

conflict throughout our history, we had to wait. We waited until 1948 until we were entitled to veterans' benefits. We waited until 1974 until we were not involuntarily discharged for being pregnant. ... We waited until 1976 before we were admitted to the U.S. Military Academy. And we waited until 2013, when the combat exclusion policy was lifted. And ... in 2019, Sergeant First Class Janina Simmons, an openly lesbian soldier, made history by become the first African American woman to graduate from the legendary U.S. Army Ranger School."

Next was Sam Gingrich, who compared reproductive rights to a super power. "Did you know that we have a super power?" she began. "This power allows us to prevent and treat cancer. It allows us to reduce poverty and give people a chance to make the lives they want. ... This power belongs to and protects all of us, not just the young woman who has chosen to terminate a pregnancy, but the mother of three who needs a pap smear so that she can live a long and healthy life with her children. Our power is reproductive rights."

To represent transgender women, Davine Kaplin read a piece written by Emily Stiles called "Without Interference." "Her name does not matter; she's a woman—a transgender woman," Kaplin began before going on to relate the struggles of the LGBT community and historical riots for rights in places like Los Angeles in 1959, San Francisco in '66 and New York in '69.

"Sick of police harassment of transvestites, as they were known, thousands of protesters rioted, tired of being persecuted for being who they were and of being forced into doing sex

work," she said, "Today, living without interference, they are an active and productive part of this society. It's time for equal rights."

The performance of Bembeleza, a woman originally from the Congo, came in the form of a poem, delivered in French and English:

"Get up and put yourselves in the world of your vision/ Woman, mother of the nation/ Woman, conclusion the nation/ Woman, contribution beyond constitution/ With real love/ Women are powerful in any sector/Life comes in the ninth month in the wombs of women/ Respect to you women/ If you're proud of this wonderful life, know that you are proud for the women/ Oh, woman/ Woman wants to be the most appreciated creature in the world/ Respect to you women"

High school student Jadyn Johnson spoke as a future voter, saying "I dissent from this dark present" and asking the audience to imagine the power of young people's votes.

"Vote for what?" she asked. Prioritizing money over morals? No. Electing leaders who feel the heat of the end of our world and who put planet over profit? Yes. ... We young women of 2020, it's our time."

To cap off the performance, Carden returned to the mic with a sort of ode to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, entitled "The Lion in the House."

"The first and only female House Speaker, and the first speaker in 60 years to reclaim the gavel after losing it, her voice unites and lifts her caucus and the women of this nation," Carden said of Pelosi. "She has backbone. She has game. She will go down in history as our most effective speaker." □

In step



Native American Jingle Dress Dancers from the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony performed again this year during the Reno Women's March. The dancers of all ages gathered together on the stage at the Reno Events Center to perform a healing dance.

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