It is impossible to examine the history of Naval Air Station Whiting Field without giving credit to the personnel who served while the field was still under construction, and who committed to seeing it built from the ground up. One of the most important groups to Whiting Field’s formation was the female service members. The first WAVES arrived at Whiting Field the day after it was commissioned.

A long line of heroines in the American military exist who in service to our country helped change the course of history. Before Congress allowed women to serve in active duty positions, women still found any way to serve dating back to conflicts during colonial times. Many women served in direct ways, as nurses and aides on battlefields, or those whose commitment to duty urged them to secretly fight alongside the men. For many others, however, it meant simply promoting and supporting a cause in which they believed.

By the time Congress established a women’s branch of the United States Naval Reserve, called Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES), they had ample example of how to mobilize the new personnel, not least of all the Yeoman (F). Yeoman (F) was the enlisted rate for women who entered the Navy Reserve after the U.S. Naval Reserve Act of 1916 which eliminated gender as a qualifying factor for entering service. As a result, thousands of women entered active duty status in the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.
Whiting WAVES (cont.)

World War II witnessed a similar need for personnel to support the war effort, as did the First World War. The same willing response came from female service members to enlist and serve. WAVES were pivotal to supporting the war effort, and they were just as important to the mission at Whiting Field, training aviators for the war.

The largest group of enlisted WAVES at Whiting included machinists mates, called “mechs.” These WAVES were attached to Training Squadron 3 and were responsible for preparing the planes for flight as well as ensuring the rigging on the plane was properly fitted. They replaced anything worn or torn and ensured every wire was properly connected. Some WAVES mechs worked in tandem with the metalsmiths, who would typically weld parts for the planes. Together, they worked as carpenters, painters, and instrument and hydraulic mechanics. Two flight lines were completely manned by WAVES, relieving two line crews of men for sea duty.

Link trainers were the second largest group of WAVES at Whiting Field. Their duty was to operate the trainer—a mounted box on ball bearings. Student aviators sat inside to learn to control the pitch, yaw, and roll while being fed information from the flight instruments inside the trainer. Link trainers were in a booth outside the trainer and tracked the student’s simulated course over the ground and communicated his progress over simulated radio. In addition to operating the trainers, the WAVES would clean and repair the them whenever it was necessary as well as entirely overhaul them once a month.

All enlisted Waves at Whiting, except those with jobs in the administration building and the storekeepers, worked seven days
Whiting WA VES (cont.)

in a row with a day off every eighth. The two exceptions, administration workers and storekeepers, kept a regular schedule, only getting Sundays off. WA VES on eight day a week schedules, however, would get a liberty day back whenever their squadron flight schedule was canceled.

Days off during a week were divided evenly among the WA VES so that group activities could continue any day of the week. These activities were generally to make use of any of the recreations that slowly started to sprout up in the early days of Whiting such as the library, sports complex, and gym. Recreation also included dances, movies, or other special events.

When they had time off from work, they had the choice of enjoying recreation on base or going off base. There was a growing number of activities to engage in on base. When staying on base, WA VES were required to be in their barracks by lights-out, unless they were attending an event that went past 10:00 p.m. Conversely, when staying off base for the night, they could stay out for the duration of their liberty, as long as they did not cross the 50 mile liberty radius of Pensacola.

Most WA VES’ days would begin at 5:30 a.m., although the only requirement was that they wake up in time for their duty. Most would begin work by 6:40 a.m. and, depending on the job, would continue duty as late as 6:00p.m.

In the first eight months at Whiting, however, WA VES regularly put in 13 hour days. Their jobs varied, serving as Link Trainer Operators, machinist’s mates, metalsmiths, yeoman, storekeepers, pharmacist’s mate, hospital apprentice, aerographer’s mate, and seamen, most of which were petty officer third class ranks, except for the seamen and apprentice when first transferred to Whiting Field.

By October, however, many WA VES were already up for promotion as a result of their advancement exams. WA VES scored comparatively well on the exams against the men. Also by this time, many of the enlisted WA VES were already being selected for officers’ training to return as Ensigns to supervise the work they did as enlisted.

In the weeks that followed the end of World War II, discharge lists became noticeably longer as many WA VES returned to their civilian lives. Still, there were some who stayed active duty, transferring to new positions on base or to entirely new duty stations.

Throughout the war, the efforts and commitment to service of the Navy WA VES helped pave the way for the Women’s Armed Service Integration Act of 1948, which made female service members a permanent component of the U.S. military. As a result, today there are few restrictions to female service members.

WA VES played an extremely important role in the history of the Navy and in the establishment of Whiting Field’s lasting tradition of excellence.
Stanley Harper Recognized By American Diabetes Association As New Category of Advocate

NAS Whiting Field’s own Stanley Harper was offered the title of American Diabetes Association (ADA) Influencer on July 9, 2020, and gave his acceptance on July 17. Harper is an employee at the NAS Whiting Field Navy Exchange.

Harper has been an advocate for the ADA since 1984, starting with representing Florida at the First National Youth Leadership Congress as a recent college grad from the University of West Florida. Since then, Harper has racked up nearly 18,000 community service hours for ADA alone as a lobbyist for the non-profit organization.

As an Influencer, a new category of advocates within the ADA, Harper said that his focus will shift from local level to national, as he plans on spending more time in Washington, D.C. and speaking to Congress for change.

In addition to his contributions to the ADA, Harper is also active within the Japan-American Society of Northwest Florida, serving on the committee that organizes events with the Japan-U.S. Military Program, which he says is dedicated to thanking “past and current military efforts in Japan and the ones that served there.”

This Day in Naval History

September 2, 1918
U.S. Navy ships and crews assist earthquake victims of Yokohama and Tokyo, Japan.

September 6, 1939
The Navy begins formation of the Neutrality Patrol for the Atlantic Ocean.

September 13, 1906
Sailors and Marines from USS Denver (Cruiser #14) land in Havana at the request of the Cuban government to preserve order during a revolution.

September 24, 1960
The first nuclear powered aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise (CVAN 65), is launched at Newport News, Va. In 1975, she is designated (CVN 65).
FFSC Clinical counselor, Michelle Moody is an experienced psycho-therapist with expertise treating adults, adolescents and children. Michelle joined the Whiting FFSC team four years ago and considers it a privilege to care for military members and their families. She is ever mindful of the courage it takes to ask for help.

Having lived in Miami Florida, surrounded by a rich variety of types of people and cultures, Michelle has a diversity-sensitive outlook.

“Two things my favorite professor said to me long ago that have made all the difference:

1. Remain curious
2. If therapy isn’t fun...you’re doing it wrong.”

Prior to joining the Whiting FFSC team, Michelle directed mental health overlay services for a boy’s juvenile residential wilderness program in the Black Water River forest.

Pat Dillenback, an FFSC Clinical Counselor provides short-term, solution-focused counseling for service members and their families.

She has been at NAS Whiting Field since January, 2008. Prior to Whiting, she worked for Community Drug and Alcohol Council (CDAC) as the Drug and Alcohol Counselor at Milton High School. She has also served with the Adoptions Counselor for Catholic Charities and had her own private practice in Pace for 3 years prior to coming to Whiting.

She has a Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy, graduating from Central Connecticut State University in 1999. After completing her post graduate work, she was licensed in 2001.

Pat loves and supports the installation mission with passion and is grateful to be working in service to Navy Sailors and their families.
Tower Spotlight: 
MA2 Cassimiro Herrera

Hometown: Santa Rosa, Texas
Time in service? 6 yrs
How long at NASWF? 3 yrs
Favorite mentor and why? Capt Ringer; “Capt Ringer never got mad at me when I failed. He always reaffirmed high expectations of me.”
Favorite inspirational quote or inspiring thought?: “Every day is a new day to do something better.”

How do you contribute to the NASWF mission? Master-at-Arms Second Class Petty Officer. As Watch Commander, he meticulously supervises a diverse section of 12 military and DoD civilian personnel in the flawless execution of day to day safety and security of all personnel and property onboard the installation.

What motivates you? “Not letting anyone down. Doing a good job everyday/consistently.”

What is one goal you have for yourself/career? “To become a more diverse Master at Arms.”

The NAS Whiting Field Morale, Welfare and Recreation team, with assistance from the School Liaison Officer (SLO), Military & Family Life Counselors (MFLCs), Whiting Field Homes, and Operation Home Front distributed hundreds of tote bags which were pre-filled with school supplies for new students on Aug. 20. The event was held adjacent to the Community Center within the Whiting Field Homes.

This drive-through event included cartoon characters dressed up to provide cheer as the families cruised the loop answering MWR pop-quizzes. (Photos provided by NASWF MWR).
The Navy Ombudsman Program celebrates 50 years of support to our Sailors and their families.

The Navy Ombudsman Program began on September 14, 1970 by then Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, as a way to foster better communication between command leadership and command families.

These volunteers “support mission readiness, assist commanders and respond to family readiness needs, and facilitate building a strong community network of services through numerous duties,” said Valera Young, Fleet and Family Support Center Director at NAS Whiting Field.

Captain Paul D. Bowdich, Commanding Officer, NAS Whiting Field, honored the five decades of service by the Navy Family Ombudsman Program and the Command Ombudsman with a 50th Anniversary Proclamation establishing September as Navy Family Ombudsman Program Appreciation Month at NAS Whiting Field.

Christina Brissette, VT-6 Ombudsman. Brissette brings a wealth of knowledge and experience after experiencing three deployments since 2014. She has been an active member of unit level spouse groups with her husband.

Kristin Kingsbury, VT-2 Ombudsman. Kingsbury graduated from FSU and the Univ. of St. Augustine, where she earned her MS in occupational therapy. She has a beautiful daughter, a lovable golden retriever, and is married to an instructor pilot.

Vancea White, VT-3 Ombudsman. White has been a Navy spouse for 10 years. As a mother of four, she understands the challenges and obstacles military families can face and is dedicated to assisting families.

Lauren Brown, HT-8 Ombudsman. Brown currently teaches at a local private middle school. Along with her husband, 1 year old son, and two dogs, she enjoys spending as much time outdoors as possible.

LCDR Mark Wallis, HT-18 Ombudsman. LCDR Wallis has 15 years of active duty service in the US Navy, and is an instructor pilot and department head for HT-18.

Whitney Martin, HT-28 Ombudsman. Martin is a former Vice President of an FRG during deployment, and her favorite aspect of military life is having friends through shared experience wherever she deploys.

Mirella Savage, Installation Ombudsman, NAS Whiting Field. Mirella serves on the Board of Directors for the Santa Rosa County Chamber of Commerce and the Santa Rosa County Navy League Council.
Whiting Field Awards and Recognition

Congratulations to Training Air Wing Five Wingers

HT-8 Winging Class August 14, 2020

HT-18 Winging Class August 14, 2020

HT-28 Winging Class August 14, 2020
Whiting Field Awards and Recognition

Congratulations to Training Air Wing Five Wingers

HT-8 Winging Class August 28, 2020

HT-18 Winging Class August 28, 2020

HT-28 Winging Class August 28, 2020
Whiting Field Awards and Recognition

Congratulations to Training Air Wing Five Awardees

TW-5 Commodore’s List with Distinction Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
July 24, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
July 24, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
July 31, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
July 31, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
August 7, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List with Distinction Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
August 13, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
August 13, 2020

TW-5 Commodore’s List Recipient receives recognition at TRAWING-5 Headquarters
August 13, 2020
NAS Whiting Field