up the first battalion of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve. While Women Marines have played a vital role in the growth and success of our Corps for more than a century, the official establishment of the Women's Reserve marked a major milestone of bringing women into service permanently.

Our Corps has come a long way since 19,000 women answered the call to "Free a Marine to Fight" during World War II. In every conflict since, women have served in increasingly expanding roles with utmost courage, patriotism, and devotion to duty. The history of women in the Marine Corps is full of broken barriers, courageous actions, and impressive accomplishments. As the roles of women in our Corps have expanded and women have risen through the enlisted and officer ranks, we are reminded that all who earn the title U.S. Marine are just that – *Marines*. Like the generations before us, all of today's Marines are playing a crucial role in cementing our legacy as our Nation's premier warfighting force.

We move into the future with a sturdy foundation, standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before us – including Women Marines like Opha May Johnson, Ruth Cheney Streeter, Annie E. Graham, Rose Franco, and Bertha Peters Billeb. These are merely a few of the women who have made a substantial impact on our Corps over the last century. Today, women remain crucial to our ability to carry out our mission – not only through the innumerable contributions made in their regular duties, but also in the unique perspective, insight, and in some cases access they bring to our Corps. As Women Marines continue to achieve ever greater things in our ranks, setting the standard and breaking new barriers in every field from ground operations to space exploration, we celebrate the legacy of all trailblazing Marines who have helped make a Corps the most feared, respected, and lethal fighting force the world has ever known.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. H. Berger".

David H. Berger
General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps