



## LORRAINE WEST

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I joined the Army early on during the Korean Conflict. I was experiencing financial difficulties at Eastern Michigan University, the Army was in need of recruits, and was recently desegregated and being an adventurous soul, I decided to become a WAC.

Basic Training was completed at then Camp Lee, now Fort Lee. After Basic Training I was sent to the 2nd Infantry Division at Fort Lewis in Washington State, Northwest region near Canada. The units Insignia/ patch was an Indian head.

The Unit was shipped into combat to Korea. I was sent to Japan with an Engineers Division. Day to day, I was a Property Clerk, yet every soldier at my station was always on high alert for incoming wounded. Everyone was sent to the Hospital to care for and process the wounded and dead incoming from Korea and reroute them to the USA. I had a rather unique experience in that many of the wounded and dead were friends and acquaintances. I had trained with the 2nd Infantry Division, which sustained more casualties than any other Division during the Korean Conflict. There were a variety of injuries, yet the memory of Phosphorus burns and severe frost bite sends a shudder still. After all this emotional draining work, everyone had to report to their regular assignments at 0 Dark thirty.

My military experience has made a lot of difference in my life. I met wonderful people, made life long friends, some of whom we see each other as often as possible up to now. The GI Bill provided me funding to complete a Masters Degree in International Education from Eastern Michigan University. I am a Founding and life member of the National Association of Black Military Women (NABMW), Cofounder of the Black Military Women Foundation (BMWF), was Chairlady of the North East Region of NABMW. I am a member of the Women in Military Service of America (WIMSA), 555 Paratrooper Infantry Division (Triple Nickles) and the 369th Veterans Association.

My bucket List: Make a parachute jump.