

The Women's Center News

Winter 2007

Check out the Women's Center at: www.louisville.edu/provost/womenctr

Volume 15, Issue 2

Elizabeth Cady Stanton Luncheon A Great Success

By Deborah Dunn,
Women's Center

On November 8th, 2007, the Women's Center held the Elizabeth Cady Stanton luncheon at the University Club on Belknap campus. Over one hundred staff, faculty, students and honored guests attended. The keynote speaker was Nora Bredes, Director of the Susan B. Anthony Center for Women's Leadership at the University of Rochester. Bredes speech topic was, "You are Susan B. Anthony: How the Dream Lives On." The Dr. M. Celeste Nichols scholarships and the Dr. Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau Gender Equity Award were presented by Vice Provost, Dr. Mordean Taylor-Archer and attorney Annie O'Connell, a former Craik Scholar, respectively.

The winners of the Nichols scholarship were **Ms. Nikki Votaw** for presentation of research on the effects of informal learning on urban middle school students, **Ms. Cynthia Britt** for presentation of research on Rachel Carson, **Ms. Alana Frost** for presentation of research on a First Nations community, **Ms. Tabetha Adkins** for presentation of research on pro-slavery rhetoric of the 19th century and homophobic rhetoric of the 21st century, **Ms. Amanda Jeanne Wyrick** for presentation



Nichols Award Winners with Vice Provost, Dr. Mordean Taylor-Archer (Center)



(Front row left to right) Dr. Mary Craik, Tachau award winner; Dr. Nancy Theriot, Women and Gender Studies; (Back row left to right) Mary Karen Powers, Women's Center; Kathleen Smith, President's Office

of research on teachers' anti-fat biases, and **Ms. Sheena Anderson** for attendance at the National Alliance of Black School Educators Conference.

The winner of the Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau award was Dr. Mary Craik. In his nomination letter for the Tachau Award, President Ramsey wrote, "Mary appreciates deeply how higher education transforms a woman..." In her nomination, Craik Scholar Annie O'Connell said "the Craik scholarship. . . is a living, lasting memorial to gender equality." A self-taught fiber artist, Dr. Craik opened the Mary Craik gallery at 815 East Market Street in Louisville in 2004.

The Women's center holds the Elizabeth Cady Stanton luncheon annually to honor the early suffragists in their struggles to make the world a better place for every woman. Please be sure to plan your agenda for next year's event and be a part of this honorable celebration to our fellow women.

Commission Works Behind Scenes For the Betterment of Women at U of L

By Sharon LaRue,
Commission on the Status of Women

The President's Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) met to begin planning for the 2007-2008 academic year. Several new positions were announced:

Chair, Sharon LaRue;
Vice-Chair, Susan Duncan; and Executive Committee members Linda Bledsoe, Valerie Casey, Victoria Molfese, Ann Larson, Dawn Heinecken, and Bobby Plenis. COSW also welcomed new members Edna Ross, Margaret Pentecost, Monica Jones, Bob Goldstein, and Leslye Erickson.



Sharon LaRue

COSW is pleased to report several successful endeavors. Through the active participation of Susan Duncan (formerly Kosse) and other COSW members, COSW played a significant role in securing a childcare facility for the University of Louisville in partnership with Project Women. Groundbreaking ceremonies on this new facility were held on October 26th. COSW also advocated for appropriate salaries for our Department of Public Safety Officers to increase officer retention and provide a safe and secure environment for all members of the University community.

Other COSW ventures planned for the upcoming year include:

- The Chair and Vice Chair will be meeting with the University of Kentucky COSW to discuss collaboration between the two Commissions and the establishment of a Kentucky Office of Women in Higher Education Statewide Network.
- COSW contributed to the Cultural Diversity, Social Justice and Opportunity section of the *Strategic*

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2007 An Important Year for U of L Women



By Mary Karen Powers, Director

2007 has been an important year for UofL women. Two were appointed as executive leaders: UofL Vice President for Information Technology,

Dr. Priscilla Hancock, and Nursing Dean, Dr. Marcia Hern. Look for them to be profiled in upcoming issues of the Women's Center News.

Three Tachau Award winners were also recognized as leaders. In October, 2006 winner Judge Janice Martin was named the 2007 Alumni Fellow of the School of Law. In December, 2004 winner, Dr. Lucy Freibert, and 2007 winner, Dr. Mary Craik, were recognized by Actors Theater as "Women of Spunk."

In addition, five other UofL women were recognized as "Women of Spunk." Four have UofL degrees: clay artist and community volunteer Elmer Lucille Beard; storyteller, artist and playwright Nana Yaa Asantewaa; adoption supervisor Barbara Goins-Bearda; and international program specialist for the Mayor's Office Claudia Perlata-Mudd. The fifth woman, Dr. Lundeana Thomas, is Director of the African American Theater Program at UofL. Thus, seven of the eleven women recognized by Actors Theater during the December ninth performance of "Spunk" – a stage adaptation of three stories by Harlem Renaissance writer Zora Neal Hurston – have strong connections to the UofL community! These women were "acknowledge(ed) [by Actors Theatre as] ... a group of distinguished Louisville women, who have overcome adversity in their personal lives and made a difference in the community." The remaining "Women of Spunk" are government worker and author Shelby Bacon; health activist Fran L. Berg; Healing Place worker Deborah Keesee; and Senator Georgia Davis Powers.

2008 also promises to be an important year for UofL women. On June 21 UofL will join Women 4 Women in the Champions 4 Her Run/Walk and Festival. UofL's participation will highlight the university's commitment to women's education and celebrate women faculty, staff and students at UofL. *Save the date!*

Patients, Families, and Physicians, Team Up for Healthier Pregnancies

By Dr. Joyce Spurgeon,
Department of Psychiatry

Depression has become a widespread disease in our society. In the past, doctors viewed pregnancy as a time when women were protected against depression. Current literature, however, suggests that ten percent of women suffer from depression during pregnancy. Of the women who stop their antidepressant while trying to conceive, approximately 75% relapse during pregnancy. Women who are depressed during pregnancy are much more likely to have postpartum depression as well. Furthermore, untreated depression during pregnancy can affect the growing fetus. Studies suggest an association between maternal depressive symptoms and preterm birth, lower birth weight, smaller head circumference, and lower Apgar scores. Depressive symptoms might also interfere with prenatal self-care, which would in turn be detrimental to the fetus.

As with any medication during pregnancy, risks are involved: 1) risk of fetal exposure to medication 2) risk of untreated psychiatric illness in the mother 3) risk of relapse if treatment is

not continued. Several antidepressants are relatively safe during pregnancy, giving women with depression some hope for treatment. Therapy also helps women make the adjustments that come with having a baby.

As the research continues to provide more and more information about use of medications in pregnancy, it is important to remember that intervention for the depressed, pregnant patient remains of paramount importance, not only for the

woman but for the fetus as well. No one treatment plan will work for every patient. It is important that all parties (the OB/GYN, psychiatrist, pediatrician, therapist, etc.) of the treatment team are in agreement about the treatment plan, but also that the patient and her family are included. Treatment plans must take into account the risks and must also be individualized to fit the needs and desires of the patient.



Dr. Joyce Spurgeon

Women Researchers Investigate Psychological Trauma and Aging

By Jeanne Cundiff and
Dr. Tamara Newton, Department of
Psychological and Brain Sciences

Research has shown that older individuals' physical health can be affected by traumatic stressors experienced decades earlier in adulthood. How or why this occurs is still largely unexamined. Small proteins that circulate in bodily fluids such as blood and saliva and that may indicate inflammation, however, have been associated with a number of age-related medical conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes, as well as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), an anxiety disorder that can occur following traumatic experiences.

The U of L Health and Stress Lab, directed by Dr. Tamara Newton, in conjunction with Drs. Jim Miller, Rafael Fernandez-Botran, Vicki Burns, all of the U of L School of Medicine, and the Clinical Research Center at the University of Louisville Hospital, is currently conducting a study focused on

women and their experiences with traumatic stressors—events that produce extreme fear and that often involve physical injury and life threat. The Women's Stress and Aging Study is designed to provide insight into connections between psychological trauma over the course of women's lives and the aging process.

To begin unraveling the connections between psychological trauma and health changes that occur as people age, the Women's Stress and Aging Study is focusing on women who have suffered abuse or violence in marriages or other intimate adult relationships. If the study hypotheses are supported, they will suggest a plausible mechanism by which traumatic events experienced earlier in adulthood may accelerate physiological aging. Implications for the development and testing of treatments in subsequent research will be examined. If you have questions, or would like to participate please call 502-767-2517.

Counseling Center Conquering Stress

By Phyllis Mitchell Webb,
Multicultural Academic
Enrichment Programs

Exams, last minute projects, and preparations for the next semester can sometimes be overwhelming for students, staff, and faculty and may lead to depression. I asked Terri L. White, Ph.D and Ms. Sheena Binford, MSSW in U of L's Counseling Center to provide us with some information on recognizing and coping with stress and depression.

We know that stress is a common ailment among all. What are some of the things that cause stress?

Dr. White: Examples of common stressors are poor time management, poor dietary/exercise habits, and poor preparation for courses of study. Other major causes of stress may be issues of adaptation, frustration, overload, and deprivation; disturbance in biorhythms, nutrition, and noise; and issues with self-perception, behavioral patterns, and anxiety.

Ms. Binford: Change can generally cause stress. Excitement of a new job, marriage, buying a new car could all be viewed as positive stressors. The loss of a loved one, financial distress, and relationship turmoil might be viewed as negative stressors.

What are some of the signs of stress? And how can one recognize the signs?

Dr. White: Mental signs of stress include poor concentration or focus, circular or obsessive thoughts; emotional signs of stress include irritability, depressed mood; and behavioral signs of stress include panicked/rushed behaviors to complete tasks, headaches, gastrointestinal distress.

Ms. Binford: A few symptoms of stress include headaches, tension in body (neck), agitation, feeling overwhelmed, forgetfulness, being accident prone and susceptibility to illness. Mentally processing or writing signs in a journal or notebook are simple ways of recognizing signs.

As counselors in a college setting, what are some of the most prevalent issues facing students on the U of L campus?

Dr. White: We work with the same mental health issues those professionals outside of the university environment experience. With the addition of a psychiatric staff, we can further support medication needs of our student population.



(Left to right) Terri L. White, PhD and Sheena Binford, MSSW

Ms. Binford: Some of the most prevalent issues facing students on the UofL campus include academic issues, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, limited support systems, and financial distress and relationship problems.

What issues do you see in staff? What issues do you see in faculty?

Dr. White & Ms. Binford: The Counseling Center does not work with staff and faculty. They are advised to contact the University's Employment Assistance Program (EAP) at 502-589-4357 or the Department of Human Resources.

What issues are different with females and males?

Dr. White: Mental health issues are not mutually exclusive based on

gender. Males are more frequently seen for antisocial behaviors whereas females are more frequently seen for eating disorders. However, there are obviously females with antisocial behaviors and males with eating disorders.

Ms. Binford: Males and females battle with depression, anxiety, stress, etc. Females, at times may be more likely to seek treatment at the Counseling Center.

About on an average, how many students (the Counseling Center) do you see in a given week?

Dr. White & Ms. Binford: The Counseling Center will see anywhere from 80 – 100 students. This number does not include the students who are seeing the psychiatric staff.

What "healthy" coping mechanisms should be in place to deal with the issue of stress?

Dr. White: Healthy coping mechanisms include prioritized time management, regular exercise, healthy eating habits, and stable and consistent sleep patterns.

Ms. Binford: Having quiet time daily is beneficial for a person to become more in tune with their surroundings and self. This can be vital in managing stress.

WOMEN'S CENTER LOOKS AHEAD TO GREAT SPRING PROGRAMS

February 16, 2008 Kentucky Women's Book Festival

This February, the Kentucky Women's Book Festival will bring Kentucky women writers and their readers to meet, discuss, and share their love and appreciation of the written word. The event is free and open to the public and will highlight and honor the outstanding accomplishments of women writers in and from the Kentucky area, expand the readership of women's works, encourage those engaged in creative writing and inspire a rising generation of readers and writers as an extension of our community-wide focus on literacy. University of Louisville, Ekstrom Library 2301 S. 3rd Street, Louisville, Kentucky 9A.M. – 5 P.M. www.kwbf.info

June 21, 2008 Champions 4 Her Walk, Run and Festival

A new and unique nonprofit fundraising initiative, the Champions 4 Her Walk, Run and Festival on the waterfront, will allow ten area nonprofit groups — including The UofL Women's Center/PEACC Program and UofL Women's Athletics to contribute to the coordination and planning of a run/walk event and same-day festival, with all benefiting from proceeds.

According to Provost Dr. Shirley Willingham, "Participation in the Champions 4 Her Walk, Run and Festival allows UofL to highlight our ongoing commitment to women and to women's education and economic well-being in a fun family event which promotes exercise and health. I hope members of the UofL community will sign up to walk in support of women!"

To receive more information about these and other events please visit our web site <http://louisville.edu/womenscenter>

Commission

(continued from front page)

Planning 2020 Task Force report from the Office of the Provost and will be involved in the implementation of these recommendations.

- The COSW Executive Committee is investigating the possibility of updating the 1994 COSW Task Force Report with current statistics relative to the existing climate for women at the University.

All members of the COSW committees, Communications; Committee on Campus Climate; Committee on Representation, Recruitment and Retention; and the Committee on Integration of Work and Family, are actively looking at policies and procedures that affect areas of concern for women at UofL. Women from the UofL community are encouraged to share any concerns with COSW. We are looking forward to a promising year.

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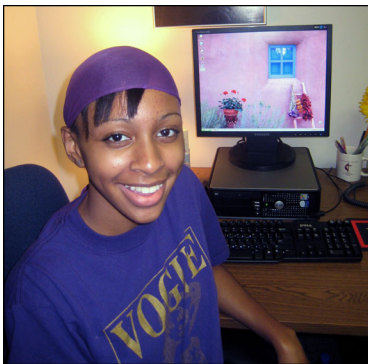
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Meet the Women's Center Staff

Tiarra Lee Shante' Hall



Tiarra graduated from Marion County High School. She is 18 years old and is interested in expressing creativity in various ways such as singing, dancing, drawing, painting, writing, sewing and graphic designing. She is also interested in majoring in liberal arts with a focus on Pan-African studies, education and sociology, and minoring in social change, but is currently undecided.



Deborah Dunn



Deborah Dunn is a part time Communication and Program Specialist for the Women's Center. She began over the summer as a work study student and begged to stay. Finding great interest in working on Women's issues and events, Dunn has been assigned the task of converting the old Women's Center Website to new U of L standards, and developing a Facebook group called the "Women's Center." Her academic pursuits beginning in fall 2008 are within the graduate school of Public Health for an MPH with a dual major at the Kent School of Social Work specializing in Gerontology. Dunn's ultimate goals are to achieve her PhD from U of L and teach undergraduate students.

February 1, 2008 is National Wear Red DaySM

Join together with thousands of women, companies and organizations and cities across America on **National Wear Red Day, Friday, Feb. 1, 2008**. By wearing red and making a donation, you'll help the American Heart Association support ongoing research and education about women and heart disease. For information visit <http://www.goredforwomen.org/index.html>

The Women's Center News

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The Women's Center News is a free, quarterly newsletter. It is available on-line at www.louisville.edu/womenctr.

To receive a hard copy of the newsletter or to sign up for email announcements, contact us at: Women's Center, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292; or 502-852-8976; or womenctr@louisville.edu.

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