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HON. BRADLEY SCOTT SCHNEIDER
OF ILLINOIS

Honoring Illinois' First All-Female Honor Flight

Mr. SCHNEIDER: Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 93 extraordinary women veterans who flew to Washington, DC this October on Illinois's first All-Female Honor Flight.

Recognition for these trailblazing women is long overdue. Ranging in age from 63 to 104 years young, each one of these patriotic women answered the call to serve their country at a time when women in the military were often targeted, harassed and discriminated against. For many female veterans, this Honor Flight was the first time that anyone formally thanked them for their service.

I'd especially like to recognize five veterans on the flight from the Tenth District: Cindy Collins, Rita Holmes, Dr. Mary Roberson, Patti Lindley and Ginny Narsete.

Sergeant Cindy Collins served in the Army from 1973-1977, where she was one of the first two women in her company. Always proud of her service, Cindy says that serving in the military was the best thing that has ever happened to her because it taught her courage and responsibility.

Master Sergeant Rita Holmes served two tours in Germany and later a tour in Korea. Master Sergeant Holmes achieved the highest enlisted rank possible during her time in the military.

My dear friend Dr. Mary Roberson served our country from 1973 – 1976. When she returned home, she struggled with PTSD and addiction to cope with what she experienced in the military. She then embarked on an incredible three-decade career in the human services and behavioral health field,

helping people from vulnerable communities who went through struggles similar to what she went through.

Staff Sergeant Patti Lindley served active duty in the Marine Corps. Upon her honorable discharge, she reenlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves. Staff Sgt. Lindley received her BS and MBA under the G.I. Bill, where she has spent her professional life dedicated to improving patient's lives in developing life-saving medical equipment and systems.

Last but not least, Master Sergeant Ginny Narsete spearheaded the effort to host an all-female Honor Flight. Master Sergeant Narsete enlisted in the Air Force shortly after high school and went on to lead a distinguished, award-winning military career where she achieved the highest rank possible. When she returned home, she made it her mission to give back to veterans through her job at the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs and by volunteering with many veterans' organizations, including the American Legion.

I am honored to recognize these American heroes, the 93 women veterans as part of Illinois's first All-Female Honor Flight, as well as all female veterans who have honorably served our country over the years. A grateful nation thanks them for their service, bravery and courage.

Bradley Scott Schneider
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

