



Indiana Auditor of State
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Op-Ed

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Celebrate Women's History Month by Carrying the Torch

March is Women's History Month.

During this month, as we begin to celebrate Indiana's bicentennial, we reflect upon great women who have carried a torch of inspiration and shown great courage, perseverance, and humility in their efforts to break down barriers and lead the way toward greater opportunities for all women.

When we tell their stories, and celebrate their noble battles and wonderful accomplishments, it is our hope that we might inspire the next generation of women to carry on that torch and lead our state into the next century.

One torchbearer that has inspired me is Clare Boothe Luce.

Clare Boothe Luce was a congresswoman, diplomat, journalist, war correspondent, author, playwright, member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, recipient of the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic and the United States' Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1987, *Time* Magazine called her the "preeminent Renaissance woman of the century."

Yet, what made Luce an iconic torchbearer was her ability to mix her beauty, elegance and wit with her no-nonsense approach and diligent work ethic which allowed her to sustain a place in the "Old Boys Club." In fact, after one of her colleagues tried to praise her for her 'masculine mind,' she dismissed it out of hand. "I refuse the compliment that I think like a man," Luce said. "Thought has no sex. One either thinks, or one does not!"

Along with her measured tenacity and insatiable desire to succeed, perhaps what I admire most about her was her ability to see the bigger picture. She was determined to achieve great things—not only for herself—but on behalf of all women saying, “Because I am a woman, I must make unusual efforts to succeed. If I fail, no one will say, ‘She doesn’t have what it takes.’ They will say, ‘Women don’t have what it takes.’”

As women, we’re not just fighting for individual achievements; we’re fighting together, as one, for the possibilities and the opportunities to achieve great things. With this in mind, we cannot let each other down. We must raise our sights and ambitions and strive to achieve great things because we all depend on it.

It won’t be easy. But we should never quit. In the wise words of the American author Phillips Brooks, “Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger [wo]men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks! Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle.”

In Indiana, women have an opportunity to carry the torch and write the next chapter of our State’s history. While we have many wonderful women serving in our legislature and statewide offices, we can always use more.

I believe that more women participating in our government and in the marketplace of ideas can help to resolve complex issues with thoughtful solutions. I believe their participation will ultimately take our state further than it’s ever been.

So this month, let us ignite the potential of all women and fuel the fire deep within them so they may reach even greater heights and achieve even greater successes to make our nation and our state a better place.

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Appointed in 2014 as Indiana’s 56th State Auditor, Suzanne Crouch serves as the state’s Chief Financial Officer. Prior to becoming State Auditor, Crouch served eight years as the State Representative for House District 78 in Southern Indiana.

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