

Women's rights struggle continues today

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Tejano Tribune

Women's History Month, celebrated every March, highlights the efforts and achievements of millions of extraordinary women across the world.

From women's suffrage to the feminine mystique and numerous feminist marches, thousands of women have inspired society to improve the roles and rights of women in diverse areas.

Nancy Nelson, Associate VP for employee relations and former member of the women's political caucus, said she recognizes the importance of this celebration just like any other that honors different groups of society.

"It is wonderful to celebrate women in the different types of creative, artistic, and social breakthroughs, as well as the advancements women have made throughout the years."

Thanks to the women's efforts to raise their voices and acknowledge their needs for equality, things like submissive housewife propaganda, social and sexual repression and unfair treatment in the work place are, in many areas at least, issues of the past.

Carina Ramirez, ESL instructor and feminist activist involved in the second-wave feminism fight for equal rights in-



Courtesy Margie Nelson
Assistant Professor,
Margie Nelson



Courtesy Nancy Nelson
Associate VP for Employee
Relations, Nancy Nelson



File photo
ESL Instructor,
Carina Ramirez

South Dakota, describes one of those situations that motivated her to fight for equality.

"When I got my first paycheck, a male colleague who was hired at the same time mentioned his salary which was considerably higher than mine," she said. "When I asked personnel about it, I was told that men had to support wives and children. When I responded that he wasn't even married, the answer was that he might be some day. Well, that was the beginning of my activism, and I've been rooting out injustices ever since."

Even if in today's society the treatment of women has improved, women should learn and keep in mind the importance of feminism.

Margie Nelson, assistant English professor and district-wide coordinator, pro-

vided the definition of a feminist as "a person that believes in the social, economic, and gender equality." And that is why "it is important for us to work together and celebrate each other's accomplishments."

Whether you are a man or a woman, anyone who believes in having the same opportunities and benefits, regardless of gender, is a supporter of the feminist movement. EPCC/UTEP corporate communications student Alberto Rodriguez said he recognizes the challenge women are facing these days.

"Women in today's era expect to be seen as active members of society yet are held back by ideologies and stereotypes society still has about them," he said. "They face the challenge to prove themselves more than ever." Rodriguez said women should not have to sacrifice their duties as family members in order to become a productive member of society.

The women interviewed for this story all said that great advances have been made

for gender equality, but that women still have to make an effort to keep the progress going.

Margie Nelson offered this advice to young women: "Get all the education you can get. That is going to be your key, and be independent." Nancy Nelson agreed: "Continue to educate yourself and grow because you never know what opportunities might come along and you want to be in a position of taking advantage of those."

Carina Ramirez said that "women of all ages must be politically active and vigilant, for these politicians who would like to remove many of the rights we worked so very hard to gain."

But most important, everyone is encouraged to recognize that Women's History Month not only celebrates feminist activist history and the achievements of exceptional women. It also congratulates every woman that forms part of our everyday history as mothers, daughters, wives, co-workers, students and friends.

Each year, the month of March is a reminder that there is a fight that needs to be continued to keep women pursuing their dreams without obstacles and proper recognition. The real accomplishment will be when the pursuit of these values stops being considered as news and becomes part of our daily life.