Women's History Month 2015
Telling 31 stories in 31 days this March.

International Women's Day

March is National Women's History Month. Its roots can be traced back to March 8, 1857, when women from New York City factories staged a protest over working conditions. Garment workers marched and picketed, demanding improved working conditions, a 10-hour day and equal rights for women. Fifty-one years later on March 8, 1908, women in the needle trades marched again in New York in honor of the 1857 event. They too demanded the right to vote and an end to sweatshops and child labor.

However, in the United States, National Women's Day was first observed on February 28, 1909. Women continued to celebrate the day on the last Sunday of February until 1913. As World War I was about to begin, Russian women observed their first International Women's Day on the last Sunday in February 1913. Then, International Women's Day was transferred to March 8th, which has remained its global date.

In 1914, more women across Europe held rallies to campaign against the war and express women's solidarity. Since then, it has become a day when women are recognized for their achievements and serves as an opportunity to remember women's past struggles, to celebrate their progress and to look ahead to what still needs to be done. It is a time when women's organizations and governments around the world hold large-scale events honoring women's advancements and reminding communities of the continued action needed to ensure women's equality is gained and maintained in all aspects of life.

International Women's Day is an official holiday in Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, China (for women only), Cuba, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Madagascar (for women only), Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nepal (for women only), Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Zambia. In many countries, it has become tradition for men to honor their mothers, wives, girlfriends, colleagues, etc with flowers and small gifts. In some countries International Women's Day holds the equivalent status of Mother's Day where children give small presents to their mothers and grandmothers.

March 8, 2015

Women quietly do extraordinary things every day. To help shed light on the resilience and strength of Hoosier women and celebrate their accomplishments and contributions to history we are releasing an article every day in the month of March. These articles showcase how women have moved Indiana and our country forward and who inspire others to do great things in their own lives.

Women in Indiana have an important role to play. You can make a difference by:

- Learning more about the issues affecting women in Indiana.
- Voicing your opinion on issues important to you
- Serving as an advocate for women
- Mentoring another woman
- Join ICW's mailing list or social media outlets to be notified of upcoming events, programs and resources available to women

Go to www.in.gov/icw to learn more about the Indiana Commission for Women and their current initiatives.

Sources:

- **International Women's Day** (http://www.internationalwomensday.com)
- **History of International Women's Day** (http://www.internationalwomensday.com/about.asp#.VPxtD_nF_eR)
- **United Nations Women Watch** (http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd/history.html
- **White House** (http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/03/08/statement-president-barack-obama-commemorating-international-womens-day)

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