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Arizona National Guard gets first female general



Credit: Senior Airman Rashaunda Williams

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Kerry L. Muehlenbeck laughs with the audience during her promotion ceremony June 7, 2014, at the 161st Air Refueling Wing, Phoenix. "The military is a big part of me – but it's not all of me. I've tried to balance all aspects of my life over the years," said Muehlenbeck.

by The Associated Press

azfamily.com

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PHOENIX (AP) -- The Arizona National Guard has its first female general.

The Guard says Air Force Brig. Gen. Kerry Muehlenbeck's promotion was the occasion for a ceremony Saturday in legal offices of the 161st Air Refueling Wing at Phoenix Sky

Harbor International Airport.

Muehlenbeck is the Guard's joint staff director, responsible for directing Army and Air Force joint operations, special staff agencies and joint policies and programs.

According to the Guard, Muehlenbeck doesn't consider herself a pioneer but says she is standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before her.

"For me, this is another opportunity to do something new, broaden my scope, and contribute," Muehlenbeck told Maj. Gabe Johnson of **Arizona National Guard Public Affairs**. "It's another opportunity to either succeed or fail. I prefer success, but you can't be afraid to fail, especially if you learn from it. You've got to go out and try. That's what my parents always taught me."

The native of Saginaw, Mich., began her career as an active duty judge advocate -- an attorney -- at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson.

She transitioned to the **Arizona Air National Guard** in 1997.

"The military is a big part of me -- but it's not all of me. I've tried to balance all aspects of my life over the years," Muehlenbeck told Johnson.

Muehlenbeck is a **professor at Mesa Community College** and an **adjunct faculty member at Arizona State University**. She teaches courses in criminology and criminal justice.