Celebrating Women: 
A University of Minnesota Tradition 
Susan A. Hagstrum, Ph.D.

A Few Notable Milestones for University Women

- 1875 — Helen Mar Ely, the University's first woman graduate, earns her degree
- 1909 — Professor Mariak Sanford is the first woman to deliver the commencement address
- 1909 — The University opens the nation's first on-campus School of Nursing
- 1934 — Ruth Winifred Howard becomes the nation's first African American woman to earn a Ph.D. in psychology
- 1954 — University scientist Jane Leichsenring wins the prestigious Borden prize

Institutional Efforts

- 1959-1960 — Minnesota Plan I initiated
- 1988 — Minnesota Plan II adopted and Commission on Women appointed
- 1998 — Office for University Women established