



MOTOWN WOMEN VETERANS

Motown Women Veterans says, "We are not invisible."



Alexis Harrison-Derriso is the CEO/ Founder of Motown Women Veterans Association and wants all to know that "female veterans are not invisible."

She enlisted into the US Army (1980-1984) during the time when women were joining the military by the hundreds. The goal was to "Be All That I Can Be".

She served as a dedicated Event Coordinator for more than 20 years hosting events for Female Veterans, during which time she was instrumental in successfully implementing the Voices for Military Women Program.

"I have positively impacted the lives of many Female Veterans, working tirelessly to connect Female Veterans to benefits and resources. I am very proud of my accomplishments and have built camaraderie amongst the women not only in Wayne County but across the nation," Derriso said.

Motown Women Veterans Association has conducted several events to bring Female Veterans out of isolation and building a networking system for generations to come. The group is currently planning an annual trip to Myrtle Beach, SC to celebrate Female Veterans all are invited

across the nation young and old to prove and show that you are not invisible.

"I have written several poems dedicated to Female Veterans which were posted in the Detroit Native Sun Newspaper, along with several interviews to discuss issues for the women such as housing, PTSD, and lack of respect for the women," Derriso said. (media Releases: Fox 2 Detroit News Women Veterans Recognition Day June 11, 2021, and Fox 2 Detroit News Curbside event to honor Women Veterans June 14, 2020)

There is help and hope for all, but I truly believe that I have been anointed to serve Women Veterans daring to be different and solely supporting the group through fund raisers to help Homeless Female Veterans. I will continuously seek a resolution for our homeless Female Veterans and their children. The group seeks to raise funds for the first of its kind Female Veteran Residential Living Facility and bring awareness to our causes.

"It is my commitment and belief in Women Veterans that we will reach phenomenal levels to address the needs by combating barriers that hinder help beyond the walls of medical treatment," she said.

Stand Tall and Look Good

STANDING TALL AND LOOKING GOOD
FOLLOWING ORDERS LIKE A SOLDIER SHOULD
CRACK OF DAWN WAKE-UP WAS NO THRILL, NO FUN
HEADING TO FORMATION FOR A 2 MILE RUN
NO TIME FOR MAKE-UP, NAILS, AND GROOMING YOUR HAIR
FEMALE VETS DIDN'T ENLIST FOR PAMPER AND CARE
WE MARCHED ON... WHILE CRAMPING INSIDE
WE SERVED THIS COUNTRY WITH STRENGTH AND PRIDE
WHEN HEADING TO THE BATTLE FIELD, NO ONE ASKED YOUR SEX
YOU ARE JUST A SOLDIER EXPECTED TO DO YOUR BEST
2 MILLION WOMEN VETERANS HAVE SERVED AND COUNTING
AND THE NUMBER OF FALLEN WOMEN IS STEADILY MOUNTING
IT HAS BEEN DRILLED IN OUR HEADS TO
BE ALL THAT WE CAN BE

NOW THAT OUR TOUR HAS BEEN SERVED, WE ARE NOT TOTALLY FREE
WE ARE OVERLOOKED BY THOSE WHO REFUSE TO SEE
WE WERE ONCE A SOLDIER, MAYBE NOW WE ARE MOMS
DESPITE TRAILS AND TRIBULATION, DURING THE STORMS WE REMAINED CALM
SO, **TO ALL WOMEN VETERANS** IT'S BEEN A LONG RIDE
SALUTE YOURSELF DAILY WITH RESPECT AND PRIDE
WE TOO SERVICED OUR COUNTRY THROUGH GOOD AND THE BAD
WE PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE SAME AMERICAN FLAG
YOU WILL ALWAYS BE A VETERAN SOLID AS WOOD
STAND TALL WITH HONOR AND ALWAYS LOOK GOOD

-ALEXIS DERRISO @8/22/2019

Michigan recognizes women veterans with



Women veterans have felt ignored for years.

Although they face the same problems as male veterans, such as homelessness and mental health deficiencies, resources are few if any.

Their contributions on and off the battlefield are finally being recognized thanks to a new Michigan license plate devoted to women veterans.

Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed bipartisan legislation last year that allowed the creation of the "Woman Veteran" license plate.

"I signed a bill that recognizes the more than 46,000 brave Michigan women veterans who served our nation in uniform, defending our freedoms abroad and here at home," Governor Gretchen Whitmer said. "These special license plates give these brave servicewomen the opportunity to share their stories and build community through their shared experience as women veterans. Together, let's continue to celebrate our veterans and fight for those who fought for us."

Alexis Derriso, founder of the Motown Women Veterans, is excited about the new license plate.

"It's a small symbol of the sacrifice women veterans have made to our country. It feels good to be seen. For many women veterans, we feel invisible. We were ignored for a long time."

Sergeant Stephanie Shannon, founder and CEO of Michigan Women Veterans Empowerment, is also pleased with the new license plate.

"I think it's awesome, and I think it has been long coming," she said. "We feel like we're invisible. I'm a disabled Gulf War veteran and a combat veteran. You don't think of combat when you think of a woman veteran."

Women veterans can apply to the Secretary of State for a "woman veteran" special license plate.

"Our veterans have risked everything to protect our freedoms and secure our nation. They deserve meaningful recognition for their dedication and sacrifices," said state Senator Sylvia Santana (D-Detroit).

Derriso added how some people are not educated on women's roles in the military.

"I parked in a veterans' spot at Lowe's, and a woman came up and said, 'That parking spot is for veterans,'" Derriso said. "'Yes, it is, because I am a veteran.' And she said, 'No way.' I thought, 'Oh my God, for this to be 2025. Seriously?'"

"It's really going to help bring a change on. We finally have something out there to identify ourselves as we're driving ...we've always been here. We've always served. Now, people will finally see us," Derriso said.

To obtain the special plate, the driver must be a Michigan resident and verified woman veteran, provide a copy of their DD-214 (discharge papers), and apply at any Secretary of State branch office or online.

"Michigan is home to more than 516,000 veterans and their families," said Brian L. Love, director of the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "Each one brings their unique story of service with them everywhere they go. [We are] dedicated to making sure that all Michigan's veterans and their family members are supported and can succeed in the communities they live, work and play in."

