

Women's Center Annual Report to the Chancellor

June 7th, 2005

Interim Chancellor Lehmkuhle, on behalf of Jarene Stanford, Chancellor's Advisory Board to the Women's Center Chair, it is my pleasure to summarize the activities of the Women's Center and the role of the Chancellor's Advisory Board to the Women's Center. Completing its 33rd year in serving students, staff, faculty, and the Kansas City community, the Women's Center and your Advisory Board have witnessed a year of exciting growth, synergy, and collaboration both within the university and with the Kansas City Community. The Women's Center is proud to be a vital part of UMKC.

Staffing

With the strong support of Vice-Chancellor Patricia Long and Assistant Vice-Chancellor Deborah Lewis, the Women's Center maintains a director, an assistant director, an outreach representative, one graduate intern, and six work-study students. As director, I provide vision and direction for the Women's Center, as well as creating opportunities for increased funding and community collaborative events. The assistant director, Jill Dunlap, creates and executes the program calendar and subsequent events, such as Women on the Move, for UMKC students, faculty, and staff. In addition, she supervises all student staff, and serves as our fiscal officer. Maria Williams, the Women's Center outreach representative, works with student and community groups, as well as preparing for more involvement with the ReVisioning Women project, which comes to the Women's Center in June.

For the past two years, the Women's Center has hosted what was the LGBT Initiative, and what, under our direction, became the LGBT Office. Tobi Leuthardt is the program coordinator for that office. After two successful years of programming and growth, it was determined that the LGBT Office would serve students best from a location within the Student Life Office.

The Women's Center is fortunate to have had an amazing student staff during the 2004-2005 academic year. Seniors Joseph Rodriguez and Vinnie Iuppa returned for their second year of service to the Women's Center. The staff was grown by the addition of Courtney McGuirk, senior, Victoria Pickering, sophomore, and Jane Webb, freshman. Although we were sad to lose both Vinnie and Joseph at the end of this year, we are excited that Courtney will be returning as a Pharmacy student in the fall, and we look forward to the new students who will join our staff in the fall.

We lost our graduate intern, Diane Beal, in December when she graduated. We were sad to lose Diane, who had been with us for two years, but thrilled when she was offered the position of Director of Shelter Services at Hope House in Independence. The Women's Center has been able to collaborate with her organization several times since her move to Hope House. With Diane's move, one of our work-study students, Lisa Martin, moved into the role of graduate intern. Lisa is an integral part of our staff, and her involvement with the planning of the 2006 Black Women Leaders conference is invaluable.

Without student staff to handle web site updates, database management and other important daily office functions, the Women's Center would not be nearly as successful as we are. Our student staff is truly the backbone of the Women's Center.

Space

Our physical space in 105 Haag Hall is not only attractive, but serves as a comfortable place for students as well as community members to read, hold meetings, or use the computer. More than 1000 students came by or used the Women's Center during the 2004-2005 school year. We feel that our physical space, as well as programs and events, helps to ensure the success of students at UMKC.

As of May 17th, the LGBT Office moved to G6 in the University Center, and the space that was occupied by the LGBT Office will return to Women's Center space, housing the statues from the ReVisioning Women project. Thus, the whole southern side of the first floor of Haag Hall will again be Women's Center occupied.

With the anticipated arrival of ReVisioning Women, we have allocated 108A to house the beautiful statues. Maria Williams has moved from her office in 105 Haag Hall to her new office in 108A and that space will become our ReVisioning Women room to meet the needs of our newest, and very exciting program.

Programs and Events

Fall 2004

We started off the semester with a full slate of programs for women students, staff, faculty, and community members. The vision of the Women's Center's programming efforts revolve around the diverse student body at UMKC. The Women's Center offered programs for non-traditional students, traditional students, and graduate students, as well as community members. Our programming mission is to foster women's success as individual women define success, and so we mixed practical application of "worldly success" with theoretical models for changing the world for women.

We offered nineteen programs in the fall, with “A Niche of Our Own” and our UMKC Women’s Leadership Institute at the apex of our fall programming. We began with “It’s in the Ice Cream,” a welcome to students in the Residence Halls, and followed that with Women’s Equality Day posters and signs. We demonstrated how to care for your car with “Road Rules: Fixing a Flat” and then offered “A Niche of Our Own” in conjunction with the Central Exchange and the Women’s Bureau, U.S. Dept. of Labor.

“A Niche of Our Own” was a Saturday morning seminar designed to empower women to begin thinking about starting their own businesses. We had a resource fair, with more thirteen organizations represented, including UMKC co-sponsors, and community partners. We had 74 participants, and many women indicated that they were thinking more strongly about starting their own business following the program.

On September 24th we sponsored “Rock the Vote” to get college students registered to vote. We had more than 100 participants and registered close to 150 people throughout the fall semester to vote. U.S. Representative Emmanuel Cleaver spoke at the concert, as well as Jeanne Patterson. Tabla Rasa supplied the music for dancing and festivities following the candidates’ speeches.

We feted Kansas City author Janet Desaulnier as she celebrated her new book What You’ve Been Missing that won the Iowa Short Fiction Award. Our partners were Bookmark Press, the Kansas City Public Library and UMKC Women’s and Gender Studies. More than fifty people attended the wine and cheese celebration following the reading.

We continued the fight against breast cancer in 2004 by sponsoring Lee National Denim Day at UMKC. Staff and faculty and students contributed five dollars to the Susan G. Komen Foundation and then wore jeans on Tuesday, Oct. 5th. We collected \$1500 in contributions.

Our UMKC Women’s Leadership Institute was held on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 14th and 15th. We were sponsored by the Women’s Bureau and by WIN for KC. Thirty women completed the Institute and we received outstanding evaluations. Please see addendum A for the evaluation results.

We highlighted UMKC faculty members Dana Collins and Peter Morello in our discussion of “Privilege, Power, and Prejudice: Unveiling the War Crimes at Abu Ghraib.” More than 25 students, staff, and faculty attended the noon event, and debated the myriad of issues surrounding the crimes.

Our “World AIDS Day” event highlighted the importance of understanding and caring for the growing number of women with AIDS and HIV, and we collaborated with staff and faculty from UMKC Student Health and the Nursing School.

Finally, we wound up (or down!) with our “Women’s Revolutionary Knitting Circle.” Twenty women attended and learned to knit, just in time for the holidays, or came to share stories and knitting time with one another.

Spring 2005

Spring saw the Women’s Center tackle twenty-two events. We began with “WI\$E—Up: Financial Planning for Gen X Women” in collaboration with the Women’s Bureau, and encouraged fifteen participants to plan their finances carefully.

We then held our first “Women on the Move” program for 2005, the Women’s Center’s flagship program, and Jill Dunlap and former Women’s Center director, Ruth Margolin, facilitated a group of women moving through life transition. That program was repeated again on May 7th. We thank committee chair, Yvonne Jameson for her support and ongoing consultation regarding the program.

The Women’s Center supported our fabulous V-Day Student Group and student directors, Victoria Pickering and Julie Coon, in The Vagina Monologues. More than 1,300 audience members saw the fabulous cast and applauded the crew, and two of the three nights were sold-out performances. The Vagina Monologues raised over \$10,000 dollars for Hope House and the Kansas City Anti-Violence Project, both local non-profits who serve victims of violence. This event took place as part of UMKC Diversity Week.

On February 23rd, as part of Black History Month, we offered “Exploring the Divide: Women of Color `Within’ and `Without’ the Women’s Movements”. More than thirty black, Hispanic, and white men and women came together to discuss the ways in which women’s rights need to be inclusive.

Women’s History Month: Women Change America

March was a phenomenal month here at the Women’s Center. Highlights from the seventeen events on the UMKC Women’s History Month calendar are below.

On March 14th we co-hosted with the Black Studies Department “Queens and Queen Mothers—African People and Adornment” with visiting faculty member Dr. Nancy Dawson speaking about the tradition of the Akan people in Ghana, West Africa.

The next night, we sponsored Joelle Ruby Ryan, a “self-styled transgender warrior” who writes and speaks movingly of her gender identity and advocates for the exploration of the intersection of transgender identities with race and class.

"Can I Be a Feminist and . . . Shave, Love my Boyfriend, Make Money and Get Married?" was a smashing success with leading Third Wave feminist writers Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards. One hundred and ninety-five participants came together in Pierson Auditorium to talk about contemporary feminism and celebrate Jen and Amy's new book Grassroots: A Field Guide for Feminist Activism. Rainy Day Books helped to sponsor the event and sold books at the discussion. MS Magazine also listed our event in their magazine and so we had national coverage.

The Women's Center hosted the 2005 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball tournament at Municipal Auditorium on March 27th—29th. Many thanks to board member Ken Hubbell and intern Lisa Martin and her sister, Missy Weaver, for their support of the visiting teams.

April and May

The Women's Center was granted \$23,500 to put together a three-day conference on April 7th—9th, titled, "The Body Politic: Gender, Culture, and Eating Disorders." The three day conference was funded by Menorah Legacy Foundation, Baptist-Trinity Lutheran Legacy Foundation, the Jewish Heritage Foundation, the Ten-Ten foundation, the National Council of Jewish Women, and the Bill and Robin Carr Philanthropic Fund. We thank Jennifer Ingraham and Karen Stites from our own Office of Development for their writing and support in obtaining the grants. Almost 500 community people, students, staff, faculty, medical personnel, and school teachers and counselors heard the audience specific messages from Harvard faculty member and national eating disorder expert, Dr. Catherine Steiner Adair. Our thanks also to the School of Continuing Education, and Dr. Virginia Miller, for collaborating and offering CEU credits to participants.

On April 11th, the Women's Center sponsored a self defense class, presented by Jill Leiker from The Ali Kemp Educational Foundation. Thanks to the Chancellor's Advisory Board to the Women's Center, more than 60 women participated in the class, including students, staff, community members and residents of local domestic violence shelters. We also had the honor of Ali Kemp's father, Roger, attending the event. The class could have never taken place without the financial assistance from our essential campus partners: the English department, Alumni and Constituent Relations, Residence Life, Women's and Gender Studies, the Center for Academic Development, Career Services, Minority Student Affairs, Student Life, and the Counseling, Health and Testing Center.

On Wednesday, April 13th, the Women's Center sponsored Take Back the Night, an annual event designed to unify women, men and children in an awareness of

violence against women. We rallied and marched to the J.C. Nichols Fountain on the Plaza where Vicki Walker read a proclamation from the Mayor.

For UMKC Staff and Faculty we hosted our 3rd annual Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day, and followed that with our yearly Women's and Gender Studies Graduation Reception.

Women's Collaborative

The Women's Collaborative, the partnership between the Women's Center, the Women's Council, and Women's and Gender Studies, created two stellar Women's History Month programs in March. We began with "Rare Moments in Music: Celebrating Women Composers" with the Chamber Music Society of Kansas City. That program took place at Diastole on March 26th.

On Thursday, March 31st, Joyce Townser, from U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office of Women's Health, discussed her office at our 4:00 Red Dress Tea, and Dr. Liz Campbell followed with a festive discussion about women's heart health. We wore red, and had a fabulous time. Mary Kay McPhee and Dr. Margery Sirridge were honored for their respective roles with the Collaborative.

Our latest collaborative effort, the Women Involved in Living and Leading (WILL) program creates an exciting learning community where students explore the complexity of women's lives in the 21st century. Programs, networking, and late-night impromptu discussions encourage residents to develop both strong leadership skills and interact in the Kansas City community. The WILL program at UMKC is based on a nationally recognized living learning community model and is sponsored at UMKC by the Women's Collaborative. Because of the unique collaboration, the WILL community combines cutting edge social justice events, community experiences, and dynamic classroom encounters to create a living-learning community that provides students with a tool kit to address the multiple issues in women's lives. This program will kick off in Fall 2006.

Starr Symposium

The 2005 Starr Symposium will take place this fall and feature Jackson Katz, male anti-violence activist. The Starr Symposium will take place on Nov. 3rd, 2005 and is led this year by Women's Council Chair, Susan True, and Women's Center Co-Chair, Kristin Webster. The title is "Pump It Up: Men and Masculinity." We thank board members Ron Zoglin, Don Landes, and Jarene Stanford for serving on the Starr committees.

Rivette Speaker Scholar

The Rivette Speaker Scholar this year will be Carolyn McKibben, speaking about her soon-to-be published book, *Of All the Gifts You Gave Me, the Important One is That I Belong. The Sicilians: Chain Migration, Gender, and the Construction of Identity in Monterey, California 1920-1999*. Board members Karen Vorst and Nancy Levit are leading this committee.

Black Women Leaders (the first in the Women of Color Leadership Series)

Following the 2004 UMKC Women's Leadership Institute, Rose Kemp approached Jane Wood and asked that the Women's Center create a leadership conference specifically to address the leadership needs of black women. She felt that although the 2004 Leadership Institute was diverse and spoke to many needs of its participants, that there were certain areas where black women needed a separate space and sessions.

Jane Wood wrote a letter to the Skillbuilder's Fund and the Women's Center was granted \$7,000 to get the conference started. The Women's Bureau, Dept. of Labor has agreed to a \$1,000 co-sponsorship. Olivia Dorsey is chairing this committee along with Kim Carlos, and the date has been set for Spring 2006.

"Friends" of the Women's Center

Our fundraising chair, Marie Whitmer, in conjunction with Jarene Stanford and the Women's Center Staff, in an effort to find a way for more people to support and learn about the Women's Center have put together a "Friends of the Women's Center" group. The current working invitation is as follows: Become a "Friend" of the Women's Center and receive timely emails regarding our latest programs, current news about women's issues, our newsletter, and free admission to all of our events. Your \$25 donation helps us make the world a better place for women.

With Laurie McCormack and the Development Office, Marie Whitmer, Jarene Stanford, Mary Kay McPhee and others will begin a Development Plan for the Friends' group.

Conclusion

The academic year 2004-05 has been an incredible success. We served more than 3,421 participants at our events, and helped countless students and community members and staff and faculty find resource help.

- We received approximately \$30,500 in grant monies.
- We thank the UMKC Diversity in Action Office for \$7,000 in grant funding.

- We raised more than \$10,000 for local non-profits.
- We sponsored programs with and for Student Life, the Conservatory, Black Studies, Women's And Gender Studies, the Institute for Labor Studies, the YWCA, and the Central Exchange's "Women's Lyceum."
- We served 3,524 students, staff, faculty and community members at programs and events.

This could not happen without the dedication of University Administrators, Executive Vice-Chancellor Pat Long, Associate Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs Mel Tyler, our partners, Kim Huyett and Barbara Bonnekessen from the Women's Council and Women's and Gender Studies, respectively as well as many others.

It also could not happen with a fantastic staff, and I want to honor Jill Dunlap, Maria Williams, Lisa Martin, Victoria Pickering, and Jane Webb, as well as our graduating student staff for making this year our best ever.

For our marketing efforts, Wandra Green, UMKC Public Relations Specialist, and Bil Phelan and Marny Burke, graphic designers, have raised the bar for us in every way. Thank you!

Finally, I wish to thank Chair Jarene Stanford. Jarene has attended almost every event we have held, as well as lunches, dinners, and the occasional breakfast. Her lovely husband, Lee Stanford, joked during the Eating Disorders Conference that we had kidnapped his wife. For her loyalty, her support, and most of all her passion to help make the world a better place for women, we honor Jarene Stanford.

Women's Center Collaborations in the 2004—2005 Academic Year

UMKC

Center for Academic Development (CAD)
 UMKC Athletics
 Career Services
 Office of Minority and Student Affairs
 Student Life
 Human Resources
 Counseling, Health and Testing
 Office of Services for Students with Disabilities
 Residential Life
 Women's Council
 Women's and Gender Studies
 Women's Collaborative

Center for the City
Communiversity
Black Studies
BookMark Press
Sue Shear Institute

Student Organizations

The African American Student Union (TAASU)
Queers and Allies (Q & A)
Campus Greens
Feminists United
Parents on Campus
ASUM

Community Organizations

WIN for KC
Feminist Majority Foundation
Central Exchange
Women's Bureau, U.S. Dept. of Labor
Willow Productions
Office of Women's Health, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
Greater Missouri Leadership Foundation
Rose Brooks
MOCSA
Jewish Heritage Foundation
National Council of Jewish Women
Menorah Legacy Foundation
The Eating Disorders Unit at Baptist-Trinity-Lutheran
AAUW
Hope House
Kansas City Anti-Violence Project
The Yarn Shop
Missouri Women's Council
Planned Parenthood
The Ali Kemp Educational Foundation
Skillbuilder's Fund
Lutheran Medical Center at HCA Community Hospital
Ten-Ten Foundation
Bill and Robin Carr Philanthropic Fund

Local Business Support

Theatre League, Inc.
Governor Stumpy's Grill House
The Cup and Saucer
The Tivoli Cinema
SRO Video

It's a Beautiful Day
Coffee Girls
Muddy's
The Crave Cafe
Half-Priced Books
First Watch
Recycled Sounds
Broadway Café
Streetside Records and Tapes
Prospero's
Extracurious
Fabu
Waldo Bikes
Early to Bed
Wild Woman Designs
Toys in Babeland
It's Only Natural
Goin' Round Gallery

