



100 YEARS

OF WOMEN AT UTEP

1916 1925

- 1916 Jeannette Rankin is the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.
- 1917 America enters World War I.
- 1918 The British Royal Air Force is founded, only 8 years after the Wright Brothers' flight.
- 1919 The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing women the right to vote, is passed by Congress on June 4th.
- 1920 The 19th Amendment is ratified on August 18th.
- 1921 Edith Wharton becomes the first woman to win a Pulitzer Prize for fiction.
- 1922 The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) is created.
- 1923 First game is played at Yankee Stadium between the Yankees and the Boston Red Sox.
- 1924 Nellie Tayloe Ross is elected in Wyoming to succeed her deceased husband becoming the first woman to serve as governor of a state.
- 1925 Miriam Amanda Ferguson is inaugurated as the first woman governor of Texas.



The First Female Members of Staff at TSM

The 1916-1917 catalog for the School of Mines lists Mrs. Ella W. Martin as the school's registrar. Mrs. Martin acted as an assistant to Dean Worrell, as her stenographer initials ("EM") can be found on several letters written by him. During the 1917-1918 academic year, Ruth Monro Augur replaced Ella Martin as registrar. A March 23, 1918, news article referred to Augur not only as the registrar, but also as the individual responsible for the school's library, making her UTEP's first librarian. Ruth Augur was relieved of her responsibilities for the library when Dean Worrell hired Mrs. Alice Morris as a full-time librarian in 1921.

As UTEP grew through the 1920s, so did its staff. At the beginning of the decade, women occupied three of the five administrative positions at the school—registrar, librarian, and secretary. By 1930, when the school was undergoing its transformation into a baccalaureate college, its administrative staff reached fourteen, of which eight were women. The highest-ranking position held by a female was the dean of women. By the height of the Great Depression in the 1930s, the number of women staff members began to decrease due to biased hiring practices that favored men. Depression-era staffing reductions also disproportionately affected women, as spouses of male employees were the first to be let go.



Ruth Brown, photographed for NOVA Magazine, 2013.

3

Ruth Brown McCluney and Grace Odell

Written by Paul J. Viera

Following Ruth Brown's graduation from El Paso High School in 1916, sixteen-year-old Ruth Brown received a scholarship from El Paso's University Scholarship Club, which afforded her the opportunity to attend the college of her choice. At first, she announced that she would attend the University of Kansas. However, Ruth's father, Charles H. Brown, insisted that his daughter postpone attending Kansas and instead attend the School of Mines, then located adjacent to Fort Bliss.

As one of only two female students attending TSM in 1916, Brown could not live in the dormitory. Instead, she commuted from her El Paso home by streetcar to the main gate of Fort Bliss, and then walked one-half mile across the parade ground and past the stables to attend classes in the school's main building. When that building burnt down in October 1916, Brown remained at TSM and became one of the first students to attend classes at the Franklin Mountains campus on October 29, 1917, which were held in the new chemistry building.

After three years attending TSM and the College of the City of El Paso, Brown became UTEP's first female instructor when Dean Steve Worrell offered her the position of chemistry assistant with a salary of \$250 per year. While Brown did not graduate from the School of Mines, she did graduate with a teacher's certificate from the College of the City of El Paso (CCEP). Brown transferred to the University of Kansas where she continued her study of chemistry. After graduating with her B.S., she returned to Texas to teach high school.

Grace France Odell, born 1899 in Kansas, came from a cattle ranching and retail merchant family. Odell graduated alongside with Ruth Brown from El Paso High School in 1916 and the two enrolled at the Texas School of Mines (TSM) in September 1916. At TSM, Odell joined the staff of the Prospector and played on the school's first women's basketball team.

In 1917, Odell, along with Brown, enrolled in the CCEP. In 1918, at a joint TSM and CCEP commencement ceremony, Odell received her CCEP diploma, which doubled as a Texas teacher credential. Odell, however, did not go into teaching. Instead, she began work as a stenographer for the U.S. army and a local architectural firm. In 1920, Odell was selected as one of the first female delegates to a state party convention following the granting of the vote to women. Odell later married Raymond Dominick, a soldier stationed at Fort Bliss. The couple moved to Kentucky where Raymond earned his engineering degree. They relocated to Los Angeles and raised three children. Grace passed away in 1992 at the age of 94.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

The first class of women came to UTEP in 1916 and by September 1917, women made up one-half of UTEP's enrollment.

4



Ruth Monro Augur, photographed for
The Flowsheet, 1921.

Ruth Monro Augur

Written by Paul J. Viera

Ruth Monro Augur was born in Austin, Texas, on November 14, 1886, to Charles Manwaring Augur and Cecelia Hall. Raised in Denver, Colorado, she studied painting under noted landscape impressionist artists Robert Henri and William M. Chase at the New York School of Art. When her father, an army officer, was transferred to Fort Bliss, Augur made El Paso her home.

Augur's association with the new Texas School of Mines (TSM) began with the school's establishment in 1914. In 1911, Augur served as a society and sports reporter for the El Paso Herald, and received a promotion to society page editor in 1916. Her journalistic duties placed her in contact with the school as she reported on the various functions held by faculty and students. In 1915, Augur began a close association with TSM's dean, Steve H. Worrell, and his wife Kathleen. With the beginning of the fall semester in 1917, Dean Worrell hired Augur to serve as the school's new registrar. Augur provided a degree of the humanities to the rugged engineering school in its early years. Utilizing her graphic artist skills, she designed the school's first logo and seal. As a musician (she played the cello), she performed at many of their social functions. In April 1919, Augur wrote and directed the first theatrical performance staged by the school and featured the students of TSM.

After leaving the College of Mines in 1929, Augur moved to California where she continued her career in the arts as a painter and the producer, writer, and director of a touring marionette puppet theatre group. Ruth Monro Augur passed away on March 10, 1967, in Oklahoma City.



Carrie M. Crosby, photographed for The Flowsheet amongst staff, 1928.

Carrie M. Crosby

Written by Guest Author

Carrie Crosby enrolled in the College of Mines in 1924, at a time when the only degree offered by the school was a Bachelor of Science degree in mining engineering. As a full time student, she became the first female to reach senior status in 1927. Carrie invested her time as a student by founding one of the first campus sororities (Omega Phi Delta), coediting the annual yearbook, and participating in the college's women's council. Despite her senior status, Crosby left TCM in 1928 without graduating and married fellow engineering student, Louis F. "Bill" Green. Carrie left TCM one year after it

began its transformation into a baccalaureate college. It would not be until 1931 that TCM would receive authorization to award bachelor's degrees.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

There are three campus buildings named after women: Bell Hall, Fox Fine Arts Center, and the Peter and Margaret de Wetter Center.

