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WGST 2011-2012 Impact

18 minor graduates, 2 MAIS graduates, 2 graduate certificates, 126 hosted meetings, 950 printer uses by students, 3 pep rallies, 13 faculty, staff, alumni participants in the "I'm a Feminist Project"
Dear Women and Gender Studies Community;

At the end of each academic year, I marvel at all that our faculty, staff and students have been able to achieve. As I come to the close of my third year as director of the program, I can honestly say that this year has been the best yet!

Throughout the Matrix, you will read about this year’s record of accomplishments that signal a thriving academic program, about our growing number of minors and certificate students, about the awards and honors students and faculty earned, about our vibrant new alumni program, about the exciting range of scholarship being produced by our core faculty and affiliates, and about the major financial gifts and grants for scholarships this year, which signal to the rest of the university our ongoing value. We are a small but mighty program, with far-reaching impact.

I am proud to be the director of such a vital program in the university. Our undergraduate courses span the range you would expect to find in larger programs. The breadth and challenge of our academic program are a credit to the work of our dedicated core and affiliated faculty, center staff, and students who make Women and Gender Studies their intellectual home. Our energetic and skilled associate director, Angie Hattery, who has just completed her first year with us, has been a fount of ideas, program enhancements, and enthusiasm, inspiring our student staff and bringing a host of new minors to the program through her active recruitment efforts. (All this while completing one book and beginning another!)

Perhaps the most visible success of the Center team this year was the 2012 Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA) Conference, which we hosted at Mason. With the invaluable assistance of my co-chair, Lynne Constantine, a Women and Gender Studies affiliate in the School of Art, and of a tireless and dedicated steering committee made up of Mason faculty, staff, and students, we were able to make the nearly 250 conference participants feel welcome and fully supported within the conference environment.

Another important event of the year was OUTLook on Mason: The LGBTQ PhotoVoice Project, for which I served as member of a four-person faculty team led by faculty affiliate Lisa Lindley, Associate Professor in Global and Community Health. The project culminated in a deeply affecting photo display and community forum attended by many of Mason’s top administrators, in a packed room in Mason Hall during Pride Week.

When other Women and Gender Studies programs are worrying about their future in a time of shrinking budgets, I believe our program makes a vital contribution to the university. As one of the few programs nationwide that fully integrates curricular and co-curricular programming, we have reached that far exceeds our numbers. I am proud of us. Congratulations, and thanks to all of you for everything you have done in the past year to help our program grow and thrive.
Dear Friends of Women and Gender Studies,

It is hard to believe as I sit here and write this letter to you all that it has been a year since I officially joined the program. In many ways I still feel very new, and in other ways it seems like I've been here much longer; not because I'm wearing thin, but because the welcome that I have received here has been so very warm and generous. As I reflect back on this last year, my first year, it is hard for me to believe all that we have accomplished! Most everything that I will highlight is featured in the Matrix so that you can read more. Here I would simply like to point out a few of our brightest moments.

Alumni:
- We hosted our first every alumni meet and greet
- We collaborated with an alumna, Ana Kay Yagoubian, to design a set of programs that provided our minors with insights to pursue careers in non-profits. Both events will expand this year.

Graduate Program:
- Our graduate assistant Caroline Pendry conducted a comprehensive review of our graduate program
- Based on the review, Caroline and Christine Hernandez, our then program coordinator, did a complete overhaul of the website—which has received rave reviews!
- We instituted the Rising Scholars Award to honor a graduate student’s scholarship or creative work.

Collaborations:
- We strengthened existing collaborations with programs including LGBTQ resources, Sexual Assault Services, African and African American Studies and the newly named Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Multicultural Education (ODIME)
- We built new partnerships with women’s intercollegiate athletics and the Office of International Programs and Services

Finally, I would like to close with a brief mention of a project I am the most proud of. In the spirit of fostering a truly feminist environment we approached this year with a focus on developing and sustaining a “culture of appreciation.” More than simply remembering to say “thank you,” this is a deliberate approach to appreciating the work that we each do to contribute to the success of our program. Specifically, as Associate Director, each semester I seek out “reward” opportunities for both students and for our program coordinator. Everyone is surprised and pleased to receive a water bottle or movie tickets or even a small stipend. Together with Suzanne and Christine, every time a call to nominate someone for an internal or external award arises, we seek an appropriate candidate and put forward the strongest nomination we can. As you can see throughout the Matrix, our nominations have led to many, many awards for our students, our staff, our faculty, and our collaborations across campus. This culture has been infectious! I close by practicing this culture of appreciation. I'm very very pleased with the work that we have accomplished this year. None of it could have been done with such success without the unwavering support of our director, Suzanne Scott, who gives me the “green light” to pursue all these new ideas, the day to day support of our program coordinator who “makes things happen!” and the often mundane, but necessary work that is performed by our GA, Caroline Pendry, and our student staff for 2011-2012, Maryam Sodefi, Sara Mallick, Lily Bolourain, Mabinty Quarshie, and A-Jay Sorrell. Without all of you this work would simply not be possible. Thank you!
Welcome Week
The 2011-2012 academic year kicked off with a welcome week event co-hosted with the LGBTQ Resource Center. More than 60 Mason students, faculty and staff attended this successful event which sparked conversations on gender, sexuality, and identity. This event also served to celebrate Women and Gender Studies minors, including two new students who signed up at the reception.

Alumni Weekend
The first ever alumni weekend was hosted by Women and Gender Studies this year. The event, held at the Women and Gender Center, provided an opportunity for alumni to see the changes made at the center and to meet the newest generation of gender scholars. The reception included a video slideshow of archived photos and flyers made by program interns Courtney Rudd and Mabinty Quarshie, who videotaped attendees to document their reflections of the program and how it affected their personal and professional lives.

Student/Staff Breakfast

60 members of the community attended, including staff, faculty, and students!
Vagina Monologues

_The Vagina Monologues_ by Eve Ensler explores views on sex, relationships and violence against women. The 2012 production was the 13th year _The Vagina Monologues_ has been performed by students at George Mason University. Funds raised from this year’s production benefited Mason’s Victim of Violence Fund and Dating Abuse Stops Here (DASH).

Take Back the Night

Athletics Partnership

This year Women and Gender Studies formed a new partnership with Intercollegiate Athletics. Kicking off this new partnership, we hosted a pep rally for the Women’s Soccer Team here at Mason that filled the center to capacity. Our partnership with athletics led us to collaborate on two other events during the year: a conversation with Dr. Pat Griffin on heterosexism, transphobia, and homophobia in sports, and a 40th anniversary party for Title IX. In response to this anniversary, Dr. Angela Hattery, Associate Director WGST, published an op-ed piece on June 20 in _USA Today_ entitled “Title IX at 40 Needs More Work.” Follow the link to read the _USA Today_ article.

Yemeni Revolution
Suzanne Scott was privileged to introduce Tawakkul Karman, the Yemeni civil, human, and women’s rights activist, who spoke to a standing room only crowd in Mason Hall’s Edward Meese III Conference Room in October. She described her role in the revolution as a voice of the voiceless, speaking out against what she and others feel are unfair and unlawful policies mandated by the Yemeni government. With the revolution sweeping over the Middle East, “the same confidence that started to trickle into the Arab people’s lives came also through to Arab women” Karman said in her speech translated by Ghassan Husseinali, an Arabic professor in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. Tawakkul Karman is the first Arab woman, the second Muslim woman, and one of only 15 women overall to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Paula Gilbert Delivers Ted Talk
“Ideas Worth Spreading” is the stated mission of the nonprofit organization, TED, who sponsored the TEDx George Mason conference on May 6th 2012. One of the highlights of the conference came from the impassioned ideas spread by our very own Dr. Paula Ruth Gilbert on women’s narratives of human rights. Opening the presentation with a story from her childhood, Dr. Gilbert spoke about a moment she became aware of the inequities girls and women faced and how she was told in explanation “Life’s just not fair.” This reasoning was not enough for the young Paula, who has remained committed to understanding the ways women’s rights are violated across the world and also understanding the ways women’s narratives can insert gender into discussions of human rights violations. The message that the audience took away was that everyone has the human right to tell their story. It’s our responsibility, therefore, to bear witness to these stories and react through activism and awareness to the human rights violations that are committed against women. You can watch Paula’s full talk on TEDx George Mason U’s youtube channel, http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU4bmCG7Os6m35rxV954uig.

Dr. Paula Ruth Gilbert is Professor of French, Canadian, and Women and Gender Studies in Modern Classical Languages and Women and Gender Studies. You can find her teaching “Women Who Kill” during Fall 2012.

Angie Meets Joe Biden
Vice President Joe Biden has long focused on violence against women; he was the lead author of the Violence Against Women Act and has been actively working to see it reactivated during congressional sessions this summer. Based on research conducted under Biden’s office, it was found that young women remain the most vulnerable to sexual assault and one in ten young women will be abused by a dating partner. The office of the Vice President used this data to create a public service announcement (PSA) that featured prominent professional athletes including Eli Manning, Jeremy Lin, David Beckham, and Jimmy Rollins which was screened at the White House on June 21, 2012. The office of the Vice President invited local scholars, activists, and student athletes to attend the screening, and our associate director, Angie Hattery was among the 100 or so folks who attended. “The campaign is amazing! It is responsive to all of the research I and others have been doing on the role that masculinity plays in sexual violence and dating violence,” remarked Hattery. At the end of the event she was pleased to present the Vice President with a copy of her recent book The Social Dynamics of Family Violence.
Mason’s Department of Women and Gender Studies hosted the 2012 Southeastern Women Studies Association Conference. The theme of the conference was Politics of Justice: New Visions of Culture and Society. As the nation’s capital, Washington DC embodies the contradictions at the heart of our nation, our region, and our moment in history. With a political culture built on thoughtful discussion and respectful disagreement, the city has a strong tradition as a center of national and international social change. But the city and its region also have been on the wrong side of history many times, particularly in relation to race, gender, sexuality, and culture. Too often, one good step has been followed by one or more false moves, resulting in impasse, frustration, and cynicism. SEWSA 2012 brought together scholars, policy makers, artists, and activists to wrestle with ideas and strategies to move forward toward a just world in theory and practice. Congratulations to the conference committee and volunteers for making the conference a huge success!
OUTLook on Mason: The LGBTQ PhotoVoice Project

PhotoVoice is a participatory research method that uses photography to bring about social action and community change. The power of PhotoVoice comes from the images taken and stories provided by community members often considered the most marginalized. The OUTLook on Mason: LGBTQ PhotoVoice Project was developed to assess and make recommendations to improve the campus climate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning students at Mason. The project culminated in a deeply affecting photo display and community forum attended by many of Mason’s top administrators, in a packed room in Mason Hall during Pride Week. Center faculty played a key role, including: Lisa Lindley, Associate Professor in Global & Community Health; Suzanne Scott, Director and Associate Professor, NCC; Ric Chollar, Associate Director of LGBTQ Resources; and Lynne Constantine, Associate Professor of Art. Julia Elkind and Joanna Wynn, recent graduates of Mason, also assisted on the project. Of the nine students involved, four were WGST minors: Jay Banks, Emma Heinemann, Dani Kreigh, and A-Jay Sorrell.

PhotoVoice was an outgrowth of another important initiative that put the Center front and center: the LGBTQ Campus Climate Task Force, which was co-chaired by Suzanne Scott and Ric Chollar. This university-wide panel of faculty, staff and students was convened in 2011 to explore the campus climate for LGBTQ students in the wake of several highly publicized suicides of LGBTQ students around the country as a result of bullying. The task force split into working groups to research the impact of Mason policies on LGBTQ students’ experience of the classroom, housing and residence life, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, health and counseling services, and other factors that could affect students’ motivation to learn and sense of safety and belonging.
Scholar’s Lecture

Devon Hodges, professor of English and Cultural Studies and Women and Gender Studies Faculty affiliate, was the featured scholar at the 2011-2012 Scholar’s Lecture. Her lecture, “Sharing and Owning: Gertrude Stein’s Collaborative Writing,” explored one of the many aspects of Stein’s collaborative work: her collaborative writing, which includes the influence of Alice Toklas. As a part of the celebration of scholarship, the program opened with the presentation of the inaugural Rising Scholar Award to Marisa Allison, a doctoral student in Sociology and graduate certificate student in Women and Gender Studies. The evening was also an occasion for the announcement of a scholarship fund made possible by the Hattery Family Foundation in memory of Frankie P. Rutherford, a graduate student who unexpectedly passed away in 2011. The scholarship will provide a full (or two partial) scholarships to student(s) who are in the Women and Gender Studies Program. The 2012-2013 Scholar’s Lecture will be delivered by Ricardo F. Vivanco Perez, Assistant Professor, Spanish, Modern and Classical Languages, and WGST faculty affiliate.

Sojourner Truth Lecture

Judy Richardson and Betty Garman Robinson, two former Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC) workers and editors of the book Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts by Women in SNCC were honored as the Sojourner Truth lecturers and shared their personal experiences with a crowd of nearly one hundred.

Peggy Oki and Dogtown and Z Boys

As the only female member of the Zephyr Skateboard team in the 1970’s, Peggy Oki was inducted into the Skateboarding Hall of Fame as well as featured in the award winning 2001 documentary Dogtown and Z Boys. A screening of the documentary on campus in April was followed by a question and answer discussion and reception with Oki.

Fall for the Book

Women and Gender studies partnered with the LGBTQ Resources office to bring in Merri Lisa Johnson for the annual “Fall for Book” festivities. Merri Lisa Johnson, director of Women’s and Gender Studies at University of South Carolina-Upstate, spoke to a crowd of more than 60 people about her book, Girl in Need of a Tourniquet. Blending her presentation with both lecture and performance, the author shed light on the realities of living with borderline personality disorder, its gendered nature, and navigating the heteronormative culture, all while maintaining a queer identity. Johnson joined us again as a keynote speaker at the 2012 SEWSA conference held at Mason the following semester.
Graduation

Women and Gender Studies hosted its annual awards and graduation reception honoring student achievements from the 2011-2012 academic year. Fifteen graduates were presented with lilac colored honor cords to wear at commencement. In addition to this celebration, Women and Gender Studies co-sponsored the 4th annual Lavender Graduation, which recognizes graduating members of the LGBTQ community at George Mason University. Our graduate assistant, Caroline Pendry, was selected to give the commencement address at the ceremony.

Outstanding Achievement in Women and Gender Studies
Award given to students who have both achieved academic excellence in their program of study as well as made substantial contributions to the Women and Gender Studies Department through their work on campus and in the community. This year the award was given to Sara Mallick and Abigail Price.

Academic Excellence in Women and Gender Studies
Annual award given to Women and Gender Studies minors who have the highest Grade Point Average. Each of these students achieved a 4.0 GPA. This year the award was given to Deborah Agustoni, Lauren Lauzon, Sara Mallick, Alexandra Parker, Giorgia Picci, Abigail Price, and Joanna Wynn.

The Tracy McLoone Feminist Leadership Award
This award recognizes an undergraduate student who has consistently demonstrated feminist leadership and serves as a positive role model on campus and in the community. This year the award was given to Lily Bolourain and Patricia Poyer.

Alumnae Gives Back
Alumna Ana Kay Yaghoubian (2003), AAUW, returned to campus this year to host a series of career workshops for undergraduate students in women and gender studies. The workshops included ways to translate classes into job skills, gender issues faced in the workplace, and internship opportunities. Alumna, Lauren Heath, recently accepted a position of Sexual Assault Outreach Specialist for Fairfax County. She will be collaborating and reaching out to the community to discuss programming options offered to assist sexual assault survivors. “I’m excited to be involved in such an important cause and hope to do my part in making this world a safer and better place. If it weren’t for Women and Gender Studies, I have no idea where I would be working right now” Lauren explained. In our interview, she went on to discuss how the courses she took helped change the way she viewed the world.
Tenure and Promotions

We would like to offer congratulations to our affiliate faculty who received tenure during the 2011-2012 academic year: Shannon Davis, Department of Sociology, and Paul Gorski, New Century College. Shannon’s research has focused on how family members negotiate the intersection of paid and unpaid work in their daily lives and how gender inequality is reproduced in families. More recently her research has focused on married couple responses to the recession, attempting to understand the extent to which the recession may lead to changes in the gendered nature of marriage. She was recognized during 2011-2012 with an OSCAR Mentor Award for her work with undergraduate researchers and as a Mason "Teacher of Distinction". Paul Gorski’s research focuses on anti-poverty activism and education, critical race theory and anti-racism education, and critical theories pertaining to women’s rights, LGBT rights, labor rights, immigrant rights, and anti-imperialism. He also founded EdChange, a coalition of educators and activists who develop free social justice resources for educators and activists. We would also like to congratulate another affiliate faculty, Cortney Hughes Rinker, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, who has been promoted from a term to a tenure-line position.

Books

Baily, Supriya


Chen, Cher Weixia


Hattery, Angela


Book Chapters

Baily, Supriya


**De Souza, Pascale**


**Gilbert, Paula**


**Hattery, Angela**


**Seligman, Linda**


Peer-Reviewed Publications

Davis, Shannon


De Souza, Pascale


Hattery, Angela


Faculty Accomplishments

Hughes Rinker, Cortney


Reybold, L. Earle


Exhibitions and Performances

Maria Karametou


Presentations

Baily, Supriya


Davis, Shannon

2012 Davis, Shannon N. Critic, Author Meets Critics Session on For the Family? How Class and Gender Shape Women's Work by Sarah Damaske. 75th Annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, New Orleans, LA


Gilbert, Paula


Reybold, L. Earle


Reybold, L. E. (2011). New trends in faculty development. Invited panel presentation to the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Meeting: Ten Years of Broadening Participation and Inclusion (Session 1). [Co-sponsored by Association for Women in Science (AWIS)]. Arlington, VA.

Reybold, L. E. (2011). New trends in faculty development. Invited panel presentation to the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Meeting: Ten Years of Broadening Participation and Inclusion (Session 2). [Co-sponsored by Association for Women in Science (AWIS)]. Arlington, VA.

Seligman, Linda


Awards and Service

Davis, Shannon

American Sociological Association Fund for the Advancement of the Discipline Award, “Gender and Career Prioritization after the Recession”, $6,885.

Membership Chair/Treasurer, Sociologists for Women in Society-South

Sociologists for Women in Society Awards Committee Elected Member (Chair, Feminist Lecturer Subcommittee)

Chair, Council on Contemporary Families Media Awards Committee

De Souza, Pascale

Fulbright Senior Specialist Grant to teach a graduate seminar on multiculturalism in the American South Pacific at the University of New Caledonia
Gilbert, Paula

Visiting Research Fellow, International Gender Studies Centre, Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford. Fall 2011.

Finalist (second consecutive year), State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Outstanding Faculty Award (SCHEV-OFA) (December 2011)

Re-nominated (third consecutive year) by George Mason University for State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, Outstanding Faculty Award (SCHEV-OFA) (April 2012)

Taylor, Anita

University of Missouri-Columbia as the 2012 Loren Reid Lecturer and Distinguished Alumni Award.
Presentations


Awards and Service

Mabinty Quarshie. 2012 Recipient of Mason's Distinguished Quill Student Leadership Award.

Sara Mallick. 2012 Recipient of Mason’s Distinguished Quill Patriot Award.

Marisa Allison. 2011-2012 Rising Scholar Award, Department of Women and Gender Studies, GMU.