



**From The Desk of V Corps Equal Opportunity Sgt. Maj. Evy Lacy**

### **Women's Equality Day**

Each year on August 26, we celebrate Women's Equality Day to rededicate ourselves to the continuous pursuit of equality for women.

Democracy and the pursuit of equality in our society is a right that many have struggled for along with the idea of a better future in which

our children will live; a future for our children which has no boundaries based on gender, race, religion, color, ethnicity, or national origin.

As we celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, N.Y., we remember the pioneers who took part in that meeting and signed the Declaration of Sentiments, a document affirming that all men and women are created equal.

In the years following that fateful convention, the rights expressed in the Declaration of Sentiments became laws. Women demanded the right to vote, initiating a centuries-long women's suffrage movement, as early as the 1600s. Women's suffrage represented the first stage in the demand for political equality.

Woman suffragists often were met with hostility and sometimes violence. Some people believed that women were not suited to vote because of their temperament and circumstance. Some thought women could not be trusted to think independently, thus they certainly could not be trusted to choose a political leader.

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the National Women's Party started picketing the White House and even going to jail, all in the name of an amendment to the Constitution for the right to vote. In 1913, the party, comprised of more than 8,000 participants, led a march on President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration day.

The perception that women did not think independently enough or were too temperamental to vote proved to be without merit. Some of the most powerful leaders in the business as well as the political world are women. The wives of several Presidents have had influential platforms and have proven to be some of the most intelligent women in the world.

In 1893, New Zealand became the first country to allow women the right to vote in national elections. The 1920 passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution secured women the right to vote in the United States.

Observing Women's Equality Day commemorates the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment and calls attention for all men women to continue their efforts toward full equality for everyone.

For you'd like more information on Women's Equality Day or other EO topics, call me or V Corps EO Program Manager Maj. John Sirmon at 370-5768 or 380-5763.