

August 15, 2011

A FEW Good Men

And yes, a pun is intended. We're not talking about the 1992 blockbuster movie, *A Few Good Men*; we're referring to the men who support the [Federal Employed Women \(FEW\) national organization](#). Most are familiar with the phrase, "Behind every great man is a great woman." It gets better though, for behind the many great women of FEW are a few good men. Matthew Fogg is one of them. In May 2010, he was elected as the first male to occupy a FEW national officer's position in decades and the first ever [FEW National Vice President for Congressional Relations](#). Simultaneously, he was the Blacks In Government (BIG) National First Vice President. Some may be surprised that a male would be interested or could get elected in leadership of a women's organization. But Matthew is no ordinary male; As a U.S. Marshal he won a [1998 landmark Title VII Federal Court verdict](#) for systemic racial discrimination inside the world's premiere law enforcement agency known as the U.S. Department of Justice, and he was a ['First Responder'](#) at Ground Zero in New York City on 9/11, and he was co-chair of the NOFEAR Coalition, responsible for promulgating passage of the most significant legislation for Federal employees since the 1964 Civil Rights Act as amended in 1991. As the Coalition gathered around the President, this legislation was signed into law by President George Bush in May 2002, as the Notification and Federal Employee Anti-discrimination and Retaliation (NOFEAR) Act.

This collaboration of men and women is not new. Matthew Frederick Fogg is just following in the footsteps of another famous Frederick from Washington DC who also pioneered tirelessly for women's rights. In 1848, Frederick Douglas promoted the first Women's Rights Convention in his *North Star* newspaper. It was recorded as the first time that men and women met together publicly to fight for women's rights. He not only supported the convention but persuaded the women to keep women's suffrage on the table when many wanted to remove it fearing that its presence would hurt their cause. He is but one of the 33 men whose names are forever etched into history on the controversial [Declaration of Sentiments](#).

Frederick Douglas who said, "Without struggle there is no progress" saw the cause of equality for men and women as the same fight. He was fighting for a woman's equal rights and her right to vote even though in 1848 he himself was not allowed to vote.

While the 15th Amendment giving black men the right to vote would be passed in 1870, Literacy tests and Poll taxes would prevent most black men from exercising their rights until the 24th Amendment was passed in 1964.

Unfortunately, [Fredrick Douglas who served as the first Black United States Marshal for the District of Columbia from 1877-1881](#) would not live to see women get the right to vote in 1920, for he died in 1895. It's interesting to note however that his very last day was spent at a triennial Women's National Council meeting with Susan B. Anthony, a longtime friend and civil rights advocate. At 78 years old, he spent most of his day there discussing women's rights until the meeting adjourned at 4pm. He got home around 5pm and after dinner while recounting the day's events with his wife, suddenly dropped to his knees. She thought he was being dramatic and at first did not realize what was happening, but he did not get back up and died at 7pm. His last breath was spent in discussing women's rights.

Today, we have a few good men cut from the same fabric, men who tirelessly work for equal rights for both men and women. Matthew Frederick Fogg is spiritually grounded and one of [BIG](#) and [FEW's](#) good men is also the president of the FEW DC Charter Chapter and the BIG Heritage Chapter. He is a retired Chief United States Marshal and volunteers his time as an [Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Representative](#) standing up for men and women who dare to challenge racial and gender unequal treatment in male dominated institutions.

We have always been stronger when we are united. Men and women represent the two wings of the same bird, and unless both wings are strong, as a nation we will not be able to fly.

Unity was the key to our greatest successes in the past and continues to be the key to our future success. United we stand. In 1768, John Dickerson wrote the Liberty song. The fourth verse of the liberty song read:

***Then join hand in hand, brave American's all, by uniting we stand,
by dividing we fall; In so righteous a cause, let us hope to succeed,
For heaven approves of each generous deed.***

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