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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Women Veterans Network Invites Student History Fair Winner to Speak**

(Bradenton, FL) Celia Szelwach, Founder of the Women Veterans Network (WOVEN) has invited Alexis Szelwach, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student from Bradenton Prep to speak on Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup> from 530-700pm at the Women's Resource Center (WRC) of Manatee County. Alexis will share the results of her research for her History Fair Project on "Conflict & Compromise"—The Evolution of the Army Nurse Corps. She received the "Medical History" Award at the Manatee County History Fair on Thursday night. Alexis' sister, Natasha Tsantles and her brother-in-law Tony Tsantles are Manatee High School graduates who are currently serving in Iraq. Staff Sergeant Natasha Tsantles is an Army Nurse supervising the intensive care unit at the 86<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad.

The Women Veterans Network launched its new logo WOVEN™ and website [www.womenveteransnetwork.org](http://www.womenveteransnetwork.org) on Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup> during Celia Szelwach's presentation as the guest speaker for the Manatee County Veteran's Council Veteran's Day Service at Sutton Park in Palmetto, FL. Celia stated that the mission of WOVEN is to connect women veterans for social support and camaraderie, to share information and resources, and to serve other veterans and local communities.

The website [www.womenveteransnetwork.org](http://www.womenveteransnetwork.org) includes a handout of the 25 Frequently Asked Questions by women veterans, a listing of veteran's events, helpful fact sheets and a comprehensive resources page which highlights contacts for VA health and benefits, historical research and statistics on women veterans, career transition and employment, and veteran small business.

The Women Veterans Network has grown to 60 members with new members joining monthly. Network members include several women veterans with more than 20 years of service in the Air Force, Navy, and Coast Guard as well as pioneers such as the first female Command Master Chief in the Coast Guard. The network stays connected through monthly meetings at the Women's Resource Center (WRC) of Manatee County and via an email newsletter which highlights community events for women and veterans. Celia Szelwach, a 1990 West Point graduate, former Army Captain and paratrooper started the Network in May with the desire to create a global online community of women veterans spanning all services, experiences, war eras, ranks, and geographies. The group serves not only as a support network for current women veterans but also for future veterans, particularly those from the latest conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

For additional information about WOVEN or to receive e-mail updates, contact Celia Szelwach at 941-795-0928, email Celia at [cszelwac@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:cszelwac@tampabay.rr.com) or contact her through the "Contact Us" page at [www.womenveteransnetwork.org](http://www.womenveteransnetwork.org).

Celia Szelwach, DBA (ABD) is the Director of the Women Veterans Network (WOVEN), a global online community committed to helping women veterans successfully transition from military service. In October 2006, she was appointed by the Secretary of the VA to serve on the 14-member Advisory Committee on Women Veterans for a two-year term. Her active duty service from 1990-1995 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina included redeploying troops and equipment from Desert Storm/Desert Shield and two humanitarian service missions—for Haitian migration to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and for Hurricane Andrew disaster relief in Miami, Florida. Her awards and decorations include the National Defense Service Medal, two Army Commendation Medals, two Army Achievement Medals, two Humanitarian Service Medals, and the Senior Parachutist Badge.