

U.S. Rep. Moore: Congresswoman Gwen Moore's bill to award a congressional gold medal to the members of the Women's Army Corps 6888th (Six Triple Eight) Central Postal Directory Battalion is signed into law!

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Congresswoman Gwen Moore released the following statement:

"I am beaming knowing that the Six Triple Eight Congressional Gold Medal Act is now signed into law! I want to thank Senator Moran and Rep. LaTurner for their leadership and partnership in this effort which was invaluable," **said Congresswoman Moore.** "I also want to thank the advocates whose work ensure that this story of sacrifice was not lost to history. This legislation is for my constituent, Ms. Anne Mae Wilson Robertson, and every unsung hero of the Six Triple Eight. In signing this legislation into law, our nation, in perpetuity, honors these trailblazing sheroes and helps ensure their service is always remembered. Now, work can begin on designing the coin and planning the formal congressional ceremony to present the Gold Medal to these women and/or their families."

"The women of the Six Triple Eight have earned a special place in history for their service to our nation, and as of today, their sacrifice is enshrined into law with the highest distinction Congress can bestow," **said Senator Moran.** "It has been an honor to meet members of the battalion and help lead this effort to award the Six

Triple Eight with the Congressional Gold Medal – the highest expression of national appreciation from Congress. Though the odds were set against them, the women of the Six Triple Eight processed millions of letters and packages during their deployment in Europe, helping connect WWII soldiers with their loved ones back home – like my father and mother. Our nation will always be grateful to the members of the Six Triple Eight and now, nearly 80 years after their service, we are finally able to recognize these extraordinary women on the national stage. Thank you to the President for acting quickly to sign this legislation into law, Rep. Moore and Rep. LaTurner for leading this effort in the House and Col. Edna Cummings for her tireless work advocating for the Six Triple Eight to be honored on behalf of a grateful nation.”

“The heroic, barrier-breaking members of the Six Triple Eight Battalion – which included brave Nevada women – played a crucial role in the operations of our armed forces during World War II,” **said Senator Rosen.** “They deserve our nation’s highest honors for their service. There is no better time to give them this long-overdue recognition than during Women’s History Month, and I’m proud to see President Biden sign our bipartisan legislation into law.”

“I’m pleased that legislation to award the Six Triple Eight with the Congressional Gold Medal is officially signed into law. After eight decades, these brave women will finally get the recognition they deserve for their heroic service to our nation during World War II,” **said Rep. LaTurner.** “I want to thank my colleagues, Congresswoman Moore and Senator Moran, for their efforts in getting this legislation across the finish line.”

The Six Triple Eight was the only all-black, all-female battalion to serve overseas during World War II, and they were responsible for clearing out an overwhelming backlog of mail, making certain American troops received letters from home to boost their morale.

“It never occurred to me that it would happen,” **said Major Fannie McClendon, (Ret.) USAF, 6888th veteran.**

“I wish more of the 688th members were here, and I hope that I’m still here when President Biden signs the bill,” **said Ms. Lena King, 6888th veteran.** “That will be a great day.”

“This is a wonderful recognition of the critical service the 6888th provided to this

country under extraordinary difficult conditions,” **said Stanley Earley, 6888th family member.**

“The 6888th deserves this honor for their dedication to our soldiers and their country for completing the job given to them in record time,” **said Janice Martin, 6888th family member.**

“The Congressional Gold Medal is the nation’s gratitude for the 6888th Battalion and the thousands of African American women who served in the Army during WWII,” **said Col. Edna W. Cummings, (Ret) 6888th Advocate.** “Their service will never be forgotten as soldiers and trailblazers for gender and racial equality.”

Background Information on Six Triple Eight

On July 1, 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law legislation that created the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) within the U.S. Army. During the Second World War, despite executive orders issued by President Roosevelt the Army at-large remained completely segregated. However, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Mary McLeod Bethune, the founder of the National Council of Negro Women, advocated for the admittance of African American women within the WAC. Dubbed “10 percenters”, the recruitment of African-American women to the WAAC was limited to 10 percent of the population of the WAAC to match the proportion of African Americans in the national population.

After several units of white women were sent to serve in the European Theater of Operations during World War II, African-American organizations advocated for the War Department to extend the opportunity to serve overseas to African-American WAC units. Hence, the Six Triple Eight was created.

The Six Triple Eight served in England and France. Setting sail in February 1945, the 6888th arrived in Birmingham, England after surviving an arduous trip across the Atlantic under the constant threat of attack by German submarines.

When they arrived at their station in England, the Six Triple Eight faced a massive challenge to sort and deliver millions of pieces of mail, totaling a six-month backlog. Through their ingenuity and hard work, the Six Triple Eight eliminated the backlog of mail in three months, far ahead of schedule. They then were sent to France to successfully address a similar mail backlog. These deliveries helped support the morale of countless soldiers on the frontlines in Europe.

This Black History Month, my bill H.R. 1012/S. 321, the 'Six Triple Eight' Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2021 shows our nation's appreciation for those who served in the 6888th by awarding the members of the battalion the Congressional Gold Medal. This medal is the highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions.