



# Tower Times

Rock Island District's News Magazine

February 2012



*Dive team  
excels*



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers** ®  
Rock Island District

# Tower Times

**Contents**

**February 2012**

## ON THE COVER



Mark Hoewing assists diver Tony Tabita up the ladder after setting the pintle ball for the miter gate to set in the recess in the main lock chamber of Lock 15 in November 2010.  
*Photo by Hilary Markin.*

- 3 Dive team has busy year providing critical capabilities** Col. Shawn McGinley, District Commander
- 4 Working together**  
Mississippi River Project staff complete work at Big Slough
- 5 LDP Level I - building leaders**
- 6 A unique niche**  
District supports the 88th Regional Support Command
- 8 Safety Corner - Stress overload can affect your safety**
- 9 Spotlight on the District - Jeff Dupont**
- 10 Around the District**
- 11 Support & Sacrifice for Corps**
- 12 February is Black History Month**

## *Tower Times*

Rock Island District, Clock Tower Building  
P.O. Box 2004  
Rock Island, IL 61204-2004  
Email: [cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil)  
Phone: (309) 794-5729

Commander: Col. Shawn McGinley  
Deputy Commander: Thomas Hodgini  
Chief, Corporate Communications: Ron Fournier  
Editor: Hilary Markin

This publication is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Tower Times are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or the Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

It is published monthly by the Corporate Communications Office, Rock Island District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should be submitted by the 15th of each month preceding publication. Circulation 1,500.

**On the web at: [www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/TowerTimes](http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/PublicAffairsOffice/TowerTimes)**

*A message from....*

Colonel Shawn McGinley, District Commander



# Dive team has busy year providing critical capabilities

Not a day goes by in which I am not amazed at what the people of our District are doing. There's a vast amount of talent and ability accomplishing such a wide array of critical work. And, some of that work is unique in its execution, something I was reminded of when I reviewed our District's recent Dive Operation Report.

For those of you who aren't aware, the District's dive team is comprised of mostly lock operators and maintenance personnel. These divers take on the tough duty of dive operations in addition to their normal job duties. They dive into the river under difficult conditions and low visibility to perform work that is imperative to keeping infrastructure operational. Whether they are doing underwater inspections of hydraulic structures or repairing barges, the dive team allows for timely response to a variety of issues and saves the District ample amounts of money.

This past year was one of the busiest on record for our dive team. Our dive team leader, Bill Ford, told me this year was as busy as he has seen dive operations in his more than 20 years of experience. The team managed to perform work at almost every lock in our District, on both the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. They assisted maintenance crews with gate changes and repairs to wicket dams. They executed inspections of countless miter gates and made repairs to a multitude of boats and barges. They were called upon to do emergency repair work at Locks 19 and 21 as well as emergency work on our District's Motor Vessel Clinton.

Much of the work they do is done on the fly, working long hours and performing with equipment that is not always overly familiar to them, due to the ever changing nature of the tasks that are presented to them. All the while, they accomplish the work quickly as it is important that they get in and out of the water as soon as possible.

The conditions in which our dive team operate stands them apart from those who are doing similar work around the country. The Mississippi and Illinois rivers are well known for being unpredictable with heavy currents. It's not an ideal work environment and yet our divers perform professionally no matter the conditions.

Although the dive team is integral to our maintenance operations on the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, their capabilities are not limited to our District boundaries. The team is a key regional asset to the Mississippi Valley Division, assisting other districts as needed and providing critical capabilities during emergency and disaster response.

There is no doubt that there is an abundance of talents and skills prevalent throughout the entire District. The dive team represents a prime example of those talents and skills. We have many important missions we carry out and among those is maintaining the infrastructure that keeps our waterways navigable.

That infrastructure is aging and well past its intended lifecycle. What keeps the locks and dams open is the hard work, dedication and adaptability of the maintenance crews. Our maintenance crews get a unique assist from the capabilities provided by our dive team. Our nation's economy relies heavily on the commerce related to navigating our waterways. Millions upon millions of tons of cargo and commodities get to their destination using locks and dams. Without the efforts of entities like our dive team, that navigation could be severely hindered or even stopped.

I'm very proud of what all of you accomplish day in and day out. There is remarkable work carried out within the Rock Island District. Thank you to the dive team members for taking on a challenging year and performing beyond expectation. Their performance is a microcosm of what this District represents. Thanks for all you do and continue **BUILDING STRONG®** 



Photo of Corey McKay taken by Bill Ford.

## Rock Island District Dive Team:

Mike Back	Mark Hoewing	Karl Schmitz
Matt Brown	Mike Jurkowski	Bryan Smith
Mike Fennessy	Cameron Kline	John Snell
William Ford	Corey McKay	Tony Tabita
Joe Fryer	Doug Morgan	Craig Williams
Nathan Gorham	Jim Punkiewicz	

# Working together

By Hilary Markin, Editor

Last minute plans can sometimes be the best laid plans. In December another project on the “to do” list of the Mississippi River Project was completed.

The combination of warm weather, the end of waterfowl hunting season in Illinois, low water conditions and the availability of the dive team provided an opportunity to remove an underwater lane divider at the Big Slough Recreation Area boat ramp.

The six-inch by six-inch concrete lane divider had been a source of complaints by boaters for many years and was generally no longer visible or served a useful purpose.

Resources to do the job were pulled together in a matter of hours from multiple sections of the Mississippi River Project on Dec. 12. The Rock Island District Dive Team supplied equipment and personnel, Structural Maintenance supplied oxygen bottles for the divers and cutting equipment, the Motor Shop transported the Project Maintenance track hoe to the site and the Natural Resources section supplied additional personnel.

“This was the first project I can remember doing with the recreation staff,” said Bill Ford, dive coordinator, Rock Island District.

All the pieces came together on Dec. 14 and the curb, rebar and other debris from the ramp area were removed in one day.

“This is a great example of the Corps of Engineers capabilities when efforts are combined,” said Lucas McCutcheon, maintenance worker supervisor, Mississippi River Recreation Unit. “The Corps of Engineers has a lot of resources available in both equipment and personnel that provide endless possibilities to what can be accomplished.”



**A track hoe works to remove the concrete lane divider at Big Slough Recreation Area boat ramp while dive personnel and other Mississippi River Project staff await the next step. Photo by Bill Ford.**



## What 600-foot lock in the Rock Island District had brand new miter gates installed in 1985?

Can you name where this occurred? If so, send your answer to [Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil](mailto:Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil). The first correct answer will receive a special prize and be recognized in the next Tower Times.



**December Answer: Illinois Waterway Visitor Center at Starved Rock Lock and Dam**

**Winner: Susan Yager,  
Executive Office**

# LDP Level I - building leaders

By Sara Paxson, professional development specialist

The revamped Leadership Development Program – Level I is on its way to developing and enhancing participants’ personal and professional leadership skills. Thirty-six District employees were accepted to participate in the program which began Feb. 1.

This six-month self-paced program is designed to ease employees into leadership development. Through readings, online training, writing, and mentoring, participants will learn more about themselves and develop their leadership skills.

All of the participants have been paired with a mentor (who are Leadership Development Program graduates) to help guide them through the program.

“I believe effective leaders rely on the collaborative effort of a team to achieve shared goals,” said Maj. Gen. John Peabody, commanding general, Mississippi Valley Division, in a recent *Around the Bend* column.

Program participants will learn to become better team members, develop personal and leadership skills and will be prepared to apply for advanced leadership development opportunities. 

Congratulations to the LDP Level I participants:

Curtis Brooks	Doug Nelson
Charles Christian	Andrew Retherford
Neil Curtis	Nathan Richards
Kevin Dill	David Robison
Anne Ewan	Mike Ryan
Wesley Florey	Monique Savage
Joe Fratamico	Lucie Sawyer
Allen Giger	Jon Schultz
Derrick Glisan	Bryan Snook
John Hayes	Gerald Snyder
Brad Houzenga	Nate Sobojinski
Jon James	Erica Stephens
Christopher Kelly	Blayne Walker
Len Kring	David Wallace
John Lacinia	Chad Weuste
Tamara Loose	Tod Willis
Nicole Lynch	Keith Witalka
Brian McMillen	Matt Zehr

## Rock Island District - BUILDING STRONG®

**ONE DISCIPLINED TEAM** - in thought, word, and action - meeting our commitments, with and through our partners, by **“SAYING WHAT WE WILL DO, AND DOING WHAT WE SAY.”**



Left, is a photo of the nearly complete Gulf Intracoastal Waterway West Closure Complex. One of the key risk reduction projects constructed on the west bank of the Mississippi River.

## Team recognized for their work

The Rock Island New Orleans Support team received the Medallion of Innovation, Excellence, and Service from the Program & Project Management Community of Practice for their work on the Project Delivery Team for Task Force Hope. The team supported the New Orleans District in completing the

Hurricane and Storm Damage Reduction System for the Greater New Orleans area capable of defending against a 100-year storm surge. This District award is proudly displayed in the front lobby of the Clock Tower. 

# A unique niche

By Hilary Markin, Editor

**S**erving our customers is something the Rock Island District takes great pride in. We have a variety of different types of customers and in one area, the District has carved out a unique niche.

That niche provides support to the 88th Regional Support Command (RSC) whose mission is to provide essential base operations for stakeholders within the Northwest region and support the Army Reserve operational force. The Northwest region spans 19 states with the greatest concentration of Army Reserve Centers and projects in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio.

This partnership started in 1998-1999 with the Rock Island District helping to bridge the gap between what the Army needed and what the Corps could provide. The District received their first project from the 88th RSC in 1999 and the type and amount of projects has continued to grow.

“It’s a win-win situation for everyone,” said Jeff Dupont, lead mechanical engineer, General Engineering Section, Engineering and Construction. “The type of designs for projects increases our

capabilities and the diversity of the projects employees work on. And, the 88th gets a quality product through a ‘one door to the Corps’ relationship.”

The District provides the 88th RSC a full range of engineering support including designs, technical support and investigations. They also have access to our full range of resources to include geotechnical support, real estate, environmental or any other area of expertise the project may require.

“Basically we are like a small A/E firm for the 88th,” said Dupont.

The projects typically involve in-house designs for facility repairs and renovations of existing reserve centers and maintenance facilities such as offices, shop buildings and parking lots.

The scopes of work vary from project to project but can include upgrade and repair of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems and electrical systems; replacement of energy inefficient lighting; updating obsolete fire alarm systems; architectural updates (ceiling replacement, painting walls, flooring repair, etc.).



The building renovation project at the U.S. Army Reserve Center building in Jeffersonville, Ind., replaced the old steam boiler system (above) with an energy efficient hydronic boiler that took up less space (right).





**A contractor reviews the renovation at the Area Maintenance Support Activity building in Jeffersonville, Ind. The project renovated the vehicle exhaust and shop ventilation systems.**

“Whenever possible we use green energy and high efficiency mechanical systems,” said Dupont.

For example in Jeffersonville, Ind., Rock Island worked on a project to renovate a U.S. Army Reserve Command building at the Jeffersonville Army Reserve Center. Project engineers designed the replacement of the old steam boiler system with a high-efficient hydronic boiler that took up a fraction of the space and increased the heating system efficiency by 10-15 percent.

Support to the 88th RSC has increased in recent years partially due to the 11 years of lessons learned while building and maintaining relationships with the 88th management and staff.

In fiscal year 2011, the Rock Island District team executed six projects totaling \$10.6 million in construction, most of which was done through small business contracts. The previous year, six projects were completed totaling \$6.7 million. Fiscal year 2012 will be similar to 2011 with a \$1.3 million construction contract already awarded to renovate an Army Reserve Center in Hobart, Ind.

The projects that the Rock Island District team works on are coordinated with Louisville and Omaha Districts who manage the military construction (MILCON) projects.

“We have positive relations with the military districts and we are essentially assisting them through a request from the 88th,” said Dupont.

The District works closely with the 88th to determine work-

load and priorities when taking on projects.

“The key has been to be flexible,” said Dupont. “This year a project at Fort Wayne, Ind., was moved up the priority list because the tenants of the facilities are deploying. We are planning to do most of the renovations while they are gone to minimize the impacts to the Soldiers.”

Many of the projects the District works on are while tenants are occupying the space which requires a lot of coordination with the customer.

As a project comes together coordination starts with the local Corps construction offices.

“Depending on where the project is located, the closest construction field office typically takes on the project – often feeding work back to respective districts in the area of the project,” said Dupont. “We work closely with the Resident Engineers to coordinate project schedules, timelines and staff.”

The type of work the District does through the 88th RSC is unique. It keeps employees up to speed on new technologies developing in areas outside Rock Island’s typical workload which adds to the District’s capabilities and level of expertise. 



# Engineer *Safety* Gram

## ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG



## Stress Overload Can Affect Your Safety

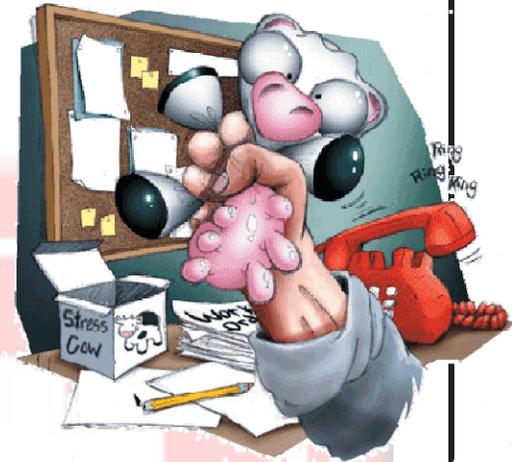
Everyone has it and it isn't all bad. But when we suffer from stress overload it can affect our health, and even our ability to work safely. A reasonable amount of stress can motivate us to work better and faster. But excessive stress can cause many problems such as health difficulties. It can also keep us from concentrating on working safely.

### *Here are some of the symptoms of too much stress:*

- ◆ Sleeping difficulties.
- ◆ Feelings of anxiety and of being overwhelmed.
- ◆ Being short-tempered and uptight.
- ◆ Physical sensations such as tense muscles, headache or upset stomach.
- ◆ Abuse of substances such as food, cigarettes, alcohol or drugs.

### *These suggestions might give you some ideas of how to cope with stress:*

- ◆ Maintain general good health. Eat nutritious meals regularly each day. Your diet should consist largely of healthy food such as whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables. Foods which are high in fat, salt and sugar should be kept to a minimum. It is important to get adequate sleep and rest. Exercising daily or at least several times a week will also help you to stay strong enough to cope.
- ◆ Avoid drugs. When we are under stress, it is tempting to turn to this kind of relief. However, the abuse of drugs such as alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, prescription drugs, over-the-counter remedies and street drugs will eventually just add to your problems.
- ◆ Special relaxation techniques might prove helpful. You can obtain more information about these methods from books and tapes which are widely available, as well as community programs, self-help groups and some therapists. One of the most simple of these techniques is taking a number of deep, slow breaths and exhaling completely. Another involves deliberate progressive relaxation of different muscle groups.
- ◆ Find someone to talk to. Problems become more manageable when you discuss them with a friend, a member of your family, a clergy person or a counselor. Contact your employee assistance program officer for assistance.
- ◆ Give some thought to your priorities. You can't do everything and you can't be responsible for everything. Decide what is really important in your life and focus on that.
- ◆ Other problems can perhaps be ignored. Many of the things we worry about are beyond our control or never actually affect us.
- ◆ Learn to relax on your time off from work and other responsibilities, even if it is very short. Every day do something you enjoy.
- ◆ Learn to set realistic goals. If you are working toward specific goals, day-to-day difficulties are easier to handle.
- ◆ Learn to manage yourself to make the most of the time which you have each day. You might find it useful to get up a little earlier each day or leave for work a little earlier so that you don't feel rushed. 



***Excessive stress is a common problem in today's hectic world. Learn to manage stress to maintain your health – and your safety.***





# *Spotlight on the District*

**Jeff Dupont**  
Lead Mechanical Engineer  
General Engineering Section,  
Engineering and Construction Division

**H**aving your roots firmly planted is something many Midwesterners are proud of. For one Rock Island District employee those roots started in Rock Island, Ill., in 1913 when his great-grandfather arrived from Belgium.

“I have a strong interest in my community. There is something to say about the history in Rock Island and knowing the people who were a part of it,” said Jeff Dupont, lead mechanical engineer, General Engineering Section, Engineering and Construction Division.

Dupont was born and raised in Rock Island leaving to attend college at Bradley University in Peoria, Ill.

During college his co-op program experience prepped him for a career in gear and machinery design for the manufacturing industry as a mechanical engineer.

“I envisioned going to work for Caterpillar or something similar after graduation,” said Dupont.

Upon graduation while searching for a job he had an opportunity to move back to Rock Island to work on Arsenal Island. His first position was working for the U.S. Army Armament, Munitions, and Chemical Command in the Quality Assurance Directorate, but after two reductions in force he found a job with the Department of Public Works for Rock Island Arsenal.

It was there that Dupont gained a variety of experience in mechanical engineering from renovating historical buildings to designing office space and manufacturing labs to working on the hydroelectric dam and the central steam plant.

“Working in public works was like running a small city,” said Dupont. “I learned the trade from my experiences.” The trade being a slightly different side of mechanical engineering that includes thermal sciences like heating, ventilating and air conditioning compared to his training in college.

“I know a lot about the buildings, architecture and how the facilities operate on the Arsenal,” said Dupont

whose father was also associated with the Arsenal which added to his knowledge base.

He has continued to build on that since joining the Rock Island District in 1998. It was during that time the Corps started to provide engineering support to the 88th Regional Support Command (RSC).

Dupont serves as the Project Manager for the military projects designed at the District. He coordinates with customers like the 88th RSC as well as other districts and divisions where the projects are located. The projects include facility repairs and renovations ranging from offices to shop buildings to parking lots to sites with environmental issues.

“It’s challenging but rewarding,” said Dupont. “The Corps is a good place for an engineer to work. There is a diverse amount of work and the work we do has a positive impact on communities.” Outside of work Dupont is married and has one daughter who is a senior in high school.

His hobbies include art and photography and he likes to intertwine them. He takes still photographs and paints features into



**Jeff Dupont, his wife Darcy and daughter Alex pose for a photo atop the Grand Canyon while on vacation.**

# Around the District

## Sympathy ...



**Catherine Diggs**, 97, of Rock Island, Ill., passed away Jan. 9 at Silver Cross Nursing Center in Rock Island.

Diggs worked for the Corps of Engineers in Rock Island from 1963 until she retired in 1983 after 26 years of service. She also had six years of service with the Army Air Corps.



**Arlene Hennings**, 88, of East Moline, Ill., passed away Jan. 5 at Genesis Medical Center, Illini Campus in Silvis, Ill.

Hennings worked for the Corps of Engineers in Rock Island retiring in 1992.



**Edward "Ed" Leuch**, 67, of Tarpon Springs, Fla., passed away Jan. 9 after a short illness.

Leuch was a civil engineer in Hydraulics and the Operations Division before retiring in 1996 from the Corps of Engineers.



In effort to reduce the costs associated with printing and mailing the Tower Times please consider signing up to receive it electronically.

You can do so by sending your name and e-mail address to Hilary Markin at [Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil](mailto:Hilary.R.Markin@usace.army.mil).

## Retirements ...

**Clint Beckert**, supervisory hydrologist, Water Quality & Sedimentation Section, Hydrology and Hydraulics Branch, Engineering and Construction Division, retired Jan. 31, after dedicating 30 years, nine months and seven days to the federal government.

**Vicki Kohl**, human resources specialist, Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, retired Jan. 31, after dedicating 33 years, eight months and twenty-six days to the federal government.

## Congrats ...



Congratulations to **Brian Nail**, natural resources specialist, Saylorville Lake, and his wife Stephanie on the birth of a baby boy, Warner Stephen, Dec. 9. He weighed seven pounds and was 19 inches long.



Congratulations to **Sam Heilig**, natural resources specialist, Mississippi River Visitor Center and her husband Matt on the birth of a baby boy, Ashton Matthew Feb. 1. He weighed seven pounds seven ounces and was 19 inches long.



Congrats to **Larry Rodriguez**, lockmaster, Marseilles Lock and Dam, for claiming the A Class crown at the Dayton Ridge Club Championship this fall at the Dayton Ridge Golf Club in Ottawa, Ill. Rodriguez won with a 161 after bouncing back from an opening round 85, edging out his competitor by one stroke.

*Please send birth announcements, engagements, obituaries and other items of interest for the Tower Times to Corporate Communications at [cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil](mailto:cemvr-cc@usace.army.mil).*

# Support & Sacrifice for Corps

Thanks to our employees who are deployed to the Afghanistan Engineer District - North (AEN) and the Afghanistan Engineer District - South (AES)!



Andrew Barnett, AEN



Charles Bauer, AES



Mark Hoague, AEN



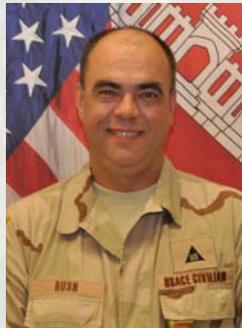
Celeste Iverson, AEN



Brian Lane, AEN



Mark Miller, AEN



Gordon Rush, AEN



## Spotlight on the District, cont.

them or overlays under- and over-exposed photographs bringing out unique colors in the subject. He carries his camera all the time just waiting for the right moment.

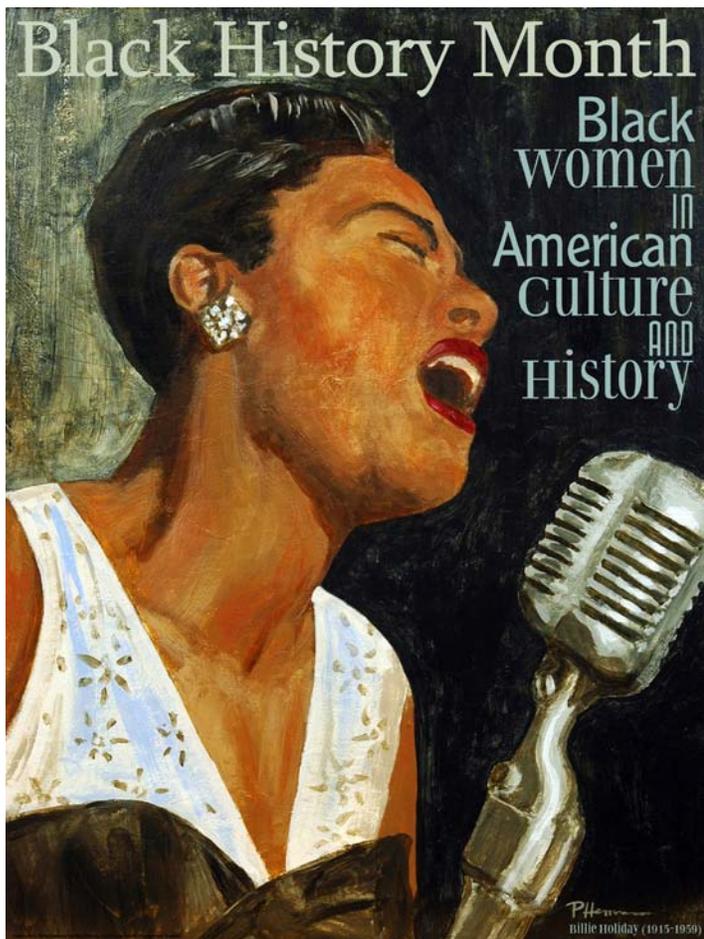
He and his family enjoy traveling seeking out adventures during vacations. They have gone snorkeling in cenotes or underground waterways, white-water rafting, hiked to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, worked on a ranch with wild mustangs, and that's just a few of them. And of course the camera was always close to capture the moment.

When asked about advice he shared this, "Carpe Diem or 'seize the day.'" 

Right, is a photo Jeff Dupont created overlaying under- and over-exposed photographs that he took of the Clock Tower Building.



J. Dupont



Billie Holiday was a true artist of her day and rose as a social phenomenon in the 1950s. Artwork by Peter Hemmer, illustrator, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute.

## February is Black History Month

From the American Revolution to the present, African American women have played a myriad of critical roles in the shaping of our nation. During the years following the Civil War, the Great Migration occurred, when a large percentage of blacks moved from the South to industrial cities in the Northeast and Midwest.

They searched for a safe place to explore their new identities as free men and women and many found it in Harlem. New York's Harlem became a cultural center for poor and middle-class blacks.

During the 1920s and 1930s, New York was one of the few states that outlawed school segregation. Blacks moved from all over the country to receive an education there.

At the heart of this cultural explosion were talented women who took their experiences of being black females and shaped their stories into careers as artists, writers and musicians. Their art, writing, dance, and music addressed not only race issues but gender issues as well.

In slavery and freedom, black women's struggles have been at the heart of the human experience. Still, their triumphs over racism and sexism are a testimonial to our common human spirit.

Today, they are remembered and respected not only for their talent and accomplishments, but for their ability to inspire. 

Did you know...

The U2 song Angel of Harlem paid tribute to Billie Holiday.

Information from Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, [www.deomi.org](http://www.deomi.org).