

International women's Day

8 March



With the feature for this month of women internationally, we focus on women whose efforts in government, business and politics have spanned the globe. We are pleased to profile Kate Gleason, Mary Kay Ash, Golda Meir, Condoleezza Rice and Hillary Clinton.

Kate Gleason worked in her family's tool making business. This was most unusual for the time, for it was in the late 1800s. She began her career at the Gleason Works at age 11 when her brother, Tom, died. Hearing her father lament the loss of his assistant, Kate simply showed up and took his place. By age 14, she was the Gleason Works book-keeper. She became her father's indispensable assistant.

In 1884, she entered Cornell University's engineering program, the first woman to so enroll. However, before her freshman year was over, she needed to return to the family business, as her father could not afford the salary of the man who had been

hired to take her place. By 1888, she was on the road selling machines on her first road trip. By 1890, she was the Secretary-Treasurer of The Gleason Works, and its chief sales representative, a position she held until 1913. In 1893, while on doctor's orders for rest, she went to England, Scotland, France, and Germany, and came back with machine orders. This was one of the earliest efforts at international marketing for any company in the U.S.

Gleason learned how to turn being a female in business into an asset. Her estate was used to establish the Kate Gleason fund, one of whose beneficiaries was the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). In 1998, RIT named its College of Engineering after her. Gleason attributed her success to "a bold front, a willingness to risk more than the crowd, determination, some common sense, and plenty of hard work."

Another woman willing to take risks was entrepreneur **Mary Kay Ash**. In 1963, she founded Mary Kay Cosmetics. She began "Beauty by Mary Kay" when, after 25 years in the direct-sales business, she resigned when another man she had trained had been promoted above her, at twice her salary. While in her kitchen she listed on a legal pad the characteristics she thought would be good in a company. She immediately realized she had the business plan for her new company. With its motto of "One Woman Can", Mary Kay, Inc. has expanded from its first international venture in Australia in 1971, to more than 35 markets on five continents.



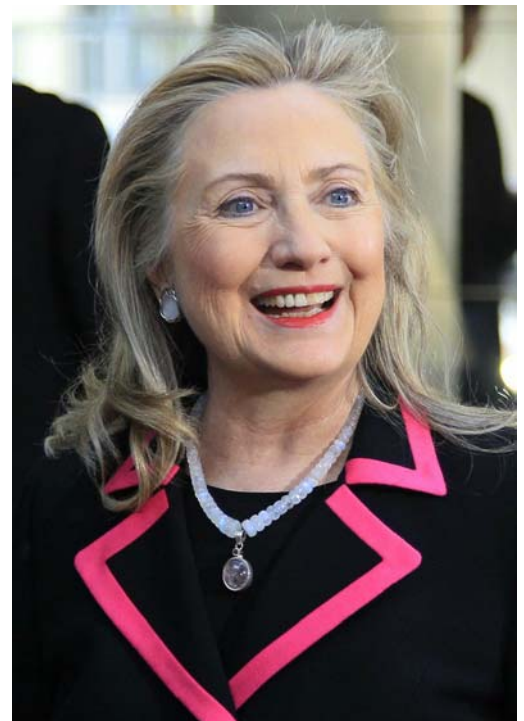
Golda Meir was truly an international woman. She was born in Kiev, (now part of the Ukraine) in 1898. Her family immigrated to America in 1906, when she was nine. Determined to get an education (her mother wanted her to leave school and get married), Meir ran away from her parents' home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to live with her sister in Denver, Colorado where she enrolled in high school. It was in Denver that she discovered Zionism. Enthralled by society's debate over gender roles, the Social Zionist movement and the future for Jewish people, she married Morris Meyerson in 1917. They soon sailed for Tel Aviv, Israel. Meir moved quickly up the political ladder and eventually became secretary of the Women's Labor Council. In 1948 she helped write the Israeli Declaration of Independence. In 1969, at age 70, Meir became Israel's fourth prime minister (Israel's first woman prime minister and the third woman in the world to hold such a position).



As Secretary of State, **Condoleezza Rice** traveled to numerous countries around the world, far from her roots in the highly segregated Southern U.S. Born in 1954 in Birmingham, Alabama, Rice surmounted extreme prejudice to become the first woman and first African American to serve as provost of Stanford University. In 2001, when she was appointed the national security advisor by President George W. Bush, she became the first black woman (and the second woman) to hold the post. Her appointment as Secretary of State was also groundbreaking – the second woman and first African American. During her term (2005-2009), she required diplomats to learn two foreign languages and dedicated her department to establishing democracies around the world. Another groundbreaking first occurred for Rice in 2012; that was the year that she and businesswoman

Darla Moore became the first female members of the Augusta National Golf Club. This was a huge breakthrough for women fighting for gender equity.

This month is also a special opportunity to acknowledge and salute former Secretary of State, **Hillary Clinton**. Clinton resigned from her post in February, after serving President Barack Obama four years—all of his first term. This position has to date capped a long and generous career of public service for Clinton. As early as her college years, Clinton (then Hillary Rodham) took volunteer positions in political campaigns for a number of politicians of the times. After college she went on to law school where she met her husband, Bill. After their marriage, she continued in the public political arena and supported Bill, as he grew his political standing from local positions, to the Governor of Arkansas to the White House as President.



As First Lady, Clinton worked hard on a number of issues from her office in the West Wing. To date, she is the only First Lady to maintain such an office. Clinton cites her work on the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 as providing her with the greatest satisfaction while she was First Lady. Clinton was next a U.S. Senator, from 2001 to 2009 and was re-elected (in 2006) by a generous margin. She ran for President and while she was not successful, after the election, she became Secretary of State. In this position,

she logged more miles than any former Secretary and she helped solidify the U.S. position at many international forums.

During the end of Clinton's tenure, she announced a new international collaborative educational project that combines learning opportunities for Arabic students to study science and technology in their native language (translated from English) from freely available resources. The learning can be adjusted and organized to the specific needs of local areas. Called the Open Book Project, many see this free access to education as a unique opportunity to bridge the international cultural divide.

From business to politics, women continue to transform our world into a global economy; we salute their many contributions.



Charlotte S. Waisman, PhD, co-author of *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America* (HarperCollins), is a national champion and advocate for women as a professor and keynote speaker. As an executive coach, Waisman coauthored *50 Activities for Developing Leaders* and *The Leadership Training Activity Book*. She is a principal with a consulting company specializing in leadership and workforce excellence initiatives.

Jill S. Tietjen, PE, co-author of *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America* (HarperCollins), is an author, speaker and electrical engineer. Her other books include the *Setting the Record Straight* series. Tietjen is a top historian on scientific and technical women. She is President/CEO of *Technically Speaking*, a consulting company that specializes in improving career opportunities for women in technology.

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