

# Grand Valley State University

## Women's Commission

### 2012-2013 Annual Report

#### **Women's Commission Committee Members:**

- **Dauvan Mulally**, Affiliate Professor in Department of Writing, co-chair
- **Theresa Rowland**, Violence Against Women Grant Coordinator, co-chair
- **Keri Becker**, Associate Athletic Director, Leadership Team Member
- **Krashawn McElveen**, Alumni Relations Office Coordinator, Leadership Team Member

**Mission:** The mission of Grand Valley State University's (GVSU) Women's Commission, formed in 1996, is to advocate for all women on campus by acting on their issues and by promoting equity and social justice, ever conscious of the intersection of race, class, gender, and orientation.

**Brief History and Overview:** In 2012, The Women's Commission marked its 17<sup>th</sup> year of advocating for all women on GVSU's campus. The Commission was formed in 1996 after a 1994 climate study suggested discontent from many of the women faculty and staff on campus. The study led to subsequent changes in salary structure. The Women's Commission has a strong and productive history at the institution and has worked on such projects as:

- The commission played a vital role in the hiring the Vice President for Planning and Equity, **Pat Oldt**, in 2000
- In 1999 a task force was formed to examine the viability of creating a women's center on campus. The Women's Center opened in 2001 and has been a collaborative partner of the Women's Commission since its inception.
- In 2002 the Commission worked with the Women's Center in co-sponsoring the Her Story series which highlights women in leadership positions within the University. Since this time, 32 women leaders from across the university have been highlighted.
- In 2005 the Commission partnered with Positive Black Women and the Women's Center to host monthly Fireside Chats.
- In 2009 the Commission celebrated the success of two of its subcommittee initiatives: the creation of flexible scheduling options and the creation of the career coaching position.
- The Commission partnered with Human Resources and the AP Development Committee to open the Excellence Series to all employee groups on campus

**Role of the Leadership Team:** The Leadership Team is responsible for working with others in the university community who care about gender equity by influencing and developing programs and policies that improve the quality of life for women on campus. These are

volunteer positions that receive administrative support from the GVSU Women's Center.

As new members of the Commission, the Leadership Team spent the first few months learning about the rich history of the Women's Commission and its past successes and initiatives. We also spent time consulting with other GVSU offices and organizations about ways we could partner on issues that affect the status of women on our campus.

**Theme for the Year:** The Leadership Team selected mentoring as their theme for the 2012-2013 academic year. With this mentoring theme, the Women's Commission set its focus on mentoring and put together a range of activities and events to promote it.

## **2012-2013 Events**

The Women's Commission hosted a range of events, which are highlighted in more detail below:

**The Fall Welcome (September 12, 2012):** The reception allowed the Women's Commission to recognize the past successes of the group and look toward the future. The luncheon, which was attended by 75 people, featured speaker **Pat Smith**, GVSU deputy university counsel who spoke about the importance of mentors in her own life.

**Mentoring Reception (November 1, 2012):** The Women's Commission in partnership with the Women's Center, Provost's Office and the Office of the President developed the GVSU Women's Mentoring Program as a way to create opportunities for dialogue and relationship building to occur between university women.

The mentoring program was launched with an informal gathering to network with potential mentors and mentees. Several senior GVSU women leaders (i.e., **Jeanne Arnold, Connie Dang, Gayle Davis, Nancy Giardina, Julie Guevara, Teri Losey, Maggie McCrystal, Pat Smith**, and **Kathleen VanderVeen**) were invited to share their journey to their current positions.

This event was a great success, with 65 women in attendance, and opened the door for women to serve as mentors and mentees. A second annual reception will be held this fall.

**Celebrating Women Awards (March 12, 2013):** Each year the Women's Commission ends the year with the Celebrating Women Awards ceremony. The event is co-sponsored by Positive Black Women, the Women's Center and Women and Gender Studies and focuses on recognizing the outstanding impact faculty, staff and students are making across campus and in their communities that promote positive social change. This year 85 individuals attended and included the following award winners:

**Kate Harmon (Unsung Hero):** This award was developed from a need to recognize the contributions of those who improve the GVSU community who may not be well known by the general public for the outstanding efforts they make. Kate is the Associate Director of Athletic and Recreational Facilities. Through her work she has intersected with multiple

individuals and departments on campus, as well as working closely with off-campus groups who utilize our facilities.

**Colette Seguin Beighley (Maxine Swanson):** The award is presented to a person who has contributed to an environment that supports the rights of all women at GVSU. Colette currently serves as the director of the LGBT Resource Center at GVSU. In this role she has been able to serve on the Gender Identity and Expression Committee formed out of the Division of Inclusion and Equity.

**Mitzi Loving Johnson (Women's Impact):** This award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions for the advancement of women at GVSU and in the community. This award honors an individual for her or his contributions as a professional, volunteer, or agent of change. Mitzi is the Department Secretary in the Movement Science Department and has been involved with the founding of a non-profit organization (501c3) Rise. She is one of four other women in the area that began the organization to assist unwed mothers and serve as a bridge connecting them to opportunities and resources.

**Diana Pace (Lifetime Achievement Award):** Diana Pace, Associate Dean of Students has been instrumental in mentoring female students, faculty, and staff throughout her tenure at GVSU. Diana was an early champion for the development of the Women's and LGBT Resource Centers, which have had major impact on identifying women's issues, addressing women's concerns, and in challenging female students to learn and to develop to their fullest potential at the university. During her time as director of the counseling center she made it a priority to offer critical counseling services that directly assisted women dealing with career, academic, relationship, sexual assault, and domestic violence issues. In addition, she has completed significant work helping non-traditional aged women who have started or returned to college to complete their degrees.

**Her Story:** The Her Story series, which we partner with the Women's Center on, offers an opportunity for the GVSU community to listen to the authentic stories of women in leadership positions and highlight the experiences that motivated them to success. Below are the speakers from the 2012-2013 series:

- **Carol "Griff" Griffin**, Director of the General Education Program (September 19, 2012) with 55 individuals in attendance.
- **Nancy Giardina**, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs (November 27, 2012) with 80 individuals in attendance.
- **Elaine Collins**, Dean of the College of Education (January 30, 2013) with 63 individuals in attendance.
- **Mary Eileen Lyon**, Associate Vice President for News and Information Services (March 20, 2013) with 70 individuals in attendance.

**Fireside Chats:** Fireside Chats promote the oneness of women from all cultures and provides a safe environment for diverse women from across campus to better understand each other in an attempt to foster new meaningful relationships. Below are the speakers from the 2012-2013 series:

- “The Media’s Influence in Defining Women of Color,” **Takeelia Garrett-Lynn**, Resident Life Assistant Director (October 8, 2012)
- “Diversity ≠ Justice,” **Collette Seguin Beighley**, Director of the LGBT Resource Center and **Carrie Christian**, Program Coordinator of the LGBT Resource Center (November 28, 2012)
- “Asian Women in Higher Education,” **Connie Dang**, Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and **Shaily Menon**, Associate Dean of CLAS and Biology Professor (February 27, 2013)
- “Rights and Education for International Women and Girls,” **Susan F. Carson**, Professor, Special Education, Foundations, and Technology (March 27, 2013)

### 2012-2013 Meetings

The Women’s Commission held seven general meetings, which were all open to the public. We welcomed many different guests to share different ideas and issues related to women and mentorship.

- Strategic Planning Meeting (August 2013 with **Marlene Kowalski-Braun**)
- General Meeting (September 10, 2012)
- **Patty Stow Bolea**, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and Faculty Fellow for the Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center presented “Mentors, Mentees, and Protégés” (October 8, 2012).
- **Kim Monaghan**, Human Resource Career Services for Faculty and Staff Consultant spoke about the UCAN (University Career Advancement Network) program (November 12, 2012).
- **Sue Sloop**, Worklife Consultant and **Beth Evans**, Human Resources Representative spoke about GVSU’s maternity leave policy and family resources (December 10, 2012).
- **Melissa Peraino**, Director of Educational Outreach for Continuing Education and **Maria Cimitile**, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Philosophy spoke about MI-ACE (American Council on Education) organization (February 11, 2013).
- General Meeting (March 11, 2013)
- **Linda Yuhas**, Director of Compensation and Employment Services spoke about mentoring relationships established throughout her life (April 8, 2013)
- Planning Meeting (June 2013)

### 2012-2013 Collaborations

The Women’s Commission collaborated with a variety of departments and organizations on GVSU’s campus during the academic year.

**Mentoring Program:** The Commission worked in collaboration with **Pat Smith**, **Sharalle Arnold**, **Janean Couch** and **Melissa Peraino** to host our first GVSU Women’s Mentoring

Reception. This event was a great success with 65 women in attendance and opened the door for women to serve as mentors and mentees. This program provides women on campus with an opportunity to connect in small informal (not necessarily work related) groups. Too often, we get “stuck” whether working on a particular issue or working with particular people. We have much to learn informally from others on campus and have many people to learn from and with.

**Maternity Leave:** The Women’s Commission partnered with GVSU’s Worklife Connections program to review the university’s current maternity leave policy and how it gets implemented as well as finding better ways to educate women about their maternity leave options. An HR intern is currently in the process of researching/benchmarking how other universities similar to GVSU implement their respective maternity leave policies.

**Lactation Policy:** We are collaborating with GVSU Worklife Connections and the Inclusion and Equity Office to create a lactation policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide nursing mothers who are employees with a private place and reasonable break time to express breast milk for her nursing child for up to one year after the child’s birth.

**Children’s Enrichment Center (CEC):** **Dauvan Mulally** and **Krashawn McElveen** met with **Sharalle Arnold** from the GVSU Children’s Center to learn about the facility and how the organizations could work together.

We aided in the promotion of the CEC’s 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, Month of the Child initiative, and art show. The Commission used artwork from the children as centerpieces for the Celebrating Women Awards Ceremony. The Women’s Commission continues to collaborate with the CEC to monitor early care and educational best practices with peer institutions to better understand how to improve current GVSU facility programs for students, faculty, staff and community.

**Family Support Initiative:** The Women’s Commission has partnered with the Children’s Enrichment Center, Dean of Students, Financial Aid, Housing/Residence Life, Inclusion and Equity, and Women’s Center to support the needs of current GVSU student families by providing advocacy and resources vital to student parent college completion. **Krashawn McElveen** continues to serve as a board representative on this committee.

**University Career Advancement Network (UCAN):** The Commission worked closely with Human Resource Career Services for Faculty and Staff Consultant **Kim Monaghan** to launch UCAN and promote the program. This is a voluntary resources bank managed through Kim that helps pave the way for staff members to come together for confidential one-to-one career enhancing conversations.

**MI-ACE:** The Women’s Commission became more involved with the MI-ACE Network, an organization committed to identifying, developing the leadership of, advancing, and supporting the retention of women in higher education throughout the state.

This year we implemented MI-ACE registration sponsorships for the Women of Color collaborative and annual conference. Seven faculty/staff from GVSU received the sponsorships. The Commission collaborated with the Women's Center and Padnos College of Engineering and Computing to provide transportation for conference participants to Lansing, MI.

**Lilly Ledbetter:** The Women's Commission sponsored a van to transport GVSU students and staff members to the Lilly Ledbetter talk at Central Michigan University in March 2013. Ledbetter was the plaintiff in the historic discrimination case that inspired the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Restoration Act. She worked for nearly 20 years as a supervisor at the Alabama Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. Through an anonymous note, Ledbetter discovered she was making thousands less per year than men in the same position as her.

**Publicity Plan:** Dauvan Mulally collaborated with Michelle Coffill to develop a communications plan for the Women's Commission. As a result, the Commission was better able to publicize their events and increase attendance at their various functions. We will continue to work closely with News and Information Services going forward.

### **Budget Recap 2012-2013**

<b>11-12 Carry Over</b>	<b>\$1709.05</b>
<b>12-13 Budget</b>	<b><u>\$4000.00</u></b>
<b>Total Working Budget</b>	<b>\$5709.05</b>
<b><u>Programs</u></b>	
<b>Mentoring Reception</b>	<b>\$409.40</b>
<b>Fall Welcome</b>	<b>\$1289.56</b>
<b>Spring Award Ceremony</b>	<b>\$1337.12</b>
<b><u>Sponsorships</u></b>	
<b>Lilly Ledbetter</b>	<b>\$34.22</b>
<b>Her Story</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>
<b>Fireside Chats</b>	<b>\$90.00</b>
<b>MI-ACE Conference</b>	<b>\$1410.22</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Meeting Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$395.19</u></b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$5265.71</b>
<b>Carry-over to 13-14</b>	<b><u>\$443.34</u></b>

## Budget Request 2013-2014

<b><u>Continuing Programs</u></b>	
<b>Mentoring Reception</b>	\$500.00
<b>Fall Welcome</b>	\$1400.00
<b>Spring Award Ceremony</b>	\$1400.00
<b><u>Sponsorships</u></b>	\$3000.00
<b>Her Story</b>	
<b>Fireside Chats</b>	
<b>MI-ACE Conference</b>	
<b>Celebration of Women in Sport</b>	
<b>Women's Center Indulge</b>	
<b>Other Requests</b>	
<b><u>New Programs</u></b>	
<b>Women's Leadership Initiative</b>	<u>\$1000.00</u>
<b>Total Request</b>	<b>\$7300.00</b>

\*This budget request reflects an ongoing commitment to the well established Fall Welcome reception and Celebrating Women Awards. Further, all four of the Her Story's presentations resulted in standing room only crowds. New initiatives for 2012-2013, such as the Mentoring Reception and MI-ACE Conference Sponsorship are in line with the mission of the Women's Commission to provide a support system for all women. These are two initiatives that will have a direct impact on the retention of women in our GVSU leadership pipeline and are the basis for our efforts as we move into the 2013-2014 academic year.

## 2013-2014 Goals

**Leadership Theme:** The Women's Commission is going with a leadership theme this year. As a component of the Commission's Mentoring initiative, we are looking to create a cohort program (Women's Leadership Initiative) aimed at GVSU female faculty/staff eager to take their next steps in becoming high impact University leaders. Tools, resources, and discussion within a safe environment will provide a platform for women to advance and enrich their leadership skills, and to sponsor the evolution of empowering women as leaders throughout the University.

**Annual Events:** The Women's Commission will continue to host its yearly Fall Welcome on September 19, 2013 and the Celebrating Women Awards on March 27, 2014.

**General Meetings:** General meetings take place monthly from noon-1:30.

- September 5, 2013
- October 3, 2013
- November 7, 2013
- December 5, 2013
- February 6, 2014
- March 6, 2014
- April 3, 2014

**Her Story:** The Women's Commission will resume full coordination of the Her Story program from booking presenters, scheduling facility space and videotaping, and promotion. A flyer with those dates will be distributed in late August/early September.

**Positive Black Women (PBW):** The Women's Commission plans to collaborate more with PBW and perhaps hold a joint meeting this year. **Krashawn McElveen** is now vice-president of the organization and we will work with her to cultivate future opportunities for cooperation.

**Mentoring Reception:** The Women's Commission will host its second annual mentoring reception on November 7, 2013 using a similar format to last year's event.

**MI-ACE:** The Women's Commission plans to offer sponsorships for the 2014 MI-ACE Conference and collaborate more with GVSU's ACE representatives.

**Worklife Connections:** The Women's Commission plans to continue to work with GVSU's Worklife Connections program on the lactation policy, maternity leave policy, and other projects as they arise.

**Ongoing Collaboration:** The Women's Commission will continue to look for ways and events to collaborate with other offices and organizations across GVSU's campus.