



# Celebrating 50 years of NU Trailblazers!

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## A Life of Service: Karen Rowe Broadmeadow '83



Karen Rowe's journey of service and leadership began at Vermont College. There she received an associate degree in business management before attending Norwich University, where she not only earned her bachelor's degree in business administration but also found a life partner in classmate John Broadmeadow. "My most enduring memory of Norwich is its sense of community," Karen says. "The camaraderie formed within various communities, including the civilian student population, Dewey Hall residents, and fellow business students, laid the foundation for lasting friendships."



After graduating in 1983, Karen embarked on a career in Human Resource Management. Ten months into her first job at Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, newly minted 2ndLt Broadmeadow was assigned to Okinawa, Japan. As a working military spouse, Karen changed jobs every 2-3 years as her husband's career progressed in the Marine Corps. Employers included Fortune 500 companies, a Historically Black College/University, and MCI WorldCom's Corporate Employee Relations. In that position, Karen played a pivotal role in investigating ethics and employee relations complaints following the internationally renowned fraud fiasco in 2002. Norwich's emphasis on the Honor Code and ethics served her well in this high-profile position.



Beyond her professional accomplishments, Karen dedicated significant time to volunteer work, supporting service members, their families, and the communities in which she lived. She served on the Board of Directors for the Carlsbad (CA) Education Foundation, chaired the Joint Spouses Conference in Hawaii, and led the 2017 Navy-Marine Corps Ball Committee, raising over \$450,000 for the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

"Being an advocate for military families, especially during wartime, can be a challenge but also offers deep rewards," Karen says. During John's six deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, she served as his 'partner in command' by helping families through the trials of

separation and offering comfort, support, and guidance during the difficulties associated with combat deployments.

Her dedication did not go unnoticed. In 2020, the Department of Navy recognized Karen with the Distinguished Public Service Award, the highest honor bestowed upon civilians for 'courageous or heroic acts or exceptionally outstanding service.' This prestigious award is a testament to Karen's 38 years of dedication and contributions to military-affiliated organizations.

Karen's service to her alma mater has also been exemplary. She is a former member of the NU Alumni Association, a current member of the Women Kicking Glass Committee, and was recently named the first female chair of the Partridge Society.

Whether connecting with classmates around the country or supporting military families around the world, Karen's commitment to service, leadership, and community remains a shining example of her enduring Norwich spirit.

*Records documenting women's history and experience at Norwich are available through the University Archives. <https://archives.norwich.edu/>*

In 1972, Vermont College merged with Norwich University. 2024 marks the **50th anniversary** of the first women to live on the Northfield campus and the first to join the NU Corps of Cadets—two years prior to the US Service Academies!

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### **Women Kicking Glass is hosting Dressing for Success**

An event providing our female students with professional work attire and support to succeed in work and life.

Help fill our clothes racks. We are seeking donations of gently worn and fashionable women's work outfits.

**[See more here.](#)**