

Opportunity to acknowledge women in history

The month of March reserved for recognition of past and present achievements of women

Kathryn Bradley

Reporter

Women's history has been disregarded by history textbooks, museums and historical sites for decades. Political events and military history have been the focal point of history in the past.

March is National Women's History Month, which attempts to change these oversights and to emphasize the importance of women in the past, as well as their current significance.

Women have an integral role at Elon, according to Mary Jo Festle, head of the gender and women's studies program.

They are crucial in their positions as students, faculty members, administrators and countless other roles.

Debbie Yow, a 1974 Elon graduate, is currently the Athletic Director at University of Maryland.

Jo Craven, who graduated from Elon in 1987, won the Pulitzer Prize while working at the Washington Post and now works at Newsday, a magazine in New York.

During the 1960s in the United States, the women's movement took place. Women began to protest against the lack of acknowledgement they received as integral members of American history.

In 1978, the Educational Task Force of a California school district created the Commission on the Status of Women. This commission created a Women's History Week, beginning March 8, the date of International Women's Day.

In 1979, a conference was held at Sarah Lawrence College, where leaders of numerous women's organizations gathered to promote the idea of women's history.

They worked together to obtain a congressional resolution about the week. Following this conference, the National Women's History Project began. This group petitioned Congress

to expand the week to a month of celebration of women's history. Finally in 1987, Congress passed the proposal.

The National Women's History Project nominates women every March to be honorees. These are notable women chosen as role models of the achievements women are capable of.

Rebecca Walker, author and founder of an empowerment group for young women, won the award.

Tania Leon, an internationally renowned composer, conductor and educator was named an honoree.

Margaret Chase Smith, a Senator who challenged Joseph McCarthy during his notorious

anti-communism crusade in 1950, received recognition from the National Women's History Project as well.

Women's History Month is celebrated nationwide as a time for women's significance and importance to be celebrated.

Festle said that Women's History Month is "an official recognition that the role of women in history has often been overlooked or underemphasized."

She also noted that it is important to understand the impact of average women in history, rather than focusing on those in the spotlight.

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Yow reaches beyond the glass ceiling



Tim Rosner / Photo Editor

"I am determined that I am not a victim. People will accept you if you do good work." -Yow's comments during her speech last April at Elon.

Name: Debbie Yow

Age: 52

Job: Athletics Director at the University of Maryland since 1994

Career Highlights: The Terrapins have won nine NCAA National Championships under her leadership. In 2002, U.S. News and World Report listed Maryland in the top 20 athletic programs in the country. Construction of the new \$125 million Comcast Center Sports was completed last year.

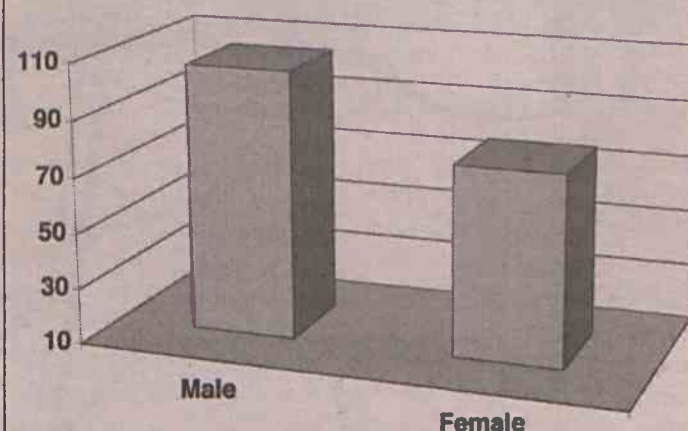
A Natural Leader: Yow was president of the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics during 2000-2001.

Trivia Tidbit: She co-authored the "Adult Guide to Children's Team Sports," which was published in December 2002.

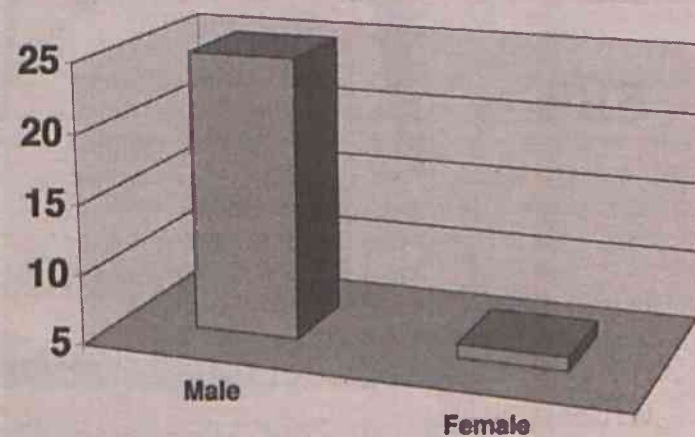
Award Recognition: Street & Smith's SportsBusiness Journal named Yow the Sports Businesswoman of the Year in 2000.

Looking at gender in Elon's faculty

Total number of full-time teaching faculty



Number of full-time professors



Source: Academic Council Yearly Report, Spring 2002

What's happening on campus?

Self-defense classes offered

A self-defense class will be offered from 3-7 p.m. March 14 in Koury Center. Instructors Beth Seigler and Kathy Hopwood from SafeSkills Inc. will teach participants verbal and physical skills for self-protection.

Panel discussion on feminists

Four Elon faculty members will discuss how they came to call themselves feminists at 6:30 p.m. April 3 in the Isabella Cannon Room in Model Center.