



# "TRUST TRANSCENDS GENDER"

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



## ■ PROJECT OVERVIEW

In the two decades since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, a profound transformation has taken place for women in the United States Army. Today, female Soldiers are integrated into every combat arms military occupational specialty and they have proven themselves able and willing to succeed in any capacity. The Center of Military History, U.S. Army Women's Museum, and TRADOC Command Diversity Office have assembled this tool kit of resources designed to give leaders the ability to have professional and educational conversations with their formations about the Army's successes and challenges in integrating women into all aspects of the organization.

## ■ SCOPE

This "Trust Transcends Gender" tool kit consists of a collection of resources that examine the historic changes to Army women's roles over the last two decades. These materials include an historical overview video, an interactive timeline, and a facilitator's guide designed to provide leaders the ability to have honest and authentic conversations with their formations about why women's roles have changed and how the Army has accomplished this transformation. These materials serve as both a retrospective assessment as well as a prompt for current discussion.



## COMPONENTS

All components can be located at:

<https://history.army.mil/genderintegration/>

### Facilitator's Guide

- This document serves as a menu for this collection of resources. It includes objectives for each of the resources, suggestions for usage, and discussion prompts.

### Videos

- The Welcome Video provides a brief introduction to the Gender Integration Initiative by General (R) Martin Dempsey, 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.  
(1 minute)
- The "Trust Transcends Gender" video gives a broad brush stroke of the historic changes to Army women's roles since 9/11. The video presents a comprehensive summary of the changes to Army women's roles over the last two decades with an emphasis on the layered progression, both at home and abroad, that led to the opening of all combat military occupational specialties.  
(7 minutes)

### Interactive Timeline

- Twenty-one featured profiles and stories on this interactive timeline represent the multifaceted changes associated with gender integration from 2001-2021. These highlights follow several themes by focusing on people, policy, and milestones. Exploration of the timeline provides users an opportunity to engage on a personal level with the information and make their own connections. These discoveries can be made independently during self-guided study or collaboratively as professional development group discussions.

Each entry includes photographs, a short summary, and additional resources to explore (articles, videos, etc.).



## ■ GOALS & OBJECTIVES

This tool kit is designed to be adaptable and flexible based on instructional time allotment and organizational goals and objectives. The facilitator's guide can be used by facilitators/leaders as part of larger diversity, equity, and inclusion training; as a way to utilize history as a backdrop for conversations to create historically minded Soldiers; or as a tool to support special observances or commemorations. It is recommended that facilitators/leaders use this guide as it best fits into their professional development programs.

### ■ Delivery Option #1: General Understanding

Time Allotment: 30-45 minutes

Resources: Videos, Highlights from the Timeline, and Facilitated Discussion Questions

An overview will give participants a general understanding of how women's roles have changed since the attacks of 9/11.

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize the unique challenges, evolving patterns, and pivotal firsts on the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan that led to policy and cultural change in the Army.
- Comprehend the challenges and successes the Army has had in integrating women into combat military occupational specialties.

### ■ Delivery Option #2: Analysis and Evaluation

Time Allotment: 45-90 minutes

Resources: Videos, Targeted and/or Individual Exploration of Interactive Timeline, Facilitated Discussion Questions

Highlighting targeted content will enable participants to see the relationship between individual service, mission requirements, and policy shortcomings that evolved during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Individual exploration of the interactive timeline, paired with conversations generated from the discussion questions in the facilitator's guide, will enable participants to synthesize their own experiences in relationship to the historical content provided.



Participants will be able to:

- Differentiate between institutional policy and the reality of a non-linear battlefield.
- Attribute values and leadership characteristics exhibited in the featured timeline profiles.
- Form judgements about the content and share contemporaneous knowledge gained during this period.

## ■ THEMES

**Meeting the Needs of the Army:** Achieving mission readiness in Iraq and Afghanistan created new and increased combat opportunities for women.

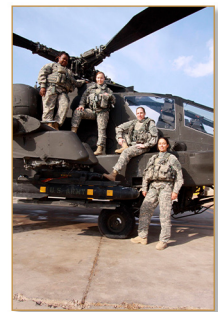
**Getting the Job Done:** Serving shoulder to shoulder with male counterparts, women performed their duties while exhibiting courage, excellence, and leadership.

**Achieving Institutional Change:** As policy shifted, women stepped forward to lead the Army's transformation into a standards based organization where every Soldier has the opportunity to serve where they are capable.

## ■ FACILITATED QUESTIONS

*2001: PFC Sayra Salas Sanchez/ 2002: CPT Sherry Womack/ 2011: Cultural Support Teams*

The need for mission readiness in Iraq and Afghanistan created new and increased combat opportunities for women. The need for Soldiers with particular skills combined with the cultural constraints in these countries resulted in women being attached to combat units for special assignments. Eventually, women employed in these types of missions were organized into Female Engagement Teams and Cultural Support Teams. How do you think women serving in these elite warfighting units changed minds about the larger topic of women in combat?



*2003: SSG Kimberly Voelz*

Many women served beside male counterparts in occupational specialties that were inherently dangerous. Staff Sergeant Kimberly Voelz and her husband, Staff Sergeant Max Voelz, deployed to Iraq with the 703rd Explosive Ordnance Detachment in 2003. After Max called in the location of an IED, Kimberly was killed by an explosion that occurred as she attempted to defuse the device. What did you find was the most significant aspect of the Voelz' story?

*2005: SGT Leigh Ann Hester*

Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester was awarded the Silver Star for her actions during a firefight outside Baghdad in March 2005. What was Hester's reaction to being awarded the Silver Star? How did Hester's award highlight the challenges of the Army policy in place regarding women in combat and the reality of Hester's assignment in Iraq?

*2006: CW2 Sheila Pressley*

CW2 Sheila Pressley deployed four times to Iraq and Afghanistan as an AH-64 Apache pilot. Pressley acknowledged that sometimes people were surprised to learn she was an attack helicopter pilot but there was a difference between surprise and disbelief. Pressley remembers having a conversation with a stranger who inquired about her profession. When she told the man she was an Apache pilot, he replied that he was active duty military and that he knew women were not allowed to fly combat helicopters. He asked what she really did and Pressley smiled through her irritation and said, "I'm a rodeo clown," to which he replied, "Wow, that's dangerous." What do you find compelling about this story? What are the barriers that cause surprise and disbelief in people about women's abilities to perform highly complex and dangerous Army jobs?



*2007: PFC Monica Brown*

While serving as a medic in Afghanistan, PFC Monica Brown exhibited extraordinary heroism during a firefight with insurgents. For her actions that day, PFC Brown was awarded a Silver Star. In interviews after the firefight, Brown repeatedly referred to her duty and training. What parts of Brown’s story reflect her commitment to these two elements? What other stories on the timeline highlight or exemplify duty and training?

*2008: GEN Ann Dunwoody*

General Ann Dunwoody was the first woman promoted to the rank of four star general. At her retirement, Dunwoody recognized the male bosses and mentors who helped shape her career. She said these men, “Gave me opportunities that I know if left to the bureaucracy would have never happened. [They are] leaders who opened the doors for me, leaders who looked beyond gender, leaders who could see something in folks that didn’t look like they do. Without their help, I know I would not be standing here today.” What characteristics could be attributed to General Dunwoody’s bosses and mentors during her 37 year career? Have you ever had the experience being mentored by an unexpected ally or being the mentor yourself to someone?

*2013: Combat Exclusion Policy Eliminated*

When reflecting upon the decision to rescind the Combat Exclusion Policy, General Martin Dempsey wrote in an editorial that, “Trust transcends gender.” Examining stories on the timeline, which Soldiers’ stories best reflect this sentiment? Can you share an example in your career, or your life, where this belief rang true?

*2015: First Female Ranger Graduates*

The graduation of the first two women from the Army’s arduous Ranger School was heavily publicized in the media. Why was this particular first so significant? How was this accomplishment reflective of the Army’s efforts to move to a standards based model, so that the best qualified Soldiers, regardless of gender, could have equal opportunities?



*2018: LTG Laura Richardson*

In October 2018, Lieutenant General Richardson took over as the acting Commanding General for United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), the largest command in the Army. In this role, she was responsible for 776,000 Soldiers and 96,000 civilians. Her predecessor, General Robert Abrams, praised Richardson by saying, "She understands the operational force. She understands what it's like being deployed and operational requirements. That is a breadth and depth of assignment history that very, very few officers – particularly general officers – have." How does this comment speak to the progressive changes in opportunities for women in the Army that prepared LTG Richardson for this command?

*2020: First Female Green Beret*

The Army achieved institutional change by eliminating restrictive policies and creating standards based qualifications for service. How does the story of the first female Green Beret in 2020 reflect these changes? Are there differences between the 2015 Ranger story and this Green Beret milestone?





## ■ GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What information in the "Trust Transcends Gender" overview video was surprising or new to you?
- Which stories on the timeline stood out as particularly interesting or compelling? What was significant about these profiles?
- If you could add a story to help fill out the timeline, what would it be? Why is this story important to you and how does it relate to the topic of gender integration in the Army?



<b>YEAR</b>	<b>FEATURE</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>
2001	PFC Sayra Salas Sanchez	Communications Operator Supporting Special Forces
2002	CPT Sherry Womack	Medical Officer with Green Berets
2003	SSG Kimberly Voelz	Explosive Ordnance Technician (EOD) KIA
2004	CPT Kimberly Hampton	First Female Aviator KIA by Hostile Fire
2005	SGT Leigh Ann Hester	First Female Silver Star Recipient for Combat
2006	CW2 Sheila Pressley	AH-64 Apache Attack Helicopter Pilot
2007	PFC Monica Brown	Combat Medic and Silver Star Recipient
2008	GEN Ann Dunwoody	First Female Four-Star General
2009	CSM Teresa King	First Female Commandant of the Drill Sergeant School
2010	SGT Sherri Jo Gallagher	First Female Soldier of the Year
2011	Cultural Support Teams	First Cultural Support Teams Deploy
2012	Combat Related Jobs Open	Army Opens Six Combat Related Military Occupational Specialties
2013	Policy Eliminated	Combat Exclusion Policy Overturned
2014	The Door Opens	Changes in the Army Reinforce Policy Shift
2015	Ranger School	First Female Soldiers Graduate from Ranger School
2016	PFC Katherine Beatty	First Female Cannoneer (Opening of Combat Arms)
2017	Infantry	First Gender Integrated Infantry Basic
2018	LTG Laura Richardson	Acting Commander of FORSCOM
2019	Diversity at West Point	Thirty Four African-American Women Graduate from West Point
2020	Green Berets	First Woman Serving in the Special Forces
2021	HON Christine Wormuth	First Female Secretary of the Army