

## Red Cross Honors Women in the Military

May was National Military Appreciation Month, and the American Red Cross is proud to honor the contributions of women in the armed forces and their longstanding connection to our organization. Women have played a vital role in the Red Cross since Clara Barton established the organization 145 years ago, and they have remained essential to the success of the American military mission throughout history.

As far back as World War I, women were permitted to openly serve in the military. During World War II, when women represented less than one percent of the armed forces, the Red Cross deployed hundreds of women to support service members on the European frontlines. These women drove and maintained their own vehicles, worked under dangerous conditions, and, when necessary, navigated enemy fire.

Though many served in noncombat roles, they demonstrated extraordinary skill, resilience, and leadership while often being underestimated.

Since then, women in the military have achieved many historic milestones, including becoming the first female Navy fighter pilot, the first female four-star general in the Army, and the first female rescue swimmer in the Coast Guard. Their extraordinary service continues to shape the future of the armed forces, and our region is honored to recognize their accomplishments through both words and action.



On April 24, 2026, we hosted our annual Distinguished Warrior Luncheon at Tiffany Circle Hall, celebrating the achievements of three remarkable military women. Our panel featured Lt. Col. Patricia Y. Pie, U.S. Air Force (Ret.); LTC Marilla J. Cushman, U.S. Army (Ret.), Senior Advisor to the President of the Military Women's Memorial Foundation; and the Honorable Paulette Vance Burton, Veterans Law Judge for the Board of Veterans' Appeals and U.S. Army (Ret.). The panel was moderated by Cathy LaFleur, Senior Director, Service to the Armed Forces (CONUS), American Red Cross.

Each speaker shared her unique personal and professional journey, reflecting on both the triumphs and challenges that shaped her career and strengthened her commitment to service. Their stories were inspiring reminders of the dedication, perseverance, and leadership demonstrated by women across the military. We are thank them for their service.

## Inside This Issue

Page 2 Blood Drive



Page 2 TC Charms



Page 3 Upcoming Events



## Save Lives This Summer!



### Inaugural National Virtual Blood Drive

The Women in Philanthropy movement reflects our steadfast commitment to the American Red Cross and its life-saving mission. Through the dedication of our time, resources, and service, we strive to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those facing crisis and hardship.

As part of this commitment, we encourage all members to

participate in blood donation efforts to support patients in need. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs a lifesaving blood transfusion, including cancer patients, new mothers, premature babies and those who live with chronic illness such as Sickle Cell disease. Blood donations play a critical role in saving lives, particularly for women requiring transfusions.

Please join us by making a blood donation appointment for our inaugural Women Leading with Heart and Humanity National Virtual Blood Drive. Together, we can exceed our goal of 100 donations between May 4 and June 12 and ensure the Red Cross is ready to meet patient needs this summer.

### SAVE THE DATE!

Tiffany Circle Turns 20! The Tiffany Circle is a community of women leaders who advance the American Red Cross mission through a focused investment of time, talent and treasure by engaging and embracing women locally, nationally and internationally. Founded in 2007, we will celebrate our 20th anniversary Fall 2027 at our national Summit.

Learn about donating and Tiffany Circle at [Redcross.org/NCGCwomeninphilanthropy](https://Redcross.org/NCGCwomeninphilanthropy)

Please contact Viola Clark-El, Senior Philanthropy Partner, at [viola.clarkel@redcross.org](mailto:viola.clarkel@redcross.org) for more information about the Tiffany Circle.

## Legacy Society

Add Some Extra Charm – Don't Miss Out!

Ready to make your Tiffany Circle bracelet even more fabulous? Here's your chance! Members who make a Legacy Gift to the American Red Cross can add an exclusive Legacy Society Charm to their collection.

Have you already included the Red Cross in your estate plans—or are thinking about it? Let us know! We'd love to present you with the stunning Lily Legacy Society Charm. Why a lily? It's the ultimate symbol of devotion, humility, renewal, and rebirth—perfect for honoring your lasting impact.

Please contact Audrey White, Gift Planning Officer at: [audrey.white2@redcross.org](mailto:audrey.white2@redcross.org) for more information or visit [RedCrossLegacy.org](https://RedCrossLegacy.org)





## Upcoming Events

- Women in Philanthropy Series: Executive Women Driving Impact Panel - June 3, 2026 (Tysons, VA)  
[e.givesmart.com/events/NUi](https://e.givesmart.com/events/NUi)
- Women in Philanthropy Series: Boots on the Ground - August 27, 2026 (Washington, DC)
- Tiffany Circle Exclusive: Charms Reception (Fall 2026, please contact Viola Clark-El, Senior Philanthropy Partner, to order new charms)
- Women in Philanthropy Series: Holiday for Heroes - December 10, 2026 (Washington, DC Tiffany Circle Hall)

**EXECUTIVE WOMEN DRIVING IMPACT**  
American Red Cross Women in Philanthropy Series

**June 3, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. | Tysons, VA**


**Panelists**

-   
Nyla Beth Gawol, North Highland Consulting
-   
Madelka McCalla, The AES Corporation
-   
Carrie Robinson, Leonardo DRS

**Moderator**

-   
Melissa Hurst, American Red Cross

Venue Provided By

 **LMI**

 **American Red Cross**  
Northern Virginia Chapter