

# Women Veterans Listening Session



Veterans Carrol Stripling, Veronica Roberts, and Julz Carey were enthusiastic about this inaugural event for women veterans.

More than 30 women veterans from various military branches gathered at Clark College on March 4 for an inaugural listening session designed to cultivate connections, share their struggles, and address their unique needs.

Hosted in partnership with the Clark College Veterans Center of Excellence, Clark County Veterans Assistance Center and the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, the event provided a space for open dialogue, with additional participation from veterans via Zoom.

The idea for the session emerged from last fall's Veterans Resource Community Fair, where women veterans voiced the need for dedicated spaces to share their experiences and available resources, and access support.

Additionally, representatives from various Veterans Affairs departments joined via Zoom to listen to the women and to offer information about available resources.



Event organizers include veterans Katherine, Veronica Roberts, and Sonja Wood.

Veteran Sonja Wood, who works at Clark County Veterans Assistance Center, was one of the organizers. She said, “For four or five years, I wanted to do a women’s symposium where women vets could meet other women vets in their community and talk about issues women vets have faced.”

The organizers listed issues experienced by women veterans, from believing they do not have a voice or a place at the table to knowing what benefits and services might be available to them and to their families.

Wood added, “Our goal is to listen to you, and work to find solutions and resources.”

Veteran Veronica Roberts, Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, said, “Knowledge is power. Some women who served in the military do not believe they are veterans. They do not

realize they qualify for benefits.”



Veteran Veronica Roberts, Washington Department of Veteran Affairs Women Veterans Advisory Committee welcomed women vets to the event.

She stood at the front of the room and encouraged women veterans to share their stories, ask their questions, and find their voices.

Donna Larson, Associate Director of the Veterans Center of Excellence at Clark College, said, “I am so pleased that so many women veterans participated in this opportunity to build community and share useful resources across all service branches and ages.”

Larson, who is a veteran, added, “It was fulfilling to witness the connections formed at this first community roundtable. I look forward to our next gathering and anticipate this group of women veterans will continue to forge relationships, build community, and help one another find resources that can enrich their lives.”

**Learn more**

- Veterans Center of Excellence at Clark College
- Clark County Veterans Assistance Center
- Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs

*Photos: Clark College/Susan Parrish*