

Women's Equality Day – Women's Contributions in World War I

More than 25,000 American women between the ages of 21 and 69 served overseas during World War I. They began going “over there” in August of 1914 – at first singly or with a few companions, then later with civilian service organizations, and lastly at the request of the United States government. Although the largest number were nurses, American women also worked as dietitians, occupational and physical therapists, administrators, secretaries, telephone operators, statisticians, decoders, librarians, recreation directors, accountants, social workers, journalists, small factory and warehouse operators, and architects. Many women continued to serve long after Armistice Day, some returning home as late as 1923. Their efforts and contributions in the Great War left a lasting legacy that inspired change across the nation. The service of these women helped propel the passage of the 19th Amendment in June 4, 1919 – guaranteeing women the right to vote.

“We have made partners of the women in the war; shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil and not to a partnership of privilege and right?”

- President Woodrow Wilson, September 1918