

Patrick-Murray Administration Honors Women Veterans in State House Ceremony

BOSTON-Friday, November 7, 2008 - To honor the sacrifice, bravery, and dedication of women who have served in the military, the Massachusetts Women Veterans' Network hosted its fourth annual "Women Are Veterans Too!" ceremony, Friday, November 7, in the State House's Memorial Hall of Flags.

"Today, thousands of Massachusetts women are actively defending our nation. We owe these women - and those who have come before them - our heartfelt thanks and support," said Governor Deval Patrick. "I applaud the good work being done by the Department of Veterans' Services and the Women Veterans' Network to serve these brave individuals."

The keynote address at this year's ceremony was given by Brigadier General Marie. T. Field who retired last year as the highest ranking woman to serve in the Massachusetts Air National Guard. The "Outstanding Woman Veteran Award" was presented to this year's honorees, Phyllis Santangelo Galeaz of Lynn and Kathleen M. Splinter of Fall River.

"It is an honor to recognize the bravery of the many extraordinary women veterans who have served our country," said Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray, Chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Veterans' Affairs. "Our appreciation and gratitude for their deeds of courage is immense."

"Outstanding Woman Veteran" award recipient Phyllis Santangelo Galeaz entered the Army Nurse Corps program in 1941. She was stationed for three years in the jungles of New Guinea during World War II. She is an active member of her community and the American Legion Post in her town.

"Outstanding Woman Veteran" award recipient Kathleen M. Splinter joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1966. She served in Vietnam for a year and received the Bronze Star. She is currently the president of Welcome Home Housing, which purchases, builds, and develops apartments for disabled veterans. Nominations for this award were collected from across Massachusetts and were reviewed based on military service, contributions to the community, participation in veterans' organizations, and special efforts to enhance the lives of women.

"Today is a great day to show our appreciation for the Massachusetts women who have served our country and for those who continue to serve today," said Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Thomas Kelley. "The Department of Veterans' Services works with veteran and community organizations throughout the state to assure that our veterans are being honored and receiving the benefits and services that they have earned. Women veterans are a special group, and through the excellent work of the Women Veterans' Network we are given the chance to reach out to women veterans in the Commonwealth."

About the Women Veterans' Network:

The Women Veterans' Network of the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services, established in 1997, acts as the central resource for women veterans in Massachusetts. The Women Veterans' Network

has a database of 13,000 women veterans who receive a biannual newsletter with information on benefits, programs, and events for women veterans.