



TO TELL HER STORY

JUNE 2026

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

President, COL. (Ret) Carol St. Pierre

Greetings, NABMW NYC Chapter Members!

Sisters and Supporters,

This year marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. It is a time to reflect on our nation's journey, celebrate its progress, and look ahead with renewed purpose and hope.

For Black Americans, and especially for the women who have served and continue to serve in our nation's military, this milestone carries deep meaning. Our history is one of courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to a country that we have helped to shape, defend, and improve. The legacy of Black military women is woven into the fabric of this nation's story, often underrecognized, but always essential.

While we celebrate how far we have come, we also remain mindful of the work that lies ahead. Recent developments, including a Supreme Court decision that impacts voting rights, remind us that progress requires continued attention and engagement. Yet even in the face of challenges, our history teaches us something powerful: change is possible when we stand together, speak out, and remain committed to the ideals of justice and equality.

The NABMW and our NYC Chapter, remains steadfast in its mission to support, uplift, and advocate for those who have served. Our strength lies not only in our shared experiences, but in our collective vision for a more inclusive and equitable future. Advocacy is a natural extension of our service.

As we honor 250 years of American history, let us also embrace the opportunity to help shape what comes next. Let this moment inspire us. Let it remind us that we are not only witnesses to history, but active participants in its making. Together, with resilience and optimism, we can continue building a nation that reflects the very best of its ideals.

Thank you for your service, your leadership, and your enduring commitment to progress.

With love and gratitude,

Carol St. Pierre
President, NABMW NYC Chapter



SECTION 1

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Honoring Excellence:

On **March 24, 2026**, Dr. Andrea Gayle-Bennett, Deputy Secretary of the MA Executive Office of Veterans Services and member of the NYC Chapter of NABMW, served as the keynote speaker at the reopening of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Museum in Lynn, MA.

April 13, 2026, What an honor to attend the celebration of 20 years of Massachusetts health care reform. Pictured with four of the five Massachusetts governors who helped shape that legacy: Governor Romney, Governor Patrick, Governor Dukakis, and Governor Weld.

April 30, 2026 Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) recently celebrated 50 years of dedicated service to older adults, caregivers, and families throughout the community. Dr. Andrea Gayle-Bennett was honored to be recognized as one of the organization's honorees during this milestone celebration.



Congratulations Lt. Col (Ret) Glennie Millard, and Major (Ret) Stanlee Richards on receiving Military Service Awards and Tawny Y. Millard on receiving the Community Service Award from the Nurses Association of the Counties of Long Island on **April 19, 2026**,

Congratulations to Dr. Carol St. Pierre, Dr. Rev Benda Archer, Dr. Stanlee Richards, Dr. Paulette Williams, Dr. Hazel Wilson, and Dr. Sharon Wilson. They were conferred Honorary Doctorates in Humanitarianism by Global International Alliance on May 16, 2026.



IN THE NEWS



On March 28, 2026, Dr. Andrea Gayle-Bennett joined Governor Healey and military leaders at the commissioning of the **USS Massachusetts** at Conley Terminal in Boston. Nicknamed “Wicked Stealthy,” the submarine is the newest fast-attack submarine in the U.S. Navy. The ceremony highlighted a unique passing of the torch as the **USS Constitution**, the world's oldest commissioned warship still afloat, saluted one of the Navy’s most advanced submarines. The legacy endures!



How to obtain DD-214 Replacement and Military Service Records

Loss of this all-important form is not the end of the world. Most veterans and their next-of-kin can get free copies of their DD Form 214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty

<https://www.military.com/benefits/records-and-forms/all-services-now-issue-form-dd214-1-departing-reservists.html>



For entire month of April, NYC Chapter NABMW has been selected as a nonprofit partner in the Stop & Shop Community Bag Program. The chapter received \$1 for each \$2.50 reusable Community Bag sold during the month of April 2026. The designated Stop & Shop location is 691 Co Op City Blvd., Bronx NY. What a great way to broaden awareness and help our cause!



Detrel Howell
U.S. Army 1987-95

NYC Chapter member Detrel Howell was featured in the June newsletter of USA Warrior Stories, an organization dedicated to honoring veterans by sharing their experiences and journeys. Her inspiring story is available to view here:
<https://usawarriorstories.org/watch/detrel-howell>

NCNW
Queens County Section
Youth Group

BANNED BOOK DRIVE

In support of the Freedom to Read Initiative, we have distributed over 300 books for children & youth written by black and brown authors from the banned & questioned book list in 2025. We are continuing our efforts through 2026.

EMPOWERED THROUGH READING

Providing children and youth with a wide array of developmentally appropriate reading materials offers many advantages. These books should not only reflect their own life experiences but also encompass the stories, histories, and experiences of others both within and beyond their communities.

Purchase books from our Amazon book registry at <https://tinyurl.com/NCNWQCSBannedBooks>

FOR MORE INFO EMAIL YOUTHSECTION.QCS@GMAIL.COM
www.ncnwqueenscounty.org/

Sakinah Black, President Nicole Hicks, 3rd Vice President and Youth Chair

The National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) actively supports the "Freedom to Read" initiative by hosting local Banned Book Drives and "Freedom to Learn" book drives to distribute challenged literature by Black and brown authors to children and youth. Purchase books from Amazon Book Registry at <https://tinyurl.com/NCNWQCSBannedBooks>

CALENDAR



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



PRAYER CALL- MONTHLY @ 7 PM

Dec 5, 2025	May 1, 2026
Jan 2, 2026	Jun 5, 2026
Feb 6, 2026	Sep 4, 2026
Mar 6, 2026	Oct 2, 2026
Apr 3, 2026	Nov 6, 2026



EXECUTIVE BOARD MTG @7PM

Dec 9, 2025	May 5, 2026
Jan 6, 2026	Jun 9, 2026
Feb 10, 2026	Sep 8, 2026
Mar 10, 2026	Oct 6, 2026
Apr 7, 2026	Nov 10, 2026



MEMBERSHIP MTG @ 7PM

Dec 7, 2025	May 16, 2026
Jan 16, 2026	Jun 19, 2026
Feb 20, 2026	Sep 18, 2026
Mar 20, 2026	Oct 16, 2026
Apr 17, 2026	Nov 2, 2026



QUARTERLY RECAP

MARCH 2026 Highlights

On March 21, 2026, Michael Simmons, a member of the NYC Chapter of NABMW and designated tour guide, organized a day trip for NYC Chapter members at the Wilmer Jennings Gallery Kenkeleba.



After visiting the Wilmer Jennings Gallery Kenkeleba, some NYC members had lunch at the Katz restaurant.



On March 29, 2026, members attended Legacy Tea, Triumph & Timeless Influence, an event hosted by NYS Senator Leroy Comrie, honoring Major (Ret) Sharon Sweeting-Lindsey of Executive Vets, Inc.





QUARTERLY RECAP

MARCH 2026 Highlights continued



The NYC Chapter members attended a performance of August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* at the Barrymore Theatre on March 31, 2026.

Family Stories Chapter Project

At our October 17, 2025 General Members Meeting, members committed to a chapter project to preserve our families' military stories. Each member and associate member is asked to write a poem or short narrative (up to two pages) about a family member who served.

Submission deadline: **March 30**

Compilation completed: **July 30**

Goal: Present the finished collection at the **October 2026 NABMW Conference**.

Contact: **Stephanie Dawson**

APRIL 2026 Highlights

NYC Conference on Veterans, AI & Human Rights



NYC Chapter members of NABMW were honored at The Nurses Association of the Counties of Long Island, NY, NACL on April 19, 2026.





QUARTERLY RECAP

MAY 2026 Highlights

USAG Fort Hamilton Retiree Appreciation Day, on **MAY 1, 2026** at Fort Hamilton Brooklyn



The NYC Chapter of NABMW hosted a Pre Mother's Day Luncheon on **May 2, 2026**.





QUARTERLY RECAP

MAY 2026 Highlights continued

The NYC Chapter of NABMW recently hosted an informative event featuring presenters Rashad Everett and Brandon West, who shared information about the AMWAY business opportunity and the benefits of entrepreneurship.

Attendees learned about options for building a business with flexible part-time or full-time opportunities while exploring the possibilities of becoming their own boss. The session encouraged participants to think about financial independence, personal growth, and creating additional income opportunities through entrepreneurship.



The NYC Chapter will present a Wreath at Memorial Day May 25th Ceremony at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument



JUNETEENTH

LOOKING AHEAD

JUNE - AUGUST

JUNE



Declarations: Black Americans and the Revolutionary War

The world premiere screening of *Declarations: Black Americans and the Revolutionary War* at The Museum of the City of New York. This powerful documentary uncovers the stories of four Black Americans who pursued freedom, citizenship, and belonging during the American Revolution, illuminating the tension between the promises of the Declaration of Independence and the lived realities of enslaved and free Black people in early America. For more information: <https://www.mcny.org/event/declarations-black-americans-and-revolutionary-war>



The NCNW, Inc. Queens County Section proudly presents its **38th Annual Black & White Awards Banquet**, on June 7, 2026, a celebration honoring outstanding leaders whose service and dedication continue to make a meaningful impact in the community. This year's theme, "Black Roses & Pearls – A Legacy of Grace & Strength," reflects a commitment to honoring past achievements while inspiring future growth and leadership.

The ShopRite District 1 Second Annual Veterans Golf Outing on June 17 at Dunwoodie Golf Course in Yonkers supports Veterans organizations making a real difference in the lives of Veterans and Military Families.

📍 Dunwoodie Golf Course, 1 Wasylenko Lane, Yonkers

📅 ^{July} 17 June 17, 2026
🏌️ Registration: 7:00 AM | Shotgun Start: 8:00 AM

Check out the flyer for registration and more details!



JULY



Contact your Vet Center counselor to learn about eligibility and registration.

Enjoy an all-inclusive, VA-sponsored shore retreat filled with relaxation and camaraderie



Stonewall Retreat
for Veterans
Activities

- Pottery Burn Rite
- Pottery
- Shooting Bow
- Pottery in the Lake
- Published
- Recreating

July 13 to July 16, 2006

Discover new opportunities, build life skills, and receive knowledge at this breathtaking venue.

Our retreats include lectures, classroom experiences, and time to reflect and enjoy nature with other veterans.

Your only investment is you. We handle all logistics and expenses from meals to transportation.

Experience tranquility and adventure at Stonewall Retreat, West Virginia. Our extraordinary retreat for female veterans offers breathtaking Appalachian landscapes, picturesque mountains, and stunning views of Stonewall Jackson Lake. Rejuvenate and connect with fellow women in a soothing, therapeutic environment, learning, and reflection.




Retreat activities include:

- 1103-1106 Stone Redactions
- 1100-1101 Conferences
- 1103-1103 Stone Management
- 1100-1100 Rally Rock
- 1103-1106 Pottery Burn Rite (2 hour limit)
- 1100-1100 Lake full day open-bowling, fishing, swimming, lake rentals, hiking

Contact your Vet Center counselor for eligibility & to learn more

www.basemilitary.com  www.basemilitary.com  www.basemilitary.com 

SAVE THE DATE

Celebrating 250 Years of the USA Through ART
at THE HAMPTONS FINE ART FAIR

Johnston Kingwood 605 Courten Rd. 89 Southampton, NY 11968
Joan Mello, East End Artist/Disabled Vietnam Veteran
Artist of Heart Healing Ceremony

FRIDAY JULY 10th 12-10 PM
Pass of War - Charity
*DAY PASS TICKETS ARE LIMITED - PLEASE VISIT BETHMELLO.COM OR
RETNAPROUDVENTURE@GMAIL.COM
CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU THERE!



"Rebirth to Hope" "Hearts of the Sea" "Across the Sea" "Reflection"



"Pass of War Service Day" "The Old Girl in the Eggplant" "Pass of War Service Day"

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL DISABLED VETERAN SUBMITTING PHOTO ARTS

On line will be John Johnston ART SHOW opening by the opening up at The East End where his family heritage dates back to the early 1800s

www.bethmello.com



"Hampton House" "Diffused Suffer" "High Sea in 17" "Pan" "Eggplant" "Sea in Love" "Hampton Castle"

Healing Through Art. Honoring 250 Years of America. Inspiring Through Service.

The New York State Department of Veterans' Services pleased to share an upcoming community event featuring East End artist and Disabled Vietnam Veteran John Melillo, whose powerful artwork continues to inspire conversations around healing, resilience, and life after military service.

On **Friday, July 10**, at the Hamptons Fine Art Fair in Southampton, John Melillo will host a special “Art of Healing Reception” celebrating America’s 250th Anniversary through art while helping give back to fellow Veterans through support for Paws of War.

LOOKING AHEAD

AUGUST

SAVE THE DATE: 2026 Finger Lakes Veterans' Mental Health Summit

Please mark your calendars for the 2026 Finger Lakes Veterans' Mental Health Summit — an important day focused on supporting the mental health and well-being of All Who Served.

This year's summit will explore important topics including Military Culture, Suicide Prevention, Aging Veterans, Women's Health, Whole Health, and Caregiver Support.



Women's Luncheon, Veterans Resource Fair & Food Distribution Event

Join us on August 29, 2026 at 11am at our Center for Community Engagement (CCE). Veterans will receive lunch, helpful resources from a variety of vendors, and food to take home. This event is proudly sponsored by PSEG Long Island.
Long Island Cares CCE
75 Davids Drive
Hauppauge, NY

For more information, reach out to Justin Berbig, Veterans Mobile Outreach Coordinator
631.582.3663 ext. 151 | jberbig@licares.org

SAVE THE DATE!

The National Association of Black Military Women will celebrate its **50th anniversary** at the next biennial convention on **Oct 8-11, 2026** at the Harbor Side Hotel in Oxon Hills, MD

This will be an unforgettable and exciting event.

Everyone is invited to attend!



LOOKING AHEAD



U.S. Department
Of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration

Plan Today. Honor Forever.

Eligible Veterans have earned VA burial and memorial benefits for themselves, their spouses, and qualifying family members.

Planning in advance can save you and your family thousands of dollars, reduce your family's stress at a difficult time, and ensure you receive the honor and remembrance you deserve. Learn more at WWW.CEM.VA.GOV/VETERANS-AND-FAMILIES and talk with your loved ones today.

Free Genealogy Resources to Help Research Your Family History

Researching family history can be both exciting and rewarding. Whether you are just beginning your genealogy journey or looking to dig deeper into your ancestry, there are many free resources available to help uncover records, stories, and connections from the past. Below are several helpful tools and websites to explore..

Helpful Research Websites

- Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-10101/>
- FamilySearch.org: Free genealogy records and family search tools
- NARA.gov: National Archives records, including immigration and military records
- WorldGenWeb.net: Worldwide ancestry resources
- USGenWeb.org: Genealogy research by U.S. state
- NMAAHC.si.edu: Information on the Freedmen's Bureau and African American genealogy resources

Useful Research Tips

- Use Census Records beginning with the 1950 Census and work backward
- Check state and local archives for marriage indexes and public records
- Use Google Advanced Search to narrow genealogy searches
- Search Google Images for ancestor photos and historical locations
- Explore historical maps and newspapers online
- Watch genealogy tutorials on YouTube

Military Records

- The National Archives maintains military service records from the Revolutionary War through present-day records. Researchers can access records through archives in Washington, DC and St. Louis, Missouri.

Important Reminder About AI

- AI tools such as Google Gemini may help guide research, but information should always be fact-checked using official records and trusted genealogy sources.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Spotlight: Recognizing Our Own: LTC (Ret) Blossom Fuerguson

This month, in the spirit of honoring trailblazers within our own NABMW family, we proudly highlight Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Blossom Ferguson, a veteran of Operation Desert Storm and a lifelong servant leader in both military and civilian spaces.

LTC Ferguson served 21 years in the United States Army Reserve. Her military awards include the Army Achievement Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. Her record reflects steady dedication and quiet excellence.



Alongside her service, she built a respected 44-year career as a Registered Nurse and Adult Nurse Practitioner. She spent 27 of those years caring for veterans at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in the Bronx, where she served as the perioperative nurse manager responsible for the operating room and anesthesia unit. She retired from the VA in 2018.

When COVID-19 unfolded in 2020, retired medical professionals were asked to return. LTC Ferguson stepped forward immediately. She returned to the Bronx VA to support telephone triage, and later joined the VA mission providing clinical support to FEMA and the New York State Department of Health COVID-19 vaccination effort in Yonkers. This work brought critical care to underserved communities and required close coordination with partners across government and emergency management.

Her service extends beyond the hospital. She is active with the Greater Allen Cathedral of New York, Women Veterans Alumni York College, the American Cancer Society, and the National Association of Black Military Women. She currently serves as the National Membership Chairperson for NABMW and as a Board Member for the Black Military Women Foundation.

On November 7, 2025, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. Delta Beta Zeta Chapter honored LTC Ferguson's legacy of service at the Stars and Pearls Gala.

✨ Takeaway: LTC Furgeson's legacy reminds us that service does not end with retirement. It lives on through leadership, compassion, and a willingness to step in when others step back.

TRUTH & LEGACY

EXPLORING BLACK HISTORY, CULTURE, AND LEGACY



BETTY BOOP: A VICTIM OF CULTURAL APPROPRIATION?

Betty Boop is a famous cartoon character from the 1930s, but her story connects to a deeper history of race, culture, and entertainment in the United States. She was created during the Jazz Age, a time when music, dance, and fashion were heavily influenced by Black culture. Although modern images of Betty Boop portray her as a white cartoon character, her voice, style, and performance were heavily influenced by Black artists and performers. Growing up, I watched Betty Boop and admired her confidence, flirty-ness, and sass. It wasn't until I became an adult that I learned about the deeper history behind her character.

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One important figure connected to Betty Boop is Esther Lee Jones, also known as “Baby Esther.” She was a Black child performer in the 1920s who became known for her playful singing style and her use of phrases like “boop-boop-a-doop.” Her performances included dancing, funny facial expressions, and a unique way of singing that audiences loved. Later, a white singer named Helen Kane used a very similar style and became famous for it. When Kane sued the creators of Betty Boop, the court found that her singing style was not original and had been used earlier by performers like Baby Esther. This shows how Black performers helped create popular styles but were not given credit for their work.

The story of Betty Boop is not just about the past—it still relates to what happens today. Cultural appropriation is not a new phenomenon and has long impacted music, fashion, and language. Cultural appropriation continues when people take ideas, styles, or traditions from marginalized cultures and use them without giving credit or support to the original creators. Black culture often shapes mainstream trends, but the people who create those trends do not always receive recognition or financial benefit. Recognizing the Black influence behind Betty Boop does not take away from her popularity—it adds to the full story. More importantly, it encourages us to think about fairness, credit, and respect when it comes to cultural expression today.

The story of Betty Boop reminds us that popular culture is often shaped by voices and influences that are not always fully recognized. By understanding the contributions of artists like Baby Esther, we gain a deeper appreciation of the character and story of Betty Boop. Quinta Brunson is developing and starring in a new Betty Boop film, giving audiences a chance to enjoy the character while also reflecting on her history and cultural impact. Be sure to see the movie in theaters!

-Danielle Bernae Wright

IN MEMORIUM

MOMENT OF SILENCE – FOR OUR
DEPARTED...
MAY THEY REST IN PEACE



CONDOLENCES TO:

- Renee Harper 's aunt passed, Leila “Theo” Williams, away on May 20, 2026. Condolences can be sent to Renee Harper, 137-27 227 Street, Laurelton, NY 11413
- Detrel Howell 's Brother, Deveret Howell, passed away on May 30, 2026. Condolences can be sent to Detrel Howell at 17242 133rd Street Apt #11F, Jamaica, NY 11434



IN MEMORIAM

“They Served. They Led. They Inspired.”

As we remember those who have passed, we honor their legacy of service, strength, and sacrifice. Their footsteps paved the way—may we carry their memory forward with pride and purpose.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

MIND, BODY & SOUL

MEDICINE FOR THE MIND

Strengthening Mental Wellness

June is PTSD Awareness Month and is an opportunity to recognize that mental health is just as important as physical health. For veterans and military families, traumatic experiences can leave lasting effects that impact thoughts, emotions, relationships, and daily life. The good news is that healing is possible, and support is available.

One of the most powerful forms of medicine for the mind is knowledge. Understanding PTSD, recognizing its symptoms, and learning healthy coping strategies can help individuals regain a sense of control. Talking with a counselor, joining a support group, or connecting with a trusted friend can reduce feelings of isolation and provide encouragement during difficult times.

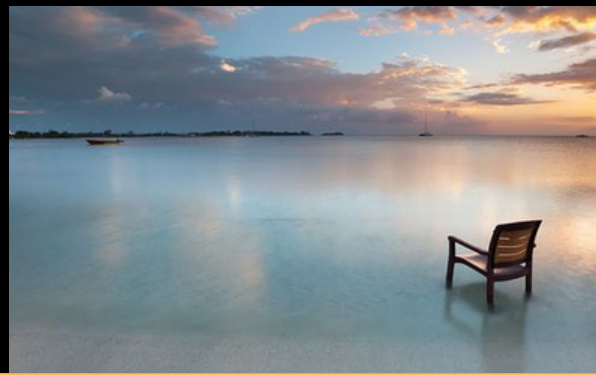
Actions you can take to nurture your mind:

- Learn one new fact about PTSD or mental wellness each week.
- Practice mindfulness or meditation for 5-10 minutes each day.
- Keep a journal to process thoughts and emotions.
- Limit exposure to negative news and social media when feeling overwhelmed.
- Reach out to a friend, family member, battle buddy, or counselor for a meaningful conversation.
- Attend a veteran support group or community event.

Mental wellness is not about never struggling. It is about developing the tools, support systems, and resilience needed to navigate life's challenges. Every step toward understanding and self-care is a step toward healing.

SECTION 4

HEALTH & WELLNESS MIND, BODY & SOUL



MEDICINE FOR THE BODY

Caring for Your Physical Health

The body often carries the effects of stress and trauma. PTSD can contribute to sleep problems, fatigue, chronic tension, and other physical health concerns. Taking care of the body can improve emotional well-being and create a stronger foundation for recovery.

Physical activity does not have to be intense to be beneficial. Walking, stretching, swimming, gardening, dancing, or spending time outdoors can help reduce stress hormones and improve mood. Good nutrition, adequate sleep, and routine medical care are also important components of overall wellness.

Actions you can take to nurture your body:

- Take a 20-30 minute walk three times each week.
- Establish a regular bedtime and wake-up schedule.
- Drink more water throughout the day.
- Schedule annual medical checkups and preventive screenings.
- Choose one healthy meal or snack each day.
- Spend time outside enjoying fresh air and sunshine.
- Try a new physical activity such as yoga, tai chi, biking, or swimming.

Small, consistent choices often have the greatest impact. Caring for your body is an investment in your health, energy, and quality of life.

SECTION 4

HEALTH & WELLNESS MIND, BODY & SOUL



MEDICINE FOR THE SOUL

Finding Purpose, Peace, and Connection

Healing involves more than the mind and body. It also requires nurturing the soul. For many veterans, the military provided a strong sense of purpose, identity, and connection. After service, finding new sources of meaning can be an important part of overall well-being.

Medicine for the soul can take many forms. Some people find comfort through faith, prayer, and spiritual practices. Others find fulfillment through volunteering, mentoring, creative expression, spending time with loved ones, or helping those in need. Activities that bring joy, gratitude, and purpose can help restore hope and strengthen resilience.

Actions you can take to nurture your soul:

- Spend a few minutes each day reflecting on things you are grateful for.
- Attend a worship service or spiritual gathering if meaningful to you.
- Volunteer in your community or support a local veteran organization.
- Write a letter or make a phone call to someone you care about.
- Engage in a creative activity such as art, music, writing, or photography.
- Spend time in nature and appreciate the beauty around you.
- Perform one act of kindness each week.

This PTSD Awareness Month, remember that healing is not only about managing symptoms. It is also about rediscovering purpose, strengthening relationships, and creating a life filled with meaning. By caring for the mind, body, and soul, we can build a healthier and more balanced future.

STAY CONNECTED



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED DEDICATION
TO NABMW'S MISSION. TOGETHER, WE WILL KEEP
TELLING HER STORY AND INSPIRING THE NEXT
GENERATION OF BLACK MILITARY WOMEN**

Follow us on social media:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NYCNABMW>
- Website: <https://www.nycnabmw.org/>

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