

Women's Center News

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Annual Stanton Luncheon Celebrates Women's Connections Throughout History

In a showcase of women's wide range of interests and experiences, the second annual Elizabeth Cady Stanton Awards Luncheon underscored and celebrated important aspects of women's lives: their connections and influence over time.



Beard

The luncheon has become an annual event to honor nineteenth-century women's rights pioneer Elizabeth Cady Stanton for her work with Susan B. Anthony and others to secure the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

guaranteeing women the right to vote.

This year, the featured speaker was **Lucienne Beard**, program director of the Alice Paul Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public about the life and work of Alice Paul, the architect of some of the outstanding political achievements on behalf of women in the twentieth century. Paul's leadership in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was



Freibert

featured in the recent film, *Iron Jawed Angels*.

At the luncheon, awards were handed out to the winners of the Mary K. Bonsteel Gender Equity Award and the M. Celeste Nichols

Professional Development Award.

Fortunately, members of the Tachau and Nichols families were present again this year to see the winners receive their awards.

The Tachau Award is named in honor of Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau (1926-1990), constitutional scholar, the first woman to serve as chair of the U of L history department and the first woman chair of the faculty senate. As part of the luncheon program, U of L history professor Dr. Ann Allen provided remarks from a personal perspective about Dr. Tachau as a colleague and mentor.

The Tachau Award was given this year to **Dr. Lucy M. Freibert, SCN**. Dr. Freibert, professor emerita of English at the University of Louisville, was honored for her "vision of equal representation in the university community." She taught the first women's studies course at U of L; she worked tirelessly to support the establishment of U of L's Women's Center and Women's and Gender Studies Department; and she was an early advocate for a university-wide sexual harassment policy. Dr. Freibert is consistently cited by her former students as "one of the best teachers I ever had." She has been actively involved with The Pleiades Theatre Company and the Coalition for the Homeless, and she is a guiding force for Project Women, a local non-profit organization that offers homeless women with children the opportunity to earn college degrees.

The Nichols Award is given to U of L graduate students for travel or other professional development needs apart

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Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902): A Tribute

Ann Taylor Allen, Professor of History

Of all the remarkable women who led the women's movement in nineteenth-century America, Elizabeth Cady Stanton is my favorite. A combination of superb intellectual and organizational talents is not usually found in one person, but Stanton was such a person.



For Stanton, as for many contemporary feminists, the personal was political. Although born into a privileged middle-class family, she learned from early childhood that she was a second-class citizen. When she tried to impress her father with her academic and athletic abilities, he responded "if only you were a boy!" When as a young adult she worked for the abolition of slavery, she and other female delegates were prevented on account of their sex from participating in a world abolitionist conference in London. When she married and became the mother of seven children, she was frustrated by the confining life of a homemaker. All her life, she depended on the support of female friends—particularly Susan B. Anthony, a single woman who helped Stanton to lead the women's movement from her home. After Stanton's children were grown, the two friends endured the hardships of life on the road in the cause of woman suffrage.

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A Message from Women's Center Director Mary Karen Powers



One hundred and ten people attended the Women's Center second annual Elizabeth Cady Stanton Awards Luncheon, on November 11, 2004. The audience was a lively mix of university students, faculty, and staff, as well as members of the civic community. Lucy Beard, Program Director of the Alice Paul Institute in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey, delivered the keynote address.

Ms. Beard illustrated her lecture on the life of Alice Paul, who was instrumental in the 1920 passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, with slides of historical photographs from the suffrage movement. These images included women standing as "silent sentinels" outside the White House—from January 10, 1917 to June 4, 1919—on behalf of women's suffrage. During these months, 168 suffragists were arrested and sent to jail for "obstructing the sidewalk," and others were physically attacked by mobs—while the Washington police watched and provided no protection. Some imprisoned suffragists resorted to the tactic of hunger strikes and were force-fed and held in solitary confinement. Alice Paul herself was confined for a period of time to the prison's mental ward, and repeatedly examined by doctors, in an attempt to commit her indefinitely to a mental hospital in Virginia.

Seeing these images, I was reminded again that work towards gender equity is never easy and that social change often comes at a very dear price. That recognition is at the core of the decision by the Women's Center to establish the Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau Gender Equity Award. We believe it is the only award in our community that specifically honors leadership in the arena of gender equity. Look for an article about our 2004 award winner, Lucy Freibert, elsewhere in this newsletter.

I look forward to seeing you at the third annual Elizabeth Cady Stanton Awards Luncheon in November 2005.

Notes:

Thank you to the co-sponsors of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Luncheon:

- Annual Fund Office
- ACCESS Office
- Commission on the Status of Women
- Commission on Diversity and Racial Equality
- Diversity Programming Committee
- Student Government Association Torchbearer Fund
- Vice Provost for Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Congratulations to Professor Susan Griffin, English Department, for being appointed the Justus Bier Distinguished Professor of Humanities, 2004-2011. The award, which provides research support for a distinguished professor in the humanities faculties, is named in memory of Justus Bier (1899-1990), who served as professor on the faculty from 1937-1961. Born in Nuremberg in 1899, Professor Bier was an internationally eminent art historian and critic who came to Louisville from his native Germany to escape the rising tide of discrimination against Jews.

Are you looking for that article in a local newspaper but can't remember when it was published? The Women's Center web page now has an updated list of Regional News of Interest to Women. To check out this list, go to: www.louisville.edu/provost/womenctr.

The Women's Center News Editorial Board: Lucy Freibert, Kathy Kremer, Kathy Pendleton, and Diane Whitlock. Please send letters, questions, and comments to The Women's Center, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292. Call 502-852-8976 or e-mail womenctr@louisville.edu.

Please add my name to your mailing list!

Name _____

U of L Dept. (or) Address: _____

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Introducing U of L's Center for LGBT Services



My name is Kristi Lohmeier. I am the Director for the new Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Services at the University of Louisville. My job is to provide support and advocacy for LGBT students, staff, and faculty at U of L and provide education and awareness on LGBT issues to the university community. The position is funded through the Office of the Vice Provost for

Diversity and Equal Opportunity. More important, this is the first and only position of its kind at a public or private university in Kentucky.

This position was created by a combination of brave administrators and student activists. Representatives from commonGround, U of L's student organization for all sexual orientations, have been speaking to a variety of people for awhile of the need for this position. This effort was catapulted into importance with an incident last spring when our campus was plastered with anti-gay fliers. After this incident, students from

commonGround and their allies held a meeting in which a list of recommendations were made regarding creating a more inclusive campus for LGBT-identifying students, staff, and faculty. One of these recommendations was the creation of a position for a person specifically trained to address the needs of the LGBT community and the eventual creation of a safe space where LGBT students, staff, faculty, and their allies can feel comfortable. Hence, the Center for LGBT Services was born.

A little about myself: I graduated in May of 2004 with a master of social work degree from the Kent School at U of L. My experiences include volunteer work with the Fairness Campaign (an advocacy/coalition-building agency in Louisville) as well as work with the Louisville Youth Group (a peer support group for LGBT youth under 20), and involvement at U of L with Student Government for the past two years.

The biggest project for which I was hired is the development and implementation of the Safe Zone Project. This program provides support for allies of LGBT individuals and tools to help improve the campus climate for LGBT students, faculty, and staff. A full description of this project as well as how to participate may be found at the Center's web site: www.louisville.edu/provost/diversity/safe_zone.htm. My office hours are Monday and Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and Thursday by appointment. My phone number is 502.852.0696 and my email is kmloh02@gwise.louisville.edu. Please contact me with questions, concerns, or just to chat!

Project Women— The U of L Connection

Annually, over the past eight years, **Project Women**, an organization that assists single mothers who are experiencing homelessness to obtain the baccalaureate degree, has held its luncheon/silent auction at the Galt House. Each year, University of Louisville students, former students, faculty, deans, provosts, artists, writers, and coaches eagerly support the event.

This year the luncheon, held on October 26, featured as its speaker Dianne Aprile, who edited U of L's *Louisville Cardinal* in her senior year and, following graduation, worked as a writer, first for the *Louisville Times*, and then for *The Courier-Journal*.

Now an acclaimed free-lance writer and the author of a number of books, Aprile is also a faculty member at Spalding University, where she teaches creative non-fiction in the Master of Fine Arts in Writing Program. With her husband Ken Shapero, she runs The Jazz Factory, which showcases both local and internationally known artists.

A special feature of this year's luncheon was the presentation of the first Lucy M. Freibert Award (The Lucy), recognition given to a woman who embodies a thirst for education, especially higher education for women. The first recipient of the award was Eugenia Ford Powers, a woman who, after rearing eight children and seeing them through college, enrolled at the University of Louisville, from which she graduated in 1988 at the age of 74 with a bachelor of arts degree in sociology. Unfortunately, Eugenia Powers died this past spring, but before her death, she had been told that she would receive the honor. The family is establishing a fund for **Project Women** participants through the Community Trust Bank.

To see the **Project Women** video produced by Morgan Atkinson, or learn more about the organization, call Michelle List, Executive Director at 584-8090.

BPW/Louisville announces Speakoff--Business and Professional Women/Louisville will hold its "Young Careerist" Speakoff on March 1, 2005. The Young Careerist Program recognizes the accomplishments of successful women or men and introduces them to the mission and vision of Business and Professional Women/USA (BPW/USA). The program, begun in 1964, involves a competitive selection process within local, regional, and state federations, resulting in selecting a Young Careerist from each state at the national BPW annual conference. The winner of the national competition will serve as the National Representative for BPW/USA. Candidates must: be between the ages of 21 and 35 by July 31, 2005; have at least one year's full-time work experience; and live, work, or attend school in the sponsoring organization's district. The deadline to apply is December 17, 2004. First-, second-, and third-place winners will receive cash prizes. If interested, please contact Angela at Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, 636-0900 ext. 247 or email awilson@kyanags.org.

March is Women's History Month!

National Women's History Month celebrates the accomplishments of women in American history. Every March, the University of Louisville Women's Center publishes a *calendar of events* as part of its spring newsletter. It is mailed to over 3000 subscribers, available on our website, and distributed on UofL's campuses.

If you or your organization plans to sponsor a program in March about women, let us know by calling the Women's Center at 502-852-8976 or email womenctr@louisville.edu. Your event may be added to the *UofL Women's History Month Calendar*, the source of Women's History Month event information in the Louisville metropolitan area.

To see previous Women's History Month Calendars, check out the *Women's Center News* archives on the Women's Center's page at www.louisville.edu/provost/womenctr.

Luncheon *cont. from p.1*

from tuition or books. It is named in honor of M. Celeste Nichols, who was the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from U of L's English Department. Dr. Nichols taught African-American literature and basic writing at U of L, Kentucky State University, and at Bellarmine University before her death in 1996 at age 45. U of L Vice Provost Dr. Mordean Taylor-Archer commented on Dr. Nichols's influence on aspiring graduate students.

This year, the Nichols award was shared by three students from distinctly different fields. **Mesia Moore Steed**, a doctoral student in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, is conducting research on homocysteine mediated cardiovascular dysfunction among women, especially African-American women. She plans to use her award to attend a professional conference. **Stacia L. Koch** is pursuing her master of arts degree as a member of the Women's and Gender Studies Department's newly established graduate program. This award will allow her to attend a women's studies conference to present her research paper pertaining to sexual assault policies at universities.

Rebekkah J. Meixner, in her final year working towards a master of fine arts degree with a concentration in theatre design and production, will now be able to attend and participate in the 2004 United States Institute for Theatre Technologies Conference in Toronto, Canada. In a letter of recommendation accompanying her application, one of Meixner's professors wrote that attending this conference would help Meixner "develop her artistic skills and her networking skills in what are traditionally two male-dominated fields... Her talent and dedication predict a bright, professional future."

Stanton *cont. from p.1*

Stanton was not only brilliant, but also courageous. She never flinched from a controversial topic, even when the personal cost was high. At the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, her support of woman suffrage alienated her husband and her father. In the 1870s she spoke out for women's right to divorce and to exercise reproductive choice—taboo

topics that most feminists refused to touch. As a woman in her eighties, she authored *The Woman's Bible*, a commentary on the Bible that exposed religion as a source of women's subordination. Her feminist colleagues were horrified, but she persisted.

Stanton left a mixed legacy. She had always assumed that the emancipation of slaves and of women would go together. But after the Civil War, the Fifteenth Amendment gave the right to vote to freed male slaves, but not to women. Angrily, Stanton opposed the Fifteenth Amendment and aligned herself with racist opponents of black suffrage—a decision that laid the foundation for racial tensions within the women's movement.

This episode does not lead me to reject Stanton, but rather to ponder the central lesson of history: that we are all people of our place and time, as well as of our ethnic, social, and racial groups. None of us will escape the judgment of posterity on our mistakes. All that we can do is what Stanton did throughout her life: follow the promptings of intellect and conscience with courage and integrity.