



Celebrating 50 years of NU Trailblazers!

OCTOBER 28, 2023

NU WKG, ISSUE #3

A Historic Experiment Gone Right



Norwich University officially became co-educational in 1972 after merging with Vermont College. The following year the Vermont College women petitioned President Loring Hart to live on the Northfield campus and to join the Corps of Cadets. In the fall of 1974, 71 women moved into Gerard Hall. Among them was the first cohort of women admitted to the Corps. In an October 1974 press release, Norwich described the inclusion of women as “a historic experiment”.

Among the women that moved from Vermont College to Northfield were five upper-class students who became the cadre/mentors to freshmen women that entered Norwich as cadets.

They were:

- o Diane Gionet '75
- o Nancy Young '76
- o Roberta Moskos '76
- o Mary Chambers '77
- o Mildred Brown '77

The Class of 1978 recruits were:

- o Caroline Flynn
- o Vicki Hippard
- o Irene Nadeau
- o Linnea Peterson



They were originally called L (Lima) Detachment because there were too few women to make a Company. They paved a path for future Norwich women and found their way through a tough program of academic excellence, physical challenges and social change. Their story is one of courage, endurance, and often humor.

The 1974 landmark ‘experiment’ began two years before the US Service Academies, including West Point. Norwich admitted women into the Corps the same year as Texas A&M and one year after the University of North Georgia and Virginia Tech. The Citadel and VMI would maintain an all-male Corps of Cadets until the mid-1990s.

Records documenting women’s history and experience at Norwich are available through the University Archives. <https://archives.norwich.edu/>