

# Foundation honors USAWC's Foote, launches programs

*Gary Sheftick, Army News Service*

## Foundation honors USAWC's Foote, launches programs for Army women



*Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia Pritchett accepts induction into the Army Women's Foundation Hall of Fame on behalf of all NCOs. Beside her are retired Brig. Gen. Evelyn "Pat" Foote and the foundation's executive director, Peggy Trossen.*

counterparts.

Those were among the findings of a study conducted by George Mason University and discussed Tuesday on Capitol Hill during the inaugural symposium of the U.S. Army Women's Foundation.

The Army Women's Foundation is not exactly a brand new organization, but the symposium was the non-profit group's first national networking event, according to its president, retired Maj. Gen. Dee Ann McWilliams. She said the organization, which traces its roots to 1969 when it founded the Women's Army Corps Museum, recently began new efforts to advocate for woman who serve in today's Army.

The foundation launched a scholarship program last year for women in the Army and their children. Its first research project was the pilot study by the GMU School of Public Policy which found that one-third of 700 female veterans who responded to the survey had a personal income of more than \$60,000 annually. Only 10 percent of women in the general population earned that much, according to the last U.S. Census.



***Carlisle Barracks celebrated Women's History Month with a photo and book display in Anne Ely Hall. Photo by Megan Clugh.***



Nearly 60 percent of female veterans had a bachelor's degree or higher compared with only 26 percent of women nationally. Women veterans also had more leadership experience, as mentioned during all panel presentations at the foundation's "Army Women in Transition" Symposium.

"I think it is an indicator of how far we have come as an Army," Casey said. He related that three years after he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1970 at Georgetown University, women were first admitted into the Reserve Officer's Training Corps. Then in 1976, they were first admitted into West Point.

"So what's striking here is...how far we've come, frankly in my lifetime. And we're not resting on our laurels."

Casey congratulated retired Brig. Gen. Evelyn "Pat" Foote and Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia Pritchett, who were inducted into the foundation's Hall of Fame Tuesday.

Foote was the first woman to command a brigade in Europe, the first to serve as Army deputy inspector general, and the first female Army officer to serve on the faculty of the U.S. Army War College.

But she said that she was reluctant to accept the award because "So many women who came before me did so much to open so many doors in which we were permitted to walk." She accepted the Hall of Fame award in the name of other female pioneers who blazed the way in the Army.

Because of those who served before her, Pritchett said she can "be a theater combatant sergeant major and not have people blink an eye."

Pritchett now serves as command sergeant major for the Army element of U.S. Central Command. She was the first command sergeant major of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. And from 2004-2006, she was the command sergeant major for Combined Forces-Afghanistan.



***Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Runnels, HHC First Sgt., looks at one of the photos that were part of the display. Photo by Megan Clugh.***



"Today it's not an anomaly to see female leaders out there (in theater). And the male Soldiers do respect the women that we have today because of what we bring to the fight."

She accepted the award on behalf of the Year of the NCO, she said, and for all non-commissioned officers in the Army.

These first two members of the Army Women's Foundation Hall of Fame served together in the early 1990s when Foote was commanding general of Fort Belvoir, Va., and Pritchett was the installation's command sergeant major.

Five \$2,500 scholarships were announced at the lunch. Sgt. 1st Class Tammy Pallone was the only recipient able to attend. She returned from Iraq last month where she served with Task Force ODIN. An Army Reserve Soldier, she is now assigned to the U.S. Strategic Command and detached to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency at Fort Belvoir, Va.

"The scholarship to me means that I can show members of my Family, my children – I can show my troops – that education is important, and you can do it no matter how tough times get," Pallone said, adding that she continued taking classes by distance learning while she was in Iraq. She added that she had final tests online this week with Strayer University.

Other Legacy Scholarship recipients were Jennifer Bishop who is stationed in San Antonio. Jennifer Myrick, who is currently deployed in Qatar; Kimberly Zimmerman, an Army Reserve Soldier in Wisconsin; and Kristen Ribich, the daughter of an Army veteran.

The foundation originally was created to found the Women's Army Corps Museum at Fort McClellan, Ala., almost 30 years ago. When that post closed, the foundation helped move the museum to Fort Lee, Va. Then about three years ago, the Women's Army Museum Foundation changed its name and dropped the word museum.

"We wanted to do more than just support a museum," said Peggy Trossen, executive director of the foundation.

"We wanted to have events like this," Trossen said. We wanted to do scholarships. We wanted to be more relevant to today's Soldiers," she said.

The foundation's inaugural "Army Women in Transition" Symposium included three panel discussion groups Tuesday.

The first panel, the "Role of Women in the Army and its Evolution" was headed by Foote, retired Brig. Gen. Barbara Doornink and Dr. Stephen S. Fuller of GMU. He discussed results of the study "Telling the Story of U.S. Army Women: Opportunities, Challenges and Benefits of Service."

The second panel, "Workforce Development and the Transitioning Army Woman Soldier was headed up by Maj. Gen. Gina Farrissee, director of Military Personnel Management for G-1.

The third panel was titled a "Legislative Perspective – Available Resources, Continued Challenges," and was headed by Dr. Betty Mosely Brown, associate director for the Center of Women Veterans, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Brig. Gen. Belinda Pinckney, director of the Army Diversity Office and Representative Carol Shea-Porter of New Hampshire.