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American Legion elects its first female National Commander

Wisconsin Army Vet to Lead Nation's Largest Veterans Organization

RENO, Nev., (August 24, 2017) – A retired University of Wisconsin administrator was elected national commander of the nation's largest veterans organization today during The American Legion's 99th national convention.

Denise H. Rohan, a Vietnam-era veteran of the U.S. Army, is the first woman to be elected to the top position of the 2 million member American Legion.

“Women were allowed to vote for national commander of The American Legion back in 1919, before they could vote for the president of the United States,” Rohan said. “The American Legion has always believed that a veteran is a veteran regardless of gender, race or religion. If I can offer a different perspective than other Legionnaires, that's great. But I am excited to build on the great programs, dedicated service and proud legacy of the many Legionnaires who came before me.”

Rohan has served The American Legion since 1984. While commander of Post 333 in Sun Prairie, Wis., she established Sons of the American Legion Squadron 333 and chartered Boy Scout Troop 333. She has also served as the department (state) commander of the Wisconsin American Legion.

She was employed with the University of Wisconsin Madison as the assistant bursar of student loans until her retirement in 2012. She managed the University of Wisconsin Madison, University of Wisconsin Green Bay and University of Wisconsin Colleges' \$120 million loan portfolio made up of approximately 200 different federal, institutional and state programs in compliance with all laws, regulations, and policy. She was responsible for the efficiency and design of the computerized student loan accounts-receivable system.

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