

Political Leader General Rita Aragon

USAF Major General Rita Aragon (Ret.) is the first female Oklahoma Secretary of Military and Veterans' Affairs. She is the liaison to the Governor for all Oklahoma military and veterans' issues. She participates and facilitates the Oklahoma Military Strategic Planning Group that helps insure the stability and growth of the communities and facilities of the five military installations in the state. She is tasked to develop programs that support current military and veterans individually and in total

General Aragon served as the first female commander of the Oklahoma Air National Guard, the first female to command a state's Air National Guard and the first female of Native American ancestry to become a general officer.

She serves on the Boards of Integris Health Edmond, Honoring America's Warriors, Women and Gender Studies for the University of Oklahoma, and Star Base. She is the Senior Military Advisor for the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, and has served on the American Red Cross and Girl Scouts, Juliette Lowe Leadership Society. Her community involvement spans participation in YWCA Purple Sash, Edmond Fine Arts, Go Red for Women for American Heart Association, and the White House Commission on Military Leadership Diversity and the Oklahoma Bar Association's Military Task Force.

The General's Awards include the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with 2 devices, Air Force Commendation, Army Commendation, Global War on Terrorism, Humanitarian Service Medal and others. Aragon has been recognized as Oklahoma's Woman of the Year by Journal Record, Oklahoma Woman Veteran of the Year, Leadership Fellow Oklahoma Christian University, Leadership Resident University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond Hall of Fame, Valley Forge Freedom Award, and Diversity Journal's 100 Women in America to Watch. In May of 2016, General Aragon was nominated to be inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame.