

WOMEN OF WONDER

Dr. Portia Lockett



Dr. Portia Lockett is an award-winning speaker, best selling author, corporate trainer, educational consultant, facilitator and chaplain.

She has been featured on CNN, in The Michigan Chronicle, The Detroit News, Detroit Free Press on Radio One and in many online magazines and podcasts. Lockett also co-produced Anointed Moments a meditational CD and book. She is a gifted songwriter.

Dr. Lockett is a living testimony to the survival and comeback spirit from the traumatic episodes in her life. From the loss of her father while in college, the death of her 28-year old son, surviving a divorce after almost twenty years of marriage, being diagnosed with several life-threatening diseases, foreclosure, bankruptcy, and unemployment, she overcame. These life-changing events made Lockett the powerhouse speaker and sought-after leader that she is today.

"I am on a mission to help as many people to reach their true calling by motivating them into their greatness," Lockett said.

Those who have experienced Dr. Lockett say she is an awesome, amazing speaker and powerful presenters that catapults people to their next level of greatness.

Corporations and nonprofits have been impacted by her interactive and uplifting message of attacking life's issues and reaching towards their highest plateau.

She trains organizations to step beyond their predetermined limitations, fears, and phobias by giving them the tools that are tangible to help them ultimately maneuver through to their full potential.

For additional information, visit her online at DrPortiaLockett.com, Facebook: Portia Lockett, Twitter: @portialockett, LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/portialockett> and Email at Drportia@drportialockett.com.

Maia Chaka

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Maia Chaka knows well that Women's History Month is all about commemorating, observing, and celebrating the vital role of the fairer sex in American folklore.

She just didn't know she would become a part of that history.

After years of officiating games in the Pac-12, Conference USA, and the NFL's Officiating Development Program, Chaka will head to the NFL in the Fall.

When she takes the field in September, the Norfolk State University graduate and health and physical education teacher will do so as the first Black woman to work as a referee in the NFL.

She'll also be just the second woman to wear the zebra stripes. Sarah Thomas, who worked last month's Super Bowl, is the other.

"This is a funny thing. I was actually at home, and I was playing NBA2K with my nephew online because that's what I like to do at night," Chaka told NNPA Newswire just hours after an appearance on NBC's "Today" show.

"Then, I received a phone call at around 9:15 p.m. [March 4], and I just dropped everything I was doing. The next thing I know, I'm getting told 'welcome to the National Football League,'" Chaka exclaimed.

Did she think it was for real?

"I just jumped up and threw everything off my lap. I thought I was being punked because I didn't believe it at the time. But it was true," she remarked.

Troy Vincent, an African American and the NFL's second-in-command behind Commissioner Roger Goodell, celebrated Chaka's appointment.

"Maia's years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance - including as par to the NFL Officiating Development Program -

have earned her a position as an NFL official," Vincent declared.

"As we celebrate Women's History Month, Maia is a trailblazer as the first Black female official and inspires us toward normalizing women on the football field," Vincent concluded.

Chaka told NNPA Newswire that she expects coaches and players to treat her the same as any other official.

"I think the coaches just want a good official who is going to get the play right," Chaka stated. "And I think they just want consistency. I hope they do not hold us to a different standard [than men] because we are all officials at the end of the day. It does not matter what gender we are. We are all wearing the same uniform."

The importance of her historic promotion isn't lost on Chaka.

"It's an honor to join the National Football League, commented Chaka, who works with at-risk girls in Virginia.

"I just want young girls of color - young women - to know that if you have a drive for something, don't let anything hold you back just because you think something may give you some limitations. Work hard and follow your dreams."

Her promotion to the big league also demonstrates to women of color that they can work and succeed in a male-dominated field, Chaka said.

"As long as you put in the work and you are fundamentally sound in anything that you do, you know you will reach your goal," Chaka offered.

"I think it's important that they see the representation in these fields."

Asked if she would switch from playing NBA2K with her nephew and challenge him to Madden Football, Chaka demurred.

"No, he couldn't handle me on Madden," she retorted.

Support Military Women

By Kim J. Clark Aka Expanding Love
SUN COLUMNIST



In the United States, March is recognized as National Women's History Month. We, at *The DeMarco Project* invite our readers to join us in celebrating and honoring women in all branches of the military; Airforce, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard,

Army Reserves, and National Guard. We are honored to celebrate all SHEROES, active duty female military personnel as well as veterans.

Over the past three years, we have featured many female veterans in our column. As an organization that is committed to saving veterans lives, we believe it is important for our readers to understand the unique issues many female veterans have. Unfortunately, many people do not understand the damaging effects of some of the military related issues females struggle with and quite often misinterpret their behavior.

In an article published February 2018 in the Detroit Native Sun, we interviewed Sgt. Stephanie J. Shannonretired (ret). She is a veteran of the United States Army, and author of an Amazon #1 best-selling book, "Battling the Storm Within." In that article Sgt. Shannon (ret) shared some common myths and truths about active duty female military service personnel and veteran women. This writer believes these myths and truths are worthy of being reprinted for the benefit of those who may not have read the original interview. Reprint below.

Myth - Females who join the military are either, gay/lesbian or promiscuous.

Truth - The fact of the matter is, just like men, women join the military for many reasons. It is a way to fund college. They have the desire to serve their country. It is a way to see the world, just to name a few.

Myth - Because of the military training, the women are "rugged" and therefore, not feminine. Their sexuality is always in question.

Truth - Many women in the military are mothers. Wartime veterans understand family is *not* first. The reality is, the mission is first. If one thinks about it, service people are required to put their emotions on the "back burner" and stay focused on the task at hand. Men who are able to do this are seen as heroes. Women...unstable damaged goods. The elephant in the room that no one wants to talk about is, 1 in 3 women suffer from military sexual trauma (MST) in addition to post traumatic stress disorder (PTST).

Myth - Women are not capable of leading. The assumption is, female veterans are

full of emotions and are not able to lead or walk in authority.

Truth - Female veterans make very powerful leaders. Military training teaches; discipline and self-control; strategic thinking; solution driven thought processes, among other skills necessary to be success in business.

As civilians, we are not capable of comprehending the challenges these brave women face. Think about it... They are willing to sacrifice their life so that you and I continue to live free. They endure abuse (by those they are willing to die for and next to...) Then they come home, are ignored, as though their contribution meant nothing. More often than not, they end up homeless, not just them, but their children as well. They suffer in silence. Their voice... unheard... labeled as unstable... Yes, there are services in place. However, the way the criterion to qualify for the services is written, in many cases, only male veterans are eligible. Please note, this article is written with the intent to educate, not to find fault with veteran services currently available.

Presently:

- There are over 43, 000 women veterans in Michigan.
- There are nearly 2 million living women veterans in the United States and Puerto Rico.
- 1 in 3 women veterans suffer from military sexual trauma (MST). This is the reported number of cases of MST.
- Female veterans account for one third of veteran suicide.
- Female veterans are the most underserved population in America.

As citizens who benefit from their brave service, we have the obligation to support these brave women any way we can. Express compassion instead of judgement. Volunteer to serve a local veteran service organization. Choose one that is sensitive to issues female veterans are struggling with.

We invite you to help us in our efforts to prevent military service related suicide. Please share the veteran crisis contact information below with a veteran you may be concerned about, as well as with their family members.

Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat, or text 838255. Veterans Crisis Line responders are trained to listen and offer support to Veterans in crisis and their loved ones." U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs

Kim is the mother of a veteran who loved his country and was willing to lay his life down for the freedoms he believed in. She is the Founder and CEO of The DeMarco Project, a Non-profit organization. Her life's mission it to save veteran lives and improve the quality of life for traumatized military service persons. If you would like to support her in the work, donations are welcome. Visit the website: www.TheDeMarcoProject.org.

