



PROUDLY SHE SERVED

Honoring Military Women Who Exemplify Courage, Strength & Selfless Service

Overview

The [*Proudly She Served Portrait Series*](#) offers a beautiful and powerful testimony and celebration of military and veteran women, who exemplify courage, strength, and selfless service ~ everyday heroes who have made an impact through their service to our country and inspire the generations following in their footsteps. The series is a combination of well-known women veterans and lesser well-known heroes. Through its beautiful portraits and captivating stories, the portrait series offers a glimpse into why these women chose to serve in the military and why they are proud of their military service. Each woman's perspective is uniquely different, but together they tell a bigger story and passes on a lasting legacy to inspire future generations to reach for their dreams.



The Proudly She Served Project

The project includes a series of twelve 36x30 inch oil paintings and captivating stories highlighted in a beautiful coffee table book. The project's executive director is New York based artist, [Steve Alpert](#). Steve's paintings are included in the Pentagon, the Women in Military Service for America Museum at Arlington National Cemetery, the Naval War College Museum and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. His work has been exhibited by fine art galleries across the U.S. as well. A beautiful coffee table book featuring photographs of the portraits and biographical vignettes will accompany the portrait series. The stories highlight the women's experiences during their military careers including challenges and successes. The women also share the mantras they live by and who inspired them along their journey. Each woman's story and perspective is uniquely different, but together weave a beautiful tapestry that tells a bigger story of a common bond of service and passes on a lasting legacy to inspire future generations to reach for their dreams.



Mission

The Mission of *Proudly She Served* is to highlight women who served or who have served in the U.S. military ~ their service and sacrifice, raise awareness of the challenges many face when transitioning to life outside of the military, and to offer transition support and a helping hand as they define their post military career goals and next steps.

Project Vision & Timeline

Phase 1 – Veterans Day 2022 - Exhibits

There will be a series of exhibits (virtual and onsite) at military museums and State VA locations during Veterans Day 2022. The exhibits will consist of portrait prints available for display, a project video, portrait poster for sale, coffee table book for sale.

Phase 2 - Portrait Unveiling & Book Launch – Gala Event & Exhibitions

The Portrait Unveiling & Book Launch will recognize the women highlighted at a gala event and in a series of exhibits at a select number of venues in 2023, all in the Washington DC area. The dates of the gala and exhibits are in the process of being determined. For the gala, we've invited well-known Southwest Airline Captain, Tammie Shults, former Navy pilot who safely landed the Southwest flight from New York when an engine exploded, to be the keynote speaker. It is expected that a couple of the large sponsors will offer remarks and if available, Senator Tammy Duckworth, one of the portrait participants, will speak. We are also planning for the Center for Women Veterans (CWV) Director, Lourdes Tiglaio, or Deputy Director, Elizabeth Estabrooks, to speak as well.

Phase 3 - Exhibition Tour

Phase 3 of the project will involve a traveling exhibition tour in mid to late 2023. Prints of the paintings will travel to a selected number of locations throughout the U.S. (e.g. airports, museums and VA sites) to inspire young women to follow their dreams and break their own glass ceilings.



The Portrait Participants



Imagine twelve large paintings of women who have served in the military or are still on active duty - women who have proven themselves in combat and non-combat duty and who have continued to give back and offer themselves as mentors to those who follow. These amazing women have been leaders at all levels, both in the military and in the corporate ranks, and have overcome obstacles not known by the average public. Many have first-hand accounts of military operations and tell real-life captivating stories.

The amazing cadre of 12 women veterans who are highlighted in the [*Proudly She Served*](#) series include the following active duty/veteran military women:

Sen Tammy Duckworth - U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth is an Iraq War Veteran, Purple Heart recipient and former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. She was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2016 after representing Illinois's Eighth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives for two terms.



Nicole Cimino – Coast Guard Senior Chief - Nurse – Retired Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Nicole Knowles Cimino works as a Medical Cardiac ICU nurse and has been part of the Covid-19 care staff, caring for critically ill patients from the Washington State area.

Arabia Essence-Shanklin – Naval Academy graduate and collegiate track & field athlete, Naval Officer, and entrepreneur, Arabia Essence-Shanklin, is the face of our young military personnel serving today. Dual military spouse with husband, Marine Corps Officer, Gerrico.

Bernice "Bee" Falk Haydu - (born December 15, 1920) was an American aviator and Women Airforce Service Pilot (WASP) in World War II. Bee remained active in aviation and as an advocate for women pilots into her 90s and was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal

Kim Brooks – Koyukon Athabascan, Caribou Clan Native American, Marine Corps veteran & Combat Engineer

Kirstie Ennis – Former Marine Corps helicopter door gunner and airframes mechanic, Wounded Warrior, Ironman, Stuntwoman, Fitness Model, Summit Adventurer, Entrepreneur

Dawn Halfaker – Retired Captain, U.S. Army, West Point graduate, Wounded Warrior, Chief Executive Officer of Halfaker and Associates, an award-winning professional services and technology solutions firm. Dawn remains active supporting numerous civic, cultural and business organizations and is a staunch advocate for Veterans and Wounded Warriors.

Miyoko Hikiji – Former Army soldier, Iowa Army National Guardsman, award winning author of “All I Could Be: The Story of a Woman Warrior in Iraq,” model, professional speaker, and former Iowa Congressional candidate

Angel Hughes – Haitian immigrant, Coast Guard pilot, Founder & CEO of Sisters of the Skies, a nonprofit organization that cultivates and promotes minority women in the aviation industry through scholarships and mentorship.

Nicole Malachowski – Retired U.S. Air Force Colonel, F-15E Strike Eagle pilot and first woman selected to fly as part of the USAF Air Demonstration Squadron- Thunderbirds and inductee into the

Women in Aviation International Pioneer Hall of Fame, White House Fellow and adviser, fighter squadron commander, Professional Speaker

COL Karen Meeker - Chaplain, U.S. Army, United Methodist ordained elder, currently serving as the Landstuhl Regional (Germany) Medical Center command chaplain. Karen has served multiple combat tours throughout her career and is an avid speaker, counselor, and mentor who encourages all levels of Army leaders and personnel to “Dream Big.”

1LT Louise Rand – Army Flight Nurse Lieutenant Louise Rand, graduated from the Ruth Brandt School of Nursing and the U.S. Air Force School of Aviation Medicine in June 1945, and served in WWII in the Army's 830th Medical Air Evacuation Squadron with one of her primary jobs as caring for the wounded on flights out of Karachi to Cairo in the Pacific Theater of World War II. She was a favorite among the soldiers and the pilots. “She was in high demand because of her fudge, which she made on a little stove on the plane.” Louise died at age 93 in Bay Shore, N.Y. and was not originally authorized to be buried at Arlington Cemetery but her daughters fought to get Rand her own marker given her service. They prevailed, and Rand was buried at Arlington with a full honors ceremony on May 27, 2015.

Social Media

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-veteran-speakers>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/ProudlySheServed>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/proudlysheserved/>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/ProudlySheServe>

YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCju4MbDjgQAxwJ7hlnzIydw>