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OFFICE OF EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMUNIQUÉ

Director's Greetings

I am pleased to bring you this Special Edition on *WOMEN'S HISTORY*. to commemorate the vital roles we have in shaping American history. While we should celebrate the achievements of women year-round, this dedicated month marks special moments in which historical



accomplishments, local and worldwide, emphasize our greatness.

This year's theme, "<u>Celebrating Women</u> <u>Who Tell Our Stories</u>," encourages the recognition of women, past and present, who have been active in all forms of media and storytelling.

Purple, green and white are the colors of International Women's Day, a global celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women on March 8—<u>purple</u> signifies justice and dignity, and being loyal to the cause; <u>green</u> symbolizes hope, new beginnings, and growth; and <u>white</u> represents freedom from immorality.

Unbeknown to me then, my story began taking shape when I was 12years-old. My mother said, "Societal norms are not a part of your DNA, and your intellect and abilities will be called into question because you are a petite black girl. But believe, with no uncertainty, that you belong in <u>every</u> room you walk in and are fully qualified for <u>every</u> role you pursue." I have carried those words of female empowerment and womenomics* throughout my evolving public service career.

We all know women are the *first* architects of society—game changers influencers—trailblazers—visionaries—innovators—who can become even stronger, together. When society eradicates glass ceilings, the sky will become our limit.

Let's go inside...

Gail V. Tucker

Director, Office of Equity & Inclusion



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MSP WOMEN OF DISTINCTION

On January 10, 1921, the members of a new police force began training at Saunders Range in Glen Burnie. Governor Albert Ritchie said he was creating "a State Police force" with statewide authority dedicated to fighting crime across Maryland. One month later, Governor Ritchie presided over the graduation of the first 35 members of the new Maryland State Police, all of whom were men.

Fast forward to 1974 when six females entered the Academy. You might say they broke the gender barrier 53 years after that first class. These courageous women took their place at the head of a long line of distinguished fellow female troopers who would build a legacy. On the Maryland State Police YouTube Channel, these women reminisce in a video about the pact they made with each other to make it through the Academy, and they did. They were the original trailblazers who created a path for today's woman in the police profession.

In 1975, Trooper Jacqueline Ringgold and Trooper Maria Barnett became the first African American women to join the ranks. In 1982, Trooper Maryann Pang became the first Asian female trooper. Lieutenant Colonel Cynthia Smith became the first female commissioned officer in 1993. Four years later, she reached yet another milestone becoming the Department's first female bureau chief. We are a police department that values our history.



Many dedicated female members of this Department have worn our uniform or worked in civilian support. Each of them has made their contribution to not only our Department, but to the safety and well-being of the people of Maryland.

In celebration of **Women's History Month**, we honor the legacy of the Maryland State Police women who have led the way and changed the course of our history. We reflect on their courage and their tenacity. With almost 54 years of service to the citizens of this state, Ms. *Ida Williams* is a prime example. She holds the record as one of the longest serving civilians in the Department. She is also the first African American civilian director and the first female director.

It is important to remember the role all of these women have played in our Department. I am proud to celebrate and honor their contributions and I salute each one, both sworn and civilian, who has ever been a part of this cadre of professionals known as Maryland's finest.

Colonel Roland L. Butler, Jr. Acting Superintendent

LOCAL SHEROES

C. Sylvia Brown uses her success to support children, schools, the arts, and the most needy. Through the Eddie C. and C. Sylvia Brown Family Foundation, Brown supports charitable groups addressing needs, in Baltimore, in the areas of health, the arts, and K-12 education. In February 2019, Brown and her husband gave \$3.5 million to endow the position of chief curator—one of the few curatorial positions in the United States named for an African American couple.

From 1991 to 2011, Dr. *Nancy S. Grasmick*, dubbed "First Lady of Education," served as Maryland's first female state superintendent of schools. We both are proud Western High School alumnae – the oldest public *all-female* high school in the U.S.

Since 2019, Adrienne Alease Jones, has served as the 107th Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates, and the first African-American and first woman to serve in that position. Speaker Jones has been a member of House of Delegates since October 1997.

After the Brown v. Board of Education ruling, Dr. *Enolia P. McMillan* became one of the first Black teachers in a white school in Maryland. Dr. McMillan was also the first female president of the NAACP. During her time as NAACP president, she helped move the national office to Baltimore City.

Aruna Miller, assumed office in January 2023, is the tenth Lieutenant Governor for Maryland. Lt. Governor Miller is the first South Asian female elected lieutenant governor in the U.S., as well as the first immigrant to hold statewide office in Maryland.

SPOTLIGHT!



Whether they are working to put on the performance of a lifetime, like in *Hidden Figures*, or fighting for gender equality, like in *RGB*, women are putting in the work, and their stories prove it. Below are documentaries and movies that celebrate the *Power of Women*.

BECOMING—Join former first lady Michelle Obama in an intimate documentary looking at her life, hopes and con-

nection with others as she tours with "Becoming." https://www.netflix.com/title/81122487

9 TO 5 THE STORY OF A MOVEMENT—In this documentary, female office workers in '70s Boston inspire change with a call for better pay, more opportunities and an end to sexual harassment.

https://www.netflix.com/title/81160953

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING—This documentary takes a deep look at gender disparity in Hollywood through the eyes of well-known actresses and female filmmakers. https://www.netflix.com/title/81110773

SELF MADE: INSPIRED BY THE LIFE OF MADAM C.J. WALKER—From a washerwoman to becoming the first female self-made millionaire. Based on a true story. https://www.netflix.com/title/80202462

HIDDEN FIGURES—The true story of three women who worked for NASA in the 1950s and '60s as "human computers" that history often forgot despite their relentless efforts being the reason that our mathematic world has advanced to the point that it has today. Streaming on Disney+ and HULU

SUFFRAGETTE—Dreaming of the right to vote, working-class Maud eagerly joins the early feminist movement. But when the peaceful protests of the suffragettes accomplish nothing, they're driven to more radical methods of effecting change. https://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Suffragette/80046819

THE MIRACLE WORKER—This outstanding classic is based on the true story of two of the great figures of American history, Helen Keller <u>and</u> Annie Sullivan Macy.

RBG—This riveting documentary chronicles the extraordinary life and career of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, highlighting the esteemed jurist's lifelong fight for gender equality.

"Each time a woman stands up for herself, she stands up for all women." ~ Maya Angelou

Have you contributed to equity-inclusion-emotional support initiatives for the betterment of MDSP? Let us SPOTLIGHT you in the next Issue of OEI COMMUNIQUÉ

MSP VISIONARIES

Since its inception in 1921, MSP's first six women troopers broke barriers in June 1974 changing the optics of "Maryland's Finest"

Jane E. Denby Virginia F. Kincaid (Lewis) Jane Diane Kulp Margaret L. Scott (Edge) Susan V. Topper

Donna L. Whiting

HERSTORY

In 2020, **Kamala Devi Harris**, a politician and attorney, became the 49th vice president, the highest-ranking female official in the U.S. history, as well as the first Black and first Asian American vice president.

Ketanji Brown Jackson was sworn in June 2022, and following a contentious confirmation, she became the first Black woman to be nominated and serve as a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Madam C.J. Walker was a Black entrepreneur who became America's first female self-made millionaire—specializing in beauty and haircare.

From suffragists like **Susan B. Anthony** and **Elizabeth Cady Stanton** fighting for women's right to vote, to the rise of feminism—these women were champions of temperance, the rights of labor, and equal pay for equal work.

Born as Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, **Maya Angelou** was an American memoirist, popular poet, and civil rights activist. She published seven autobiographies, three books of essays, several books of poetry, and is credited with a list of plays, movies, and television shows spanning over 50 years.

* WOMENOMICS - the concept that women's economic advancement can improve the global economy as a whole, and remove pay disparity and inequities.

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