

Grand Valley State University Women's Commission 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.

2015-16 Women's Commission Leadership Team and Core Membership

Leadership Team:

Commission Chair: Kristen Evans, Housing and Residence Life

Treasurer: Keri Becker, Athletics

Administrative Chair: Jennifer Palm, The Graduate School

Advocacy Chair: Suzy Herman, Housing & Residence Life

Events Co-Chair: Jenna Bolle, University Libraries

Events Co-Chair: Ashley Schulte, Women's Center

Core Membership:

Katie Barnhart, Department of Public Health

Chelsea Brehm, Department of Movement Science

Cassonya Carter, Kirkhof College of Nursing

April Holder, TRIO Educational Talent Search

Yumi Jakobcic, Office of Sustainability

Kelsey Martin, University Counseling Center

Lisa Miller, Center for Adult & Continuing Studies (MI-ACE Rep)

Christine Rener, Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center

Carol Sanchez, Seidman College of Business (MI-ACE Rep)

Casey Thelenwood, Center for Educational Partnerships

Kathleen Vanderveen, Division of Inclusion and Equity

Meghan Veltri, Career Center

2015-16 Meeting Schedule:

Wednesday, September 2, 3pm, DeVos 302E

Wednesday, October 7, 3pm, Kirkhof 1142

Wednesday, November 4, 3pm, DeVos 302E

Wednesday, December 2, 3pm, Kirkhof 1142

Wednesday, January 6, 3pm, DeVos 302E

Wednesday, February 3, 3pm, Kirkhof 1142

Wednesday, March 2, 3pm, Kirkhof 1142

Wednesday, April 6, 3pm, Kirkhof 1142

2015-16 Events & Programs

Annual Fall Welcome

The 18th annual fall welcome, held on September 17, 2015 allowed the Women's Commission to recognize the past successes of the group and look toward the future. The luncheon, attended by a record 150+ faculty and staff members, featured a keynote address by **Chick Blue**, Vice President for Enrollment Development, who shared her personal experience as a first generation college student and encouraged all in attendance to commit to making a difference in the life of a first generation college student at Grand Valley. This annual kickoff event offers the campus community a reminder that there is an avenue for discussion and advocacy around issues faced by faculty and staff on campus.

Mentoring Reception

The fourth annual Mentoring Reception, held on November 10, was attended by 50 GVSU faculty and staff members and featured the powerful stories of **Sharalle Arnold**, **Jodi Chycinski**, **Carol Sanchez**, **Lee VanOrsdel**, and **Pat Waring**. This event offers a comfortable yet professional environment for socialization and networking as well as a platform for accomplished women at GVSU to share insight and advice for newer professionals. Attendees were encouraged to continue conversations and develop relationships with the mentors featured in the panel.

Celebrating Women Awards

Continuing the tradition which began with the Maxine Swanson award in 1998, the Women's Commission hosted the Celebrating Women Awards ceremony on March 29 which included contributions by Positive Black Women and the Women's Center. 2016 marked the first year in which the Emerging Professional Award was distributed and also featured original student poetry around the themes of privilege, oppression, and gender based violence by GVSU Senior Kelsey Martin. The event focused on recognizing the outstanding impact of faculty, staff and students promoting positive social change on campus and in their communities. 130 faculty, staff, and students attended to celebrate the award winners including:

- **Unsung Hero Award – Doris Penn**, Registrar's Office
Presented to an individual who may not be well known by the general public but who goes above and beyond to improve the lives of faculty, staff and students
- **Maxine Swanson Award – Stephanie Schaertel**, Chemistry
Presented to an individual who has provided leadership in support of the rights of women at Grand Valley State University
- **Women's Community Impact Award – Cara Ocobock**, Biomedical Sciences
Presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions for the advancement of women at GVSU and in the community via contributions as a professional, volunteer, or agent of change
- **Women's Community Impact Award – Allison Montaie**, Women's Center
Presented to an individual who has made outstanding contributions for the advancement of women at GVSU and in the community via contributions as a professional, volunteer, or agent of change

HerStory

The HerStory series, a tradition created by the Women's Center and now facilitated by the Women's Commission, offers an opportunity for the GVSU community to hear the authentic stories of women in leadership positions and the experiences

that motivated them to success. More than 50 women have shared their stories via the HerStory series since it began in 2003. The 2015-16 series featured:

- **Renee Freeman**, Police Chief and Director of Public Safety (October 6, 2015)
- **Zulema Moret**, Professor of Modern Languages and Literature (December 1, 2015)
- **Melba Velez Ortiz**, Assistant Professor in the School of Communications (March 1, 2016)

2015-16 Partnerships and Collaborations

Children's Enrichment Center (CEC): The Commission continued the tradition of featuring centerpieces made by students at the Children's Enrichment Center at the annual Celebrating Women Awards. The Commission maintains a strong partnership with the Children's Enrichment Center and continues to advocate for the development, growth, and expansion of the offerings of the Enrichment Center.

Inclusion & Equity: The Women's Commission strengthened its relationship with the Division of Inclusion and Equity during the 2015-2016 academic year. Inclusion and Equity started a council which featured representation from each of the eight Affinity Groups on campus. The 2015-2016 Commission representative was Suzy Herman, the Chair of the Commission's advocacy subcommittee. The Affinity Group Council, led by Dr. Jesse Bernal, met twice a semester and began conversations around hiring practices, student support and celebrations, and the Climate Study.

Additionally, the Women's Commission began to work with the Division of Inclusion and Equity preparing to review the results of the 2015 Climate Study. The Commission will continue to work with the Climate Study Action Team as we move into the next school year, focusing on specific commission related items.

MI-ACE: The Women's Commission continued involvement with Michigan's American Council on Education Network, an organization committed to identifying, developing the leadership of, advancing, and supporting the retention of women in higher education throughout the state. The Commission maintained regular communication with the MI-ACE representatives, Lisa Miller and Carol Sanchez, and sponsored one attendee for the annual MI-ACE Network conference in June. The Women's Commission was also awarded a \$250 MI-ACE micro-grant which provided additional funding for the annual Celebrating Women Awards.

Positive Black Women: Members of the Women's Commission and Positive Black Women collaborated to present a session at the 2016 Teach-In around the theme of intersectionality titled "What White Feminism Gets Wrong: Being Intentional About Intersectionality". The group was invited to present the content of that session to a graduate level Social Work class. In addition, the Commission sponsors the annual Celebrating Women Awards which honors the annual Positive Black Women scholarship recipients.

Public Health: Masters of Public Health student **Shannon Lowell** is working closely with the Women's Commission advocacy committee to complete her research in parental leave practices, comparing GVSU to peer institutions.

Student Parent Success Committee: Kristen Evans represented the Women's Commission at the Inclusion & Equity Student Parent Success Committee. The Commission has a vested interest in the quality and breadth of services provided by the GVSU Children's Enrichment Center and recognizes the success of the Children's Enrichment Center as integral to the success of both of student parents and faculty/staff members of the University.

University Communications: The Commission continued a partnership with University Communications to improve event publicity, resulting in notable growth in attendance at annual Commission events.

Women's Center: The Commission continued its close partnership with the Women's Center, relying on Women's Center student volunteers to assist with events and maintaining frequent communication regarding events, initiatives, and campus climate. Commission archives and supplies are housed in the Women's Center. Additionally, the Commission promotes the Women's Center Fireside Chat series.

2015-16 Technology Projects

HerStory: A Women's Commission YouTube channel was created to host the HerStory video archives. A submission form was also added to the Women's Commission website to allow campus community members to recommend colleagues as future HerStory presenters.

ListServ: The Women's Commission email listserv was updated for improved accuracy and thoroughness.

Website: The Women's Commission website successfully transitioned from CMS 3.0 to CMS 4.0. In addition, content was reviewed and updated to be more accessible and readable.

2015-16 Budget and Expenditures

Expense Type	Projected Amount	Actual Amount
14-15 Carry Over	--	\$509.98
15-16 Budget Allocation	\$5,300.00	\$5,300.00*
Fall Welcome	\$2,200.00	\$2,702.33
Mentoring Reception	\$600.00	\$599.20
Celebrating Women Awards	\$1,500.00	\$1,261.05
Her Story	\$150.00	\$125.00
MI-ACE	\$600.00	\$274.64
Misc. Meeting Expenses & Supplies	\$250.00	\$125.86
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$5,300.00	\$5088.08

**Inclusion & Equity funding only; does not reflect the \$250 MI-ACE microgrant funding*

2016-17 Budget and Expenditure Projections

<u>Programs</u>	
Fall Welcome	\$2700.00
Mentoring Reception	\$ 700.00*
Celebrating Women Awards	\$1750.00
<u>Sponsorships</u>	
Her Story	\$ 300.00
MI-ACE Conference	\$ 500.00
<u>Meeting and Retreat Costs</u>	
Misc Meeting, Retreat & Supply Costs	\$ 250.00
Total Projected Expenses	\$6200.00
Less 15-16 Carry-Over	\$ 971.90
TOTAL REQUEST	\$5228.10

**Food cost only - beverage expenditure approved and funded by Provost Office*

The 2016-2017 budget request reflects a \$900 annual increase of 17%, accounting for the increase in event attendance and food costs along with consideration of the non-renewable MI-ACE microgrant one-time funding of \$250 received in 2015-2016.

2016-17 Projects and Initiatives

By-laws: The Women's Commission will review and update the group's By-laws to better reflect current practice and growth of the organization.

Climate Study: Members of the Women's Commission are contributing to the work of the three Climate Study Action Teams. **Kristen Evans** and **Lisa Miller** are serving on the staff action team, **Keri Becker** on the student action team, and **Carol Sanchez** on the faculty action team.

Collaborations:

- **Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies:** The Women's Commission will work with the Women, Gender & Sexuality studies department in the recognition of outstanding faculty, staff, and students via the Celebrating Women Awards.
- **Positive Black Women:** The Women's Commission will continue to grow a partnership with the Positive Black Women organization which may include the co-sponsorship of a HerStory and/or Conscious Conversation installment.
- **Women's Center:** A dedicated Women's Center representative (Ashley Schulte) will sit on the Commission and serve as the official liaison between the two.
- **Inclusion & Equity:** A dedicated Inclusion & Equity representative (Kathleen Vanderveen) will sit on the Commission and serve as the official liaison between the two.
- **Affinity Groups:** A Commission representative will continue to participate in the Affinity Group Council and seek opportunities for collaboration with other affinity groups.

Commission Awareness: As we enter our 20th year, the Women's Commission seeks to expand campus-wide awareness of the existence and purpose of the Commission. While an increase in membership would be beneficial, the primary goal for 2016-2017 is to get more faculty and staff on campus familiar with the work of the Commission. The Commission will incorporate the following tagline to pair with our formal University logo as well as our 20th anniversary graphic: *Women's Commission: An Association for Faculty and Staff at GVSU.*

MI-ACE: The Women's Commission seeks to sponsor participation in the 2017 MI-ACE Conference and build a stronger partnership with GVSU ACE representatives.

Subcommittees: The Women's Commission will implement subcommittees to further the work of the commission on campus. Committee work will include: Awards, Advocacy, Communication & Marketing, and Professional Development. Members can serve on one or more subcommittees.

Twentieth Anniversary: 2016-2017 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Women's Commission. A 20th anniversary graphic will be included in all Commission marketing items for 2016-2017. The focus of anniversary efforts are increased visibility and awareness of the Commission.

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Leadership Team:

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Commission Co-Chair: Jennifer Palm, The Graduate School

Treasurer: Keri Becker, Athletics

Advocacy Chair: Casey Thelenwood, Center for Educational Partnerships

Events Chair: Jenna Bolle, University Libraries

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Christine Renner, Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center

Carol Sanchez, Seidman College of Business (MI-ACE Rep)

Ashley Schulte, Women's Center (Women's Center Liaison)

Kathleen Vanderveen, Division of Inclusion and Equity

Meghan Veltri, Career Center

2016-17 Meeting Schedule

The Women's Commission will meet monthly from September through May, alternating between the Allendale and Pew campus. A GoToMeeting or other virtual meeting option will be available for members to participate from offsite.

- Thursday, September 15, 4pm, Kirkhof 1142
- Thursday, October 13, 4pm, DeVos 302E
- Thursday, November 11, 4pm, Kirkhof 1142
- Thursday, December 8, 4pm, DeVos 302E
- Thursday, January 12, 4pm, Kirkhof 1142
- Thursday, February 9, 4pm, DeVos 302E
- Thursday, March 16, 4pm, Kirkhof 1142
- Thursday, April 13, 4pm, DeVos 302E

2016-17 Events and Programs

Fall Welcome: Thursday, September 22, 12pm, Grand River Room

Mentoring Reception: Wednesday, November 16, 4pm, Loosemore

Celebrating Women Awards: Thursday, March 30, 3pm, Grand River Room

Her Story: 3 speakers, Fall 2016-Winter 2017, TBD

Family Leave Forum: TBD

Conscious Conversation: TBD