



Michigan American Council on Education Women's Network Institutional Representative 2022 Annual Report

Directions: *The MI-ACE Women's Network is one of the most active networks in the nation and has been recognized by the American Council on Education with the ACE State Network Leadership Award for the Advancement of Women in Higher Education in 2005 and 2016. It is important for the Executive Board to be informed about the work of the IRs and that programming efforts on member campuses are reflected in Network strategic planning, annual conference planning, and the IR Institute. Information submitted in the IR Annual Report is assessed to determine the annual Chiara Hensley Outstanding IR Award. Please complete this report as comprehensively as possible, listing information about the activities you have conducted on your campus as part of your responsibilities as an IR for the MI-ACE Women's Network. Include as much detail as possible. Please submit the completed annual report electronically, no later than Friday, May 6, 2022.*

College/University: Grand Valley State University

Institutional Representative (name and title): Karen Gipson, Professor of Physics and Integrative Studies

Email Address and Telephone Number: gipsonk@gvsu.edu; 616-914-0409

Institutional Representative: Kristen Evans, Assistant Director of Housing

Email Address and Telephone Number: evansk@gvsu.edu; 616-331-2824

Please describe your respective roles. How do you share the responsibility? Do you work as a team or separately?

We both serve on the leadership team of GVSU's Women Commission, along with 2 other women leaders at GVSU.

Have you attended one or more IR events during the past year? If so, which event(s)?
If no, what prevented you from attending?

We both attended the IR Institute on October 15 and served as panelists for the discussion on campus programming. In addition, one or the other of us attended a variety of other IR events.

Did you attend one or more virtual MI-ACE events this year? If so, which event(s)?
If no, what prevented you from attending?

We both attended the MI-ACE online conference on June 14-15 and the WOCC Virtual Luncheon on November 5.

If you will not continue as IR for 2022-23 (July – June), please indicate the new IR's name, title, and contact information below if available.

(Both are continuing.)

1. Describe how you enlisted the support of other women at your institution by assessing needs and facilitating institutional professional development programming that represents the mission of the MI-ACE Women's Network.
 - a. Please describe the programming you have sponsored on your campus during the past academic year (e.g. workshops, luncheons, or special activities). Include details about program themes and topics.
 - b. Please be sure to estimate the number of people in attendance and their assessment of the activity.

Given the constraints of the pandemic lessening this year, we hosted two significant in-person events this year:

To open the academic year, a Fall Welcome luncheon was held in September, with 44 faculty and staff in attendance. GVSU's President, Philomena Mantella, provided opening remarks, and GVSU's Associate Vice-President and Deputy Inclusion Officer, Kathleen VanderVeen, served as our keynote speaker, providing a wonderful overview of the history of work done by the Women's Commission. Feedback from the event was uniformly positive.

To close the academic year, a Reflections luncheon was held in April, with 57 faculty and staff in attendance. A diverse panel of three women leaders was recruited to offer their perspectives on leadership; our panelists were Elisa Salazar, Employee Ombuds; Deb Sanders, Director of Human Resources Strategic Business Partners; and Sherril Soman, Dean of the College of Education and Community Innovation. Kristen Evans interviewed each panelist in advance and moderated the panel, with themes of authenticity, self-care, and community impact expressed as crucial aspects of leadership. Feedback was outstanding, with many attendees saying the event was inspirational.

2. Describe the process you use to establish and/or collaborate with other campus programs/activities focusing on women. (Do you have a steering committee or a core team of people to assist you?)
 - a. Describe the meetings you have held for your committee.

The core leadership team meet monthly. Regular Women's Commission meetings were scheduled as usual, but few people outside the leadership team attended. Informal feedback disclosed that exhaustion due to the pandemic and overwork due to numerous institutional

changes were key factors in the low attendance numbers this year. We subsequently focused on self-care in our communications and in the end-of-year event.

Seven newsletters were distributed to 475 people between September and April, with a open rate of 51%. [A sample newsletter from November](#) shows that Women's Commission members and allied women leaders hosted 11 sessions at GVSU's Teach-In on gender-justice topics such as gender-based violence, sexuality, menstruation stigma, reproductive rights, and intersectionality of race and gender.

b. Who have you enlisted to help you and what have been the results?

The Women's Commission leadership team includes 2 other women, and we also generally collaborate the GVSU's Center for Gender Equity.

One of us (Karen) served as the faculty lead for GVSU's 2021 Teach-In and specifically solicited proposals on gender justice from women leaders across campus, resulting in numerous sessions on gender-justice and related intersectional topics.

One of us (Kristen) served on the Women's Commission's Family Leave TaskForce, which had been working since 2016 to advocate for expanded parental leave for staff. Years of effort were rewarded this year, with President Mantella announcing a new policy. The members of this taskforce also won the [Outstanding Team Project Award](#) from the Allied Professionals (AP) Committee for their outstanding work.

As IRs, we were charged with GVSU's nomination for the MI-ACE Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award (DWA). We were thrilled that our recommendation, Keri Becker, received the DWA this year and will receive the award at the MI-ACE meeting in June.

c. Please estimate how many people are involved in your planning team.

Four

d. What is the "focus" of the team you enlisted (e.g. all women on campus, graduate assistants, only women administrators, women department chairs and above, women administrators and those interested in becoming administrators, etc.)?

The Women's Commission is open to all members of the GVSU community who are interested in advancing gender equity. However, the history of the Women's Commission is that it's mostly been women staff members. This year, we shifted our meeting times to Fridays at noon in an effort to better engage faculty and students.

3. Share how you educate women at your institution about the Network's mission and major initiatives (e.g. Annual Conference, Women of Color Collaborative, public policy agenda).

Our website has information on MI-ACE, and an application for sponsorship to the MI-ACE conference. This was announced via the newsletter and verbally announced at events.

4. Describe the process of how you serve as the communication conduit to women at your institution by disseminating appropriate information in the monthly IR News Update and

quarterly MI-ACE Women's Network Newsletter as well as professional development, professional advancement, grant/research funding, call for papers/proposals from MI-ACE, its members institutions or national ACE.

- a. Have you forwarded these messages to individuals/groups on your campus? N/A
- b. If so, please identify the groups and estimate numbers involved in each group. N/A

As previously mentioned, this was an unusual year due to both the ongoing pandemic and many institutional changes. Our communications therefore were more focused on internal events and supporting self-care.

- c. Describe the impact of your receiving informational email messages from the MI-ACE Women's Network. N/A
- d. Do you follow the MI-ACE Facebook and LinkedIn pages? If so, do you share social media posts to women on your campus? N/A

- 5. Share how you encourage attendance by women at your institution in the Annual Statewide Conference, Women of Color Collaborative, and other programs sponsored by the Michigan ACE Women's Network.

We offer sponsorships for women to apply to attend the annual conference; this year we are sponsoring 3 women to attend the MI-ACE conference in June.

- 6. Have you met with your campus president/chancellor/CEO on behalf of the MI-ACE Women's Network during the past year?
 - a. If yes, how many times?
 - b. If no, why not?

We haven't yet met in person due to ongoing issues related to the pandemic and institutional changes, but we have a meeting scheduled for summer 2022.

- c. How else did you communicate? Email? Phone? Written report?
Email and written report.
- d. Did you meet with another administrator in lieu of president, e.g. provost? If so, explain.
No, because the provost changed mid-year.

- 7. In summary, please estimate the total number of women on your campus who were involved in all of the activities you "orchestrated" last year.

Around 100

- 8. As an IR:

- a. Has your appointment as an IR led to other opportunities at your institution, such as inclusion in existing committees or events? (Examples: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Women's History Month, Equal Pay Day, Women's Center) If so, please describe.

Both IRs currently serve on the leadership team of the Women's Commission, a practice which we hope will continue (perhaps be formalized into policy).

- b. Has your IR role led to opportunities outside your institution such as appointment or volunteering for a local, regional or state board, commission or task force? (Examples: Athena event, League of Women Voters, Women's Commission) If so, please explain.

No

9. Please provide the names and titles for women promoted or hired into senior-level positions (e.g., dean and above) on your campus during the previous year.

Laura Akins, Vice-President for University Development

Jenny Hall-Jones, Vice-President for Student Affairs

Fatma Mili, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Elisa Salazar, Employee Ombuds

Also (from 2020; missed last year):

Lola Coke, Acting Dean of Kirkhof College of Nursing

Kara Van Dam, Vice-Provost for Graduate and Lifetime Learning

10. Describe the major challenges you face as an Institutional Representative in building an effective program for women on your campus.

Time is always an issue, and this year (as previously discussed) we seemed to hit a wall with wide-spread exhaustion on campus.

11. What can members of the MI-ACE Women's Network Executive Board do to help you serve the women on your campus better?

We can't think of anything. The support has been great.

12. Do you have a women's commission, women's resource center director board, or equivalent body at your institution? If so, have you met with this body on behalf of the MI-ACE Women's Network during the past year?

Yes, it works very well to have IRs serve on the leadership team of the Women's Commission.

If yes, how many times?

What was the focus of your conversation?

Name of group

If no, why not?