



THE SUMMER ISSUE OF VOICES

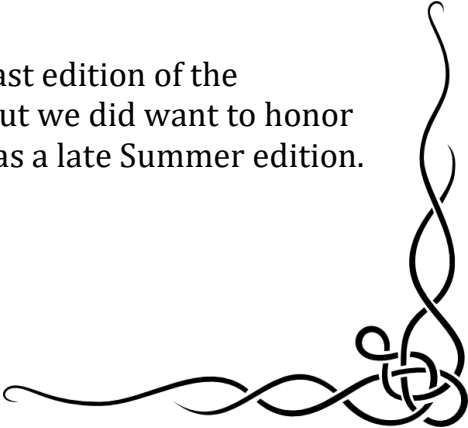
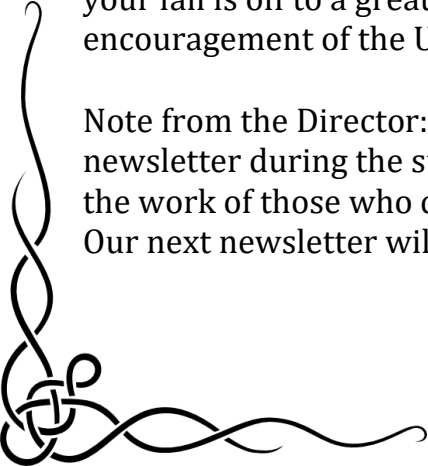
LETTER FROM THE 2019-2020 NEWSLETTER EDITOR

By: Lauren Ablondi-Olivo

My name is Lauren Ablondi-Olivo, and starting this Fall 2019 semester, I'll be taking over the role as Newsletter Editor at the Women's Center here at UConn. I am so excited to start putting together our new edition of *Voices*, with the help of our writing intern, Marielis Cruz. But first, we felt it was important to publish the Summer 2019 edition of *Voices*, the last installment under our former Newsletter Editor, Katie Depalma. This issue covers many things that the Women's Center was involved in during the Spring 2019 semester, including, but not limited to, a recap of Take Back the Night, spotlights of senior staff members who have now graduated, and a review of the Women's Center speaker, Tarana Burke, founder of the "Me Too" movement.

We hope you enjoy the May issue of *Voices* and are excited to read our Fall issue. You can expect a new format and layout, as well as exciting features about different programs and events hosted and sponsored by the Women's Center. We also hope to cover a range of current cultural and political issues both on campus and out in the world.

Whether you are a current student, an alum, a faculty or staff member, we hope your fall is off to a great start, and we look forward to your continued support and encouragement of the UConn's Women Center.



Note from the Director: We were not able to finalize the last edition of the newsletter during the summer as we were short staffed, but we did want to honor the work of those who contributed, so we are releasing it as a late Summer edition. Our next newsletter will be coming out in mid-November.



VOICES

MAY 2019

LETTER FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

By: Katie DePalma

My time at the Women's Center has been a journey of self-growth. I have published seven respective editions of *Voices*, and within each unique edition I have learned something new about myself, the Women's Center, and gender equity. I have learned how to design a publication, how to write for an audience interested in learning about gender equity and the Women's Center, and most importantly how to emphasize voices within *Voices*. In other words, *Voices* is meant to be a platform for the Editor and the Writing Intern to share their opinions, but also a space for collaboration and the voices of all different types of women and individuals to offer insight into their own respective experiences at the Women's Center and beyond. In this edition, specifically, other voices are represented within our Senior Spotlights, and articles on Ignite, Tough Tea Time, In-Power, the Women's Affinity Group, and the Semester in Review(s). Ultimately, within features such as these, we hope to demonstrate the many facets of gender equity work both in and out of the Women's Center through the voices of individuals with different intersecting identities and backgrounds.

(Continued on p. 2).

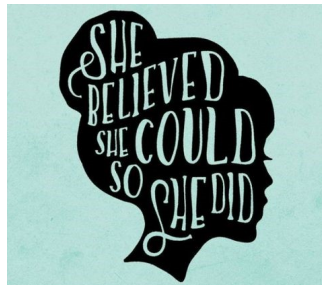


Photo One

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LETTER FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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Voices within *Voices* has been the framework of how I have segmented the newsletter during my time as the Editor of this publication. I hope this framework continues even after my time at the Women's Center is over because we cannot engage in feminist work without the support and input of others-it is the only way to push the women's movement forward. The Women's Center has taught me inclusivity in this manner through a community of practice, which is ultimately where the idea of voices within *Voices* stemmed from. I will never forget the importance of building a community through adding the voices of others to the conversation, both for this publication and for life.

LETTER FROM THE WRITING INTERN

By: Olivia Grossman

Working at the Women's Center was one of the best decisions I have made in my three years at UConn. I applied for the writing internship because I was interested in getting experience with editing and publishing, yet I have come out of this job with so much more knowledge, expertise, appreciation, and passion than I could have ever anticipated. For me, the Women's Center has served as my outlet to discover a new fascination and eagerness within gender studies. After only spending one semester here, I have been exposed to so many more topics and ideas than I ever have before, and have been urged to get more involved on campus. I was welcomed by every member of staff, was encouraged to challenge myself and my work ethic, and was invited to explore topics that I had previously shied away from. Through all that I have taken out of this experience, I have now been inspired to pursue a different career path than I originally planned. I will apply to graduate school to gain a Master's in Secondary Education, as my long term goal is to implement gender studies courses in middle school curricula. Yet, I never would have discovered this dream were it not for my time at the Women's Center. I cherish everything I have learned at the UConn Women's Center, but my only regret is that I was not exposed to work like this until my Junior year of college. I believe middle school is a prime and important age for kids to start learning about important topics such as social justice and gender equity. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity I was given to work here, as it has started to shape my life in a way I never expected, but am incredibly excited about.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

By: Kathleen Holgerson

Our end of the semester edition is always one of reflection and celebration, which mirrors what it is like to be on campus during Commencement season. Seniors are looking forward to their last set of finals, preparing for the next chapter, and looking forward to the celebrations of their academic accomplishments. Check out our Senior Spotlights to hear directly from some of the folks who are moving on to life after the Women's Center.

While the focus of most colleges and universities is on the students, it is the staff and faculty who serve as the mainstays on those campuses. The students will come, stay for a few years, and then move on – that is the life cycle of being a student. For many staff and faculty, we come and stay for a more than a few years. We have the ability to set tone and culture throughout our institutions. Therefore, the work of the Women's Center includes attending to making our workplace a welcoming and inclusive environment. To that end, in this edition you can find more information about our new Women's Affinity Group for staff and faculty and the results of the second Workplace Climate Survey distributed by the Something's Happening Committee.

But ultimately, academics and graduation are the reason we exist. On page 17, you will find the list of this year's recipients of the Outstanding Senior Women Academic Achievement Awards and the 100 Years of Women Scholarship. Both of these were established as part of the University of Connecticut's celebration of 100 Years of Women at UConn during the 1992-93 academic year. The Provost's Office, UConn Alumni, and the Women's Center sponsor these annual awards to recognize those graduating women who have excelled academically within each school/college and have demonstrated dedication to research and service to the University community. The Women's Center annually grants the 100 Years of Women Scholarship Award to honor current UConn undergraduate or graduate students and/or high school seniors planning to enroll in the University of Connecticut, who have demonstrated a commitment to women's issues through service to their community or school. We are committed to this event because we believe recognizing accomplishments and success is an important part of the work of social change. These women have made incredible contributions by creating new knowledge; serving as mentors and role models; addressing barriers to access that pave the way for women after them; and to taking the time to care for themselves through their hobbies and outside interests. So it's a wrap on 2018-19 and on to the plans for 2019-20.

FRANCESCA RAMSEY

By: Olivia Grossman

UConn's Women's Center invited YouTube sensation, Francesca Ramsey to open for 2019's Herstory month. Ramsey is an actress, comedian, and blogger, and the author of the novel, *Well That Escalated Quickly*. In addition, Ramsey contributed to *The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore*, and has been featured on MSNBC, ABC, and with Anderson Cooper for her video, "Sh*t White Girls Say...to Black Girls." Ramsey is most known for her show, "MTV Decoded." There are currently seven complete seasons in which she discusses controversial social justice topics such as, "Five Asexuality Myths Debunked," "The Virginity Double Standard," "Why Racism Isn't Just a Southern Problem," and more.

As the opener for UConn's Herstory month, Ramsey talked about privilege as it relates to intersectionality, a topic also discussed on *MTV Decoded* in an episode called "[Why Does Privilege Make People So Angry?](#)" She presented a story she had written about a [snail and a caterpillar](#) which stood as a simple way to understand exactly what privilege means in our society. Ramsey emphasized that recognizing you have privilege is not meant to foster personal guilt or blame, but rather awareness that some individuals are born with more privilege than others. Her points are based around the idea of intersectionality, which emphasizes the complexity within social categories as people are advantaged and disadvantaged by different social categories, such as gender, race, class, and any other salient identities they experience. Everybody has some sort of privilege. For example, Ramsey pointed out that she is disadvantaged because she is an African American woman, but is privileged in that she is both cis-gender and an able bodied person who does not have to worry about homophobia or ableism. Prior to Ramsey's talk, I had seen a small handful of the episodes on her YouTube channel, and I admired the comical and non-aggressive way in which she approached very controversial topics. In person, however, she was even more engaging, funny, open, and inviting than she is online. (Continued on p. 5)



Photo Two

FRANCHESCA RAMSEY

Continued from page 4

The discussion of privilege in itself is often perceived to be a very touchy subject, and I have actually had debates before with friends about it that have ended in anger and frustration. In her presentation, however, Ramsey was able to explain the concept of privilege in a clear-cut and unassuming way; offering ideas about how you can discuss privilege and intersectionality in a productive manner. This is because Ramsey consciously uses humor as a vehicle that encourages people to join her discussion, which in turn allows others to be able to talk about a wide variety of very controversial (often political) social issues. She takes difficult topics and approaches them with a touch of humor, yet still offers solid evidence to back her claims. Essentially, she has mastered the art of productive debate.

Women's Center In-Power co-facilitator, Jenny Giri also thoroughly enjoyed Ramsey's talk, stating, "One thing that really stood out to me during her talk was how she talked about how being 'woke' was more like being 'groggy' because you feel 'sort of awake' as you are feeling around in the dark, and you might trip or mess up, but you're still awake. Because she said the word 'woke' implies that someone is 'awake,' and then they are done, but being groggy is a constant work in progress and you're always learning from mistakes."

Franchesca Ramsey was a fantastic choice by the Women's Center for the start of Women's Herstory month, as she is an incredibly respectful, powerful, educated, witty, and put-together woman. Make sure to check out her show [MTV Decoded](#) to get a taste of her talent for communication, comedy, and social change.



Photo Three



Photo Four



Photo Five

SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS



LINDSEY VIEWEG

After graduation, I will be continuing my education and getting a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I will spend the fall semester abroad in London. What I've learned at the Women's Center will carry with me everywhere I go. I will always be thinking through an intersectional lens and trying to best educate my students on these issues in order to make them better citizens after they leave my classroom.

TOMMY JACOBSON

After graduation, I am pursuing a Master's degree in Education, but right afterward I will hopefully be teaching high school English! I want to use what I have learned at the Women's Center to educate my students on gender equity through novels and a variety of other sources as well as develop a program similar to the Men's Project at my school. I ultimately hope to help my students get involved in advocacy and purposeful community writing, if they're interested, because these skills will benefit them for the rest of their lives!



IZZI GELLER



After graduation, I'm interning at Blue State Digital in New York City. At the Women's Center, I had the opportunity to learn more about approaching activism artistically and executing creative campaigns. I hope to continue this work at my internship and in all of my post-grad pursuits.

(Continued on p. 7)

SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

Continued from page 6

KALLIOPE SANDERSON

In the fall I am moving to the NYC area, where I will begin earning my MSW from the NYU Silver School of Social Work. As of now, I hope to use my MSW to work with the much neglected aging population in hospitals and nursing homes. I will think of the Women's Center by heading into this new journey with an open mind and love and understanding for everyone I meet along the way!



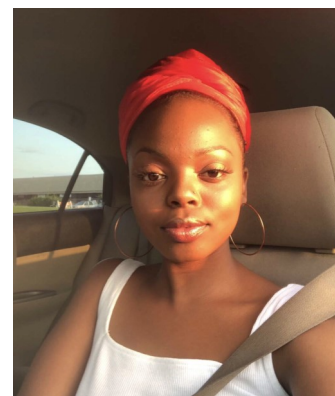
HOLLY LABREQUE



After graduation, I will be pursuing my final year of my Masters in Applied Health Sciences program at UConn Health. At UConn Health, I also plan to work in an Autism Spectrum Disorder research lab where I will plan and implement meaningful interventions to help children who have ASD reach their full potential. At the Women's Center, I've learned how to better advocate for myself and others so that those who are oppressed can have their voices heard. I've learned that though achieving gender equity is a gradual process, individuals efforts are integral to empowering the community as a whole.

SADEJAH BLAKE

After graduation, I'm moving back home (Hartford). I will be embarking on my journey with the Community Leadership Corps. This will allow me to make concrete changes in my community. I plan on traveling and focusing on my mental betterment as well. I will apply self-advocacy and self-reassurance which I became more comfortable with while working at the Women's Center. I will miss this safe space.



(Continued on p. 8)

SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

Continued from page 7



JENNY GIRI

I don't have a plan yet, and the Women's Center has empowered me to feel okay about that.

KATIE DEPALMA

After I graduate from UConn, I am planning to get a job working as a Paralegal, hopefully within a firm that focuses on human rights issues. I will bring what I learned at the Women's Center to my professional and personal life by advocating for marginalized individuals in and out of the workplace. The Women's Center taught me that the world is what we make of it, and we can make a difference-big or small-just by living our lives based off values rooted in gender equity and feminism.



EMMA ATKINSON



After graduation, I plan to take a gap year where I will look to finish up my undergraduate research projects before I attend graduate school in the Fall of 2020. I will be going to graduate school to pursue my MD/PhD in Neurology and Computational Neuroscience, and I will continue on working to model neurological and psychological disorders and find potential interventions and treatments. I plan to apply what I have learned from the Women's Center by advocating for myself in a male-dominated career: empowering the women around me to succeed in their field; encourage diversity in all of my endeavors; and working to make the field of STEM a more inclusive and diverse group. I also plan to advocate for women's rights and gender equity throughout my career.

IGNITE

By: Joseph Schiro

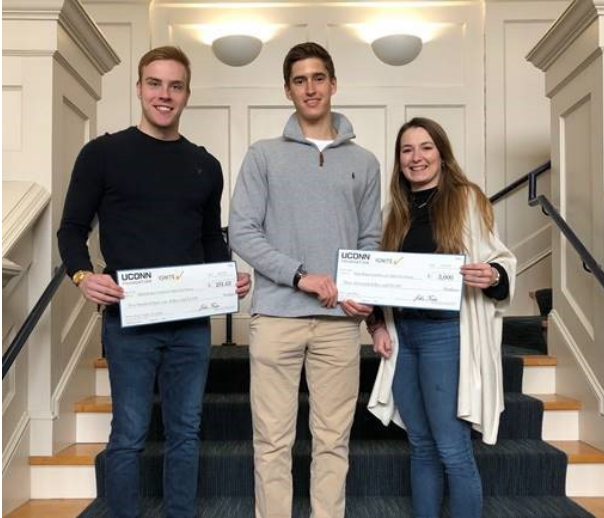


Photo Six

Alpha Kappa Lambda and Alpha Chi Omega worked in tandem to raise money for the UConn Women's Center in this year's Ignite Crowdfunding Project. Ignite is a competition centered around unique donations from demographics across the UConn community; whether it be students, parents, alumni/ae, or professors. Alpha Kappa Lambda and Alpha Chi Omega enjoyed tabling for donations, singing for donations, and fundraising to make our 2nd place win possible. In total our organizations raised \$3,231.63 to the benefit of the Women's Center. We are very proud of this achievement and look forward to supporting the Women's Center in the future.

GOODBYE AND THANK YOU TO OUR FORMER SECRETARY, ANN LOCICERO

By: Lauren Ablondi Olivo

We want to take this opportunity to say thank you and farewell to our former secretary, Ann Locicero, who retired in June. Students who have worked with Ann say that she was welcoming and kind, always willing to talk, and helped with any problems, Women's Center related or not. We have appreciated and cherished our time with Ann, and want to wish her the best in all of her future personal and professional endeavors.

Thank you, Ann!



Photo Thirty-one

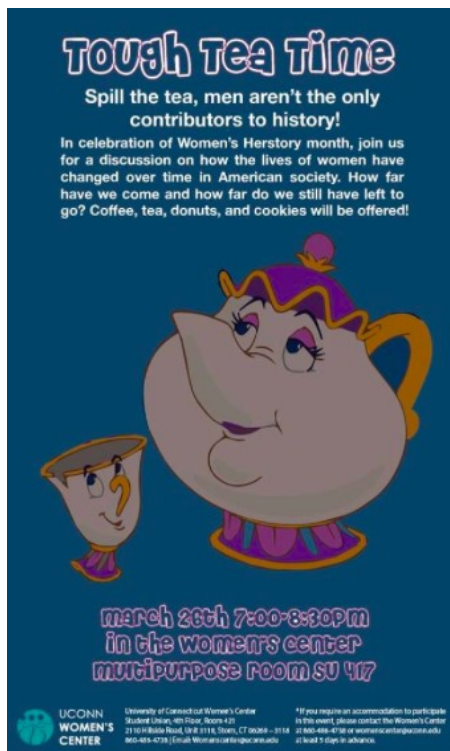


Photo Seven



Photo Eight

TOUGH TEA TIME

By: Grace Mandy

This semester's *Tough Tea Time* event took place during Women's Herstory Month, so we decided to center our discussion on how far the women's rights movement has come, and how far we still have left to go. At this event we hoped to get students talking about the progress they have seen in recent history, as well as the areas we still need to improve on.

Some of our topics included reproductive rights, body image, misperceptions about feminism, and on a lighter note, who we admire most as a women's rights advocate today. Students engaged in thoughtful discussion with each other, which was a great way to realize our own thoughts and struggles that are shared with many other women. At one point, when discussing body image, we had a participant state, "The idea of presenting women as faceless with just their bodies, and not their faces in frame, as well as with a voyeuristic view, has been a huge trend in commercials, and now on Instagram, you can't avoid advertisements, whether it's from celebrities or the tailored ads that pop up on your feed."

"It's horrible for girls that are young and coming into their bodies to see these ads and feel the need to portray themselves as perfect when they don't have to be." From there, lots of women spoke up about how this was a huge struggle for them too, and how they felt pressure to look and act a certain way.

So, while we have made major strides in the feminist movement, it became clear that there is still plenty of work to be done. At the end of the event, when we asked women to talk about the feminists they look up to most, we heard some incredible answers. (Continued on p. 11)

TOUGH TEA TIME

Continued from page 10

There were so many women, in so many different fields of work, who all push forward the women's rights movement, and it was a very uplifting way to end the night. Individuals named Aly Raisman, Emma Watson, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Michelle Obama and so many others as inspiring leaders who would help make progress.

At the end of the night, another student was able to sum up the event by stating, "We've gotten past a lot of the 'firsts' for women, but we still have a ways to go with how women are actually viewed and treated in society. We still haven't had our first female president! Women are underrepresented throughout society, from politics to the STEM field to the media, and it's important for others to look up to them in places of power to eventually increase representation across the board." All in all, it was an incredibly successful event, and we look forward to having another Tough Tea Time next year!



Photo Nine

TARANA BURKE

By: Katie DePalma

On Wednesday, April 10th, the Women's Center hosted Tarana Burke, civil rights activist and the founder of the "me too" movement. Burke began the "me too" movement in 2006; but it was not until 2017 that the movement took off and became a global phenomenon that helped raise awareness and support for victim/survivors of sexual harassment, abuse, and assault. In 2017, Burke along with other prominent activists who identify as women were dubbed as "the silence breakers" by *Time* magazine. This assertion by *Time* highlights that before the "me too" movement sexual assault and gender-based violence was not discussed within mainstream society.

Burke and other activists who identify as women gave women around the world a platform to speak up about their experiences, say "me too," and work together to support one another and spread awareness about the pervasiveness of assault. Currently, Burke travels around the world speaking to different audiences, many of them college-aged students about the origin of the "me too" movement, how the movement has transformed over time, and how we as a community of men and women alike can continue to push the "me too" movement forward. Burke coined the phrase "me too" during her time working for Just Be Inc., a nonprofit she founded in 2003 that worked towards advancing the overall well-being of young women of color. In her talk at UConn, Burke discussed a conversation she had with a young girl of color who had been sexually abused. Burke described herself as unsure what to do in this scenario, but that all she really wanted to say to this young girl was "me too." (Continued on p. 13)



Photo Ten



Photo Eleven

TARANA BURKE

Continued from page 12

Since then, Burke has used the phrase “me too” as a way to tell survivors that, “You are not alone, this happened to me too.” The “me too” movement is built around fostering empathy for victim/survivors from survivor to survivor, while also boldly declaring that this happened to me, but I am not ashamed or alone.

Overall, the “me too” movement has transformed the way we as a society view sexual assault. The “me too” movement asserts that gender-based violence and assault is pervasive, meaning that is not just a “women’s issue.” Sexual violence affects everyone within a society, and to pretend that women are the only victims is not true and ultimately causes society to ignore the issue, rather than to do something to help victim/survivors and those who are allies to victim/survivors. The “me too” movement challenges the pervasiveness of gender-based violence and assault by bringing visibility to victim/survivors and a platform where their voices and experiences can be heard and met with empathy and support. To learn more about the “me too” movement and Tarana Burke visit <https://metoomvmt.org/> and/or [Tarana Burke’s Ted Talk](#).

The Women’s Center would also like to thank the following co-sponsors of the Tarana Burke event: Office for Diversity and Inclusion, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion), the Asian and Asian American Studies Institute Ahimsa Endowment (Made Possible by the Greater Hartford Jain Center), the Rainbow Center, the Asian American Cultural Center, the African American Cultural Center, and the Puerto Rican Latin American Cultural Center.



Photo Twelve



Photo Thirteen

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

By: Katie DePalma and Olivia Grossman



Photo Fourteen



Photo Fifteen



Photo Sixteen

Take Back the Night (TBTN) is a nationwide event that occurs on many college campuses that seeks to raise awareness and empower victim/survivors regarding sexual violence and rape culture. The UConn's Women's Center sponsored the event on Wednesday, April 17th, hosted and run by Women's Center VAWPP (Violence Against Women Prevention Program) staff Mikayla Garvin and Zeqing (Esther) Shao. TBTN at UConn was comprised of a video, a march, a speak out, and a Community Coffee House. Groups within the Women's Center, such as GASA (Greeks Against Sexual Assault), In-Power Support Group, Men's Project, and the VAWPP class were involved in the program.

Takeaways from the Writing Intern: This was my first year participating in TBTN at UConn. Not only have I never experienced this event, but I have also never been a part of anything like this before. I have never marched; I have never attended a speak out; I have never seen a night as emotional and powerful as this one. I did not know what to expect going into the event, but I came out of it feeling incredibly sad, but also incredibly empowered.

The march gave me a sense of belonging, like I was a part of something much bigger than anything I had experienced before. I felt that by contributing my time and voice, I was actually making a change to help raise awareness for sexual violence. This is not a feeling I have ever encountered before, and I was surprised by how strong and how proud it made me feel. As this is my first year at the Women's Center, this is also the first time in my life I have really studied or been devoted to gender equity and social justice issues. (Continued on p. 15)

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

Continued from page 14

It is one thing to research, read, and write about these topics, however, an entirely different thing to take action and stand up for what you believe in. TBTN was an incredible experience, and I applaud everyone that had a hand in coordinating it and everybody who attended.

Takeaways from the Newsletter Editor: This was my second year attending TBTN. For me, this was a vastly different experience than my first time. The first year I was less educated about issues of gender-based violence, such as harassment, sexual assault, coercive sex, and relationship violence. I didn't understand how ingrained rape culture is within society and how jarringly common it is on college campuses. I felt relatively alone with my experience with sexual violence, which at the time I felt was just the way things are; not that what happened to me was okay, but that it was what it was and that I couldn't do anything about or talk about it. Then I went to TBTN, and I marched in solidarity with like-minded individuals who support victim/survivors and then listened to so many brave individuals share their own experiences with sexual violence. It was an incredibly humbling and empowering experience that gave me hope that someday we can live in a world without rape culture. However, I also left wishing that someone had talked about the pervasiveness of sexual assault within our society; meaning that you do not need to be raped to be a victim/survivor. TBTN encompasses all forms of gender-based violence including sexual assault, harassment, relationship violence, coercive sex, and stalking. This year at TBTN, due to this feeling, my own experience with an assault that wasn't a rape, and then more recently an actual rape, I felt like I had the opportunity to make an impact and empower myself by speaking at the Speak Out. (Continued on p. 16)



Photo Seventeen

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

Continued from page 15

This is specifically because, for me, both experiences with assault were equally valid and both experiences denote me as a victim/survivor. It is just so incredibly important to remember that your experience with gender-based violence, no matter how insignificant or significant you may think is it, is valid and it is true, no matter what.

Takeaways from participants:

Anonymous: “I wasn’t expecting to share my story, but with the help and encouragement of friends and co-workers, I told my story at TBTN to help other victim/survivors grow, as well as educate those willing to learn about gender-based violence. In my opinion TBTN did a wonderful job empowering victim survivors like myself.”

Frankie Anile-Santiago, GASA Co-facilitator: “TBTN was inspiring; it made me feel like anything was possible and that I mattered. It made me feel like I could be believed.”

Tessa Bravata, Graduate Assistant in CLAS Alumni Relations: “The Community Coffee House portion of TBTN was really inspiring to hear everyone stories’ in an intimate setting. It gave me the tools to empower friends who may be affected by gender-based violence.”



Photo Eighteen



Photo Nineteen

The Provost's Office, UConn Alumni, and the Women's Center annually sponsor the Outstanding Senior Women Academic Achievement Awards Ceremony, which recognizes women undergraduate and graduate students who have excelled academically within each school/college and demonstrated high achievement in research and service to the University community. The program also celebrates the recipients of the 100 Years of Women Scholarship, which was established in 1992 to honor current matriculated UConn undergraduate and graduate students and/or a high school senior planning to enroll in the University of Connecticut, who have demonstrated a commitment to women's issues through service to their community or school as a role model or advocate. A reception is held in their honor during Commencement weekend.

Academic Achievement Awards

Oindri Sen	School of Pharmacy
Mackenzie Fischer	Batcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture
Jessica Seltz	College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources
Madisyn Silva	School of Business
Autumnsarah Foster-Pagett	Neag School of Education
Shaylin Cetegen	School of Engineering
Samantha Card	School of Fine Arts
Amelia Henkel	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Brooke Rose Parmalee	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Mary Szarkowicz	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Ashley Rich	School of Nursing
Yan Li	Graduate School
Kadeejah Jade Kelly	School of Law
Aliyah Henry	School of Social Work - MSW
Alysse Loomis	School of Social Work - PhD
Mary Elizabeth Soyster	School of Medicine
Candice Elizabeth Logan	School of Dental Medicine

100 Years of Women Scholarship

Rebecca S. Colby
Rayna Esch
Odia Kane

SEMESTER IN REVIEW: MEN'S PROJECT

By: Rhys Hall and Tommy Jacobson

The Men's Project had a full Spring 2019 semester, which featured multiple changes in structure and overhauls in curriculum and activities. While the Men's Project retains its support for Take Back the Night (including several participants and facilitators shooting for the quote video), we no longer require our members to actively participate in our events (such as speaking or producing imagery). However, we strongly encourage participants to be there in person and share to the extent they find appropriate, though we have adjusted our semester project after student feedback.

Now, Men's Project participants will find a space on campus they deem part of their "sphere of influence." This is either a space they already possess an impactful role, where their voices could help bring new light to a topic that a group hadn't considered, or they can find a space that they want to have a more active role in. In these spaces, participants can either share lessons, curriculum and activities that they learned in the Men's Project. Additionally, they can help guide a discussion on what they gained from the Men's Project and what role programs like these offer for campus men and their growth and development. A concern expressed in previous survivor panels is the request of sexual violence victim/survivors to not just retell their stories, but answer questions about their experience (which can be a form of emotional or traumatic labor). Additionally, the sensitivity of the subject matter lends the outreach process to requesting people who have already shared their stories publicly, which often means the panelists for such events consist of VAWPPers, Take Back the Night participants and other women/Women's Center affiliated folks who offer these stories and resources in other settings. (Continued on p. 19)



Photo Twenty

SEMESTER IN REVIEW: MEN'S PROJECT

Continued from page 18

Asking survivors to visit the Men's Project may not be the most productive practice, rather we can encourage participants to show up when these people speak publicly.

Instead, we are beginning a new practice of inviting VAWPP facilitators and assistants to the Men's Project to offer an (abridged) version of the curriculum they offer to students across campus, with components centered on facilitator knowledge. This will aid Men's Project participants in learning how to teach other people the lessons they learn in these spaces, which may be more pertinent towards their goal for campus impact. These mini-trainings come at the availability of facilitators and will help prepare participants before their campus-wide initiative.

Lastly, this year we put a greater emphasis on discussing our journal reflections and opening our meetings with dialoguing on contemporary issues related to masculinity. This compliments an effort to be conscious of space and time use, particularly for the sharing of personal backstories. We find all these adjustments beneficial in our mission to make narrative use more intentional and for the purpose of creating empathy and then learning tools to teach others. Several participants have also shared the impact they felt from the Narrative 4 exercise, where participants tie in their own experiences to a prompt via role-swapping storytelling. As we provided less opportunities for participants to talk about their own lives over the duration of the 11 week program, we believe it made the nights specifically set out for such activities to be more impactful and memorable.



Photo Twenty-one



Photo Twenty-two



Photo Twenty-three

SEMESTER IN REVIEW: GASA

By: Frankie Anile-Santiago and Lindsey Vieweg

Greeks Against Sexual Assault (GASA) had an awesome semester! GASA had four times as many male-identified participants compared to last year. This was important because it allowed for the group dynamic to develop and be discussed from more perspectives than ever before. GASA tackled several issues this year involving intersectionality, privilege, rape culture, sexual assault, gender identity, power, bystander awareness, and toxic masculinity, as well as how to bring the lessons learned in GASA back to members' chapters in an appropriate manner.

The experience allowed for participants to educate themselves, and their brothers and sisters, on how to prevent sexual assault and be more aware of the signs that cause sexual assault to happen. GASA has had many heavy conversations throughout the semester with participants while still keeping the tone of the conversations welcoming and warm to make all participants feel their voices matter.

One of our participants, Emma Atkinson, describes GASA as, "A comfortable place for uncomfortable conversations to take place." GASA has also created new activities and found new resources to provide for more effective conversations in order to challenge our participants to think through a new lens.

Some of the new activities GASA has done this semester are the "Chipotle Exercise" and the *Bystander Choose Your Own Adventure* activity. "The Chipotle Exercise" involved the facilitators walking through an interaction at Chipotle, where the worker is taking your order and you are ordering. The activity takes place step-by-step to illustrate how consent is needed at every step in a sexual encounter.

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SEMESTER IN REVIEW: GASA

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Responses do not always have to always be verbal, as enthusiastic nonverbal affirmation is sufficient as well. The idea is that consent works the same way.

The *Bystander Choose Your Own Adventure* activity is a book given to participants to read through. The book puts participants in the shoes of a bystander at a social gathering and asks questions about different possible decisions someone could make while analyzing a potential dangerous situation. The book takes the participants through different scenarios depending on the choices they make, while illustrating not every interaction is always consensual. The activity exemplifies the gray area of being a bystander, but illustrates the importance of taking acting or speaking out. Overall, GASA has made a lot of improvements this semester in regards to our participants and how the discussions that happen during GASA are facilitated. The importance of making GASA a comfortable space for participants can never be lost because it is impossible for participants to grow without support from their peers and the GASA facilitators.



Photo Twenty-four

SEMESTER IN REVIEW: WISTEM

By: Emma Atkinson

A year of growth: the WiSTEM program year in review

When I first got the phone call from the Women's Center that I was selected as the WiSTEM Program Director, I remember springing off the couch, grabbing my journal, and began scribbling down all the ideas I had and what I wanted to see the program do that upcoming year. As I go back and look at the same journal entry tucked away in the very early pages of that journal, I find it ironic and bittersweet; I had written down so many ideas on what I could provide, what I could teach, and how I could empower other women, oblivious to all that the women in WiSTEM would provide me with, how much they would teach me, and how much they would empower me.

This was a year of many firsts for the program, which helped to catalyze strong feelings of empowerment, support and excitement that only grew stronger throughout the year. We increased meetings from once a month to every other week, which provided more opportunities to gather as a community of strong women in STEM and grow comfortable with each other. We opened up to new lenses and identities that can shape the experience of women, such as adding new majors like Pharmacy and Nursing, and by adding fluidity in the mentor and mentee dynamics by allowing upperclass students to be mentees and underclass students to be mentors. (Continued on p. 23)



Photo Twenty-five

SEMESTER IN REVIEW: WISTEM

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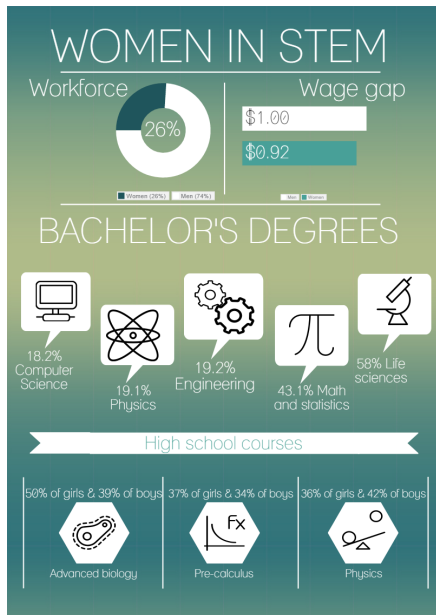


Photo Twenty-six

We added a new Groupme, which completely shattered its original intentions of simply relaying information and opportunities and turned into a place filled with positive messages, motivational quotes, women reaching out to other for help, and most importantly, celebrating other's successes and acknowledging their own accomplishments.

I cannot believe that the entire year has completely flown by, as it seems like it was just yesterday when I was curled up in my couch scribbling in my notebook. As I reflect back upon my time this year and my experience as the Program Director, I cannot help but to smile and wish I could do it all over again. It truly was a year of growth for the program, the participants, and myself as well.

I felt empowered to be a part of a community that fostered challenging, intellectual and powerful dialogues going on between some of the brightest minds in the STEM community and became more knowledgeable about how intersectionality impacts experiences in STEM. It motivated me to improve my study habits and time management and push myself for academic success, as I was in a role-model position.

My self-confidence improved tenfold by listening to how women in their respective programs challenged institutionalized sexism which motivated me to successfully advocate for myself. I cannot thank the WiSTEM program enough for not only helping me to become a powerful and successful woman in STEM, but also for empowering me to grow into the powerful and successful woman who I am so proud to be.

SEMESTER IN REVIEW: BETWEEN WOMEN

By: Carly Martin

This was my 1st year facilitating Between Women, a group I have been attending since my first year here at UConn. Each meeting we focused on a different topic pertaining to various LGBTQ+ themes. There were a lot of new members, as well as familiar faces from previous semesters. This semester, the group seemed to really work well together, creating a safe space on Wednesday nights for those two hours. The group wasn't as large as it had been in previous years, but the smaller group allowed for more in-depth and intimate conversations, where all voices had the chance to speak.

We centered a lot of our conversations around the different identities one person could have. We didn't just focus in on one specific identity, but rather how different identities can intersect. One of the most popular topics we discussed was about representation in the media. At first I framed this question as just LGBTQ+ representation, but the group allowed it to evolve into the diversification of LGBTQ+ representation. A lot of the time what little representation that is given to the queer community just shows characters who are white, and more often than not, these queer characters tend to be white gay men. In recent years, this has begun to shift to diversify representation, but it was something I hadn't noticed before our group conversation about the topic.

Members also brought up how queer people are shown in news media, not just in fictional media like movies and TV shows. This conversation led the group to discuss stereotyping and how it can both negatively and positively impact people who are being stereotyped. This conversation about representation also allowed for shows and movies recommendations and gave members an excuse to go home and start binge-watching. The conversation about media, and many of our other conversations in the group, made me see things with more critical eyes, and I think a lot of the group did too. We ended many conversations with the question of "Now What?" What can we do to try and evoke change and in the case of media; how can we be critical consumers; and how can we ourselves create the media we want to see?

I think it was a very successful year for Between Women and a successful first year as the facilitator. There are always improvements that can be made and things to be learned, but Between Women has always been a safe space for queer women to come to once a week to discuss LGBTQ+ themes and be themselves.

NEW WOMEN'S AFFINITY GROUP

By: Jessica Muirhead

GROUP FOR WORKING WOMEN LAUNCHED WITH INAUGURAL PROGRAM

The Women's Center has formed a new Women's Affinity Group (WAG) for staff and faculty at UConn in order to create more opportunities to build community for working women. On March 8th, in honor of International Women's Day, WAG held its first gathering, *Navigating Permission in the Workplace*. Marie Percy, Professor of Movement and Intimacy Coordinator for the Department of Dramatic Arts, presented on workplace intimacy and engaged with working women from across the University to reflect on issues of consent. Attendees then took time to reflect and learn from one another in open dialogue over lunch.

The Women's Affinity Group will be organizing a variety of opportunities throughout the year, including networking events and continued discussion series. The next meeting will be a networking happy hour on the evening of Tuesday, June 4th. Participants interested in joining the planning committee should contact Kathleen Holgerson (Kathleen.Holgerson@uconn.edu), Director of the Women's Center, to get involved.



Photo Twenty-seven

IN-POWER

By: Katie DePalma

This semester the Women's Center created a new ongoing, gender-inclusive group for victim/survivors of gender-based violence. The group is called In-Power and seeks to empower, support, and encourage victim/survivors no matter where they are in their healing process. In-Power is facilitated by Women's Center student staff members, Jenny Giri and Sara DeFazio. Below is a short Q&A between the Newsletter Editor and Jenny and Sara detailing In-Power, their vision for the group, and a preview of the hopes for the group next semester.



Katie: "What is the purpose of In-Power?"

Jenny: "To build a community where students can feel comfortable to share with one another. I think it is definitely a place where individuals can learn coping strategies from us and more importantly from one another."

Sara: "In-power was proposed by Women's Center alum, Kyle Harrington. The purpose is to create a community building space for victim-survivors of gender-based violence. The space is dedicated to help victim-survivors of any gender identity in their healing process by giving them a space to share their experiences and to listen to others. Healing is non-linear and different for everyone, so we aim to create a space where people are always welcome to explore their own healing processes and create community with others."

Katie: "Do you see In-Power as a space for victim-survivors to cope/grow?"

Jenny: "We try to make it a brave space (when the group is okay with that) where we can be comfortable, but also challenge ourselves to grow."

Sara: "Yes." (Continued on p. 27)

IN-POWER

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Katie: “How will you facilitate a community of practice within In-Power group discussion?”

Jenny: “It is a community of practice because we work together to create group expectations and those help keep everyone accountable for the things they say. And if someone says something that might bother someone else, we have a general protocol to follow where they can remedy that hurt themselves as a group.”

Sara: “We started the group by collectively coming up with a list of community expectations that we want for the group. One of the expectations that we agreed upon, was to do what we call ‘temp-checks,’ which helps us all connect with each other and how we are all feeling prior to the meeting. The ‘temp-checks’ were recommended by a group member who also suggested the use of ‘ouch - oops’ which we also tell all new participants about. ‘Ouch - Oops’ is a practice where if someone is hurt in any way by something someone may have said, the person who has been hurt is encouraged to speak about it. The ‘oops’ portion of this is that the person who said the hurtful thing must take responsibility for what they said and try to grow from the feedback.”

How is this semester going to shape the group for the coming fall 2019 semester?

Jenny: “I think each semester is really shaped by the group’s current members because we strive to make it a place where every member has a say into how the group runs. However, I would say this semester will shape next semester in that we will just have more experience and can focus more on the group itself than the logistical stuff like the description, marketing, and planning.”

Sara: “The group works on a basis of consent, so at the end of every meeting we list a few ideas for what the next meeting could be about, and then we decide as a group. That means that we can't necessarily plan for next semester besides working on outreach and promotion of the group. We will also be creating new expectations with next year’s members in order to create a space for all of those who are involved.”

SECOND WORKPLACE CLIMATE CIVILITY

By: Something's Happening Committee

With the support of President Susan Herbst, the Something's Happening Committee (SHC), an ad-hoc group of the UConn community addressing workplace climate at the University, sponsored its 2nd University-wide "Workplace Climate Survey" in February 2017. The purpose of the survey was to gather information from UConn employees about their work experiences and provide guidance to create a respectful, civil, ethical, diverse and safe campus community.

Since that time, the Committee has been working to analyze the responses and create a comprehensive report with recommendations. The report and recommendations were released to the UConn community on March 18th.

For more information on the survey and the Something's Happening Committee, please visit <http://respect.uconn.edu>

SHC Members:

Alison Cutler, Faculty & Staff Labor Relations
Amy Gronus, UNITE
Pamela Health-Johnston, Human Resources
Kathleen Holgerson, Women's Center
Alexa Linauer, Office of Institutional Equity
Leslie Maddocks, CEUI
Vicky Magley, Psychological Sciences
Chuck Morrell, UCPEA
Laura Mcconnell, AFSCME
Amanda Pitts, Office of the Provost
Doug Racicot, CEUI
Thomas Reid, GEU-UAW
Nancy Tanner, Dining Services
Cara Workman, University Events & Conference Services
TBD, AAUP
TBD, Public Safety
TBD, University Compliance

PERIOD. END OF SENTENCE.
FILM REVIEW

By: Olivia Grossman

The Netflix documentary, *Period. End of Sentence* describes the journey of several women in rural India as they work to implement the usage of pads within their community and neighboring villages. These women were pioneers within their community as they helped other women gain access to adequate period products. Periods are branded as shameful in most Indian cultures, considered by Sneha, the documentary narrator, as “the biggest taboo in the country.” Many Indian men do not even know what periods are; one man specifically believing it is an “illness that primarily affects women.” Additionally, Indian women do not really understand what their periods are or how they work, knowing only that they signify you are able to bear children.

The common cloth material Indian women use in place of pads or tampons is not nearly as absorbent as the packaged pads we see in the U.S. In America, we are able to go to the drug store and buy a box of pads that we will eventually use and throw away, whereas the Indian women in this documentary have access to several cloths and are forced to clean and reuse the ones that they do have. The documentary follows a group of women who aim to change this inconvenience, by starting a small business called *Fly Pads*. These women work together using a simple machine to create and package actual pads (as opposed to simple cloths), that they then sell for profit by going door to door across their towns and villages. From obtaining the material, to making the product, to marketing to businesses, to selling, these women are active in every step of the business process. Their actions demonstrate the female empowerment gained by defying traditional cultural and gender norms. (Continued on p. 30)



Photo Twenty-eight

PERIOD. END OF SENTENCE:
FILM REVIEW

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The Indian women represented within this film do not often purchase the market brand pads sold in drug stores, as they are expensive and women are embarrassed to buy them from the male cashiers. In contrast, *Fly Pads* are noticeably more absorbent than the drug store brand, are much more affordable, and women are more comfortable buying them as they are being sold by women, too. Thus, sales skyrocketed quickly and business took off at an unexpected rate. While this is an incredible accomplishment in itself, the implications of the business are much more noteworthy and impressive. Besides being successful, the creation of *Fly Pads* made the employed women feel independent, respectable, and self-sufficient. Men are most often the wage earners in India, and so to hear of a woman earning her own money is uncommon. The narrator, Sneha, is now confident enough in herself to use her wages to pursue her education in police training, something she may not have done previously as she had little money of her own.

Fly Pads did so much more than address the taboo of menstruation in Indian culture: it served as a stepping stone to empower women to help themselves and each other. This has given them an opportunity to stray away from social norms by taking control of their own lives and futures. Through this documentary, these women have demonstrated strength, ambition, and daring: as one Indian man quotes, "The strongest creature created by God is...the girl."



Photo Twenty-nine

CALL FOR ACTION: SURJ

By: Katie DePalma

The Women's Center's Programming Committee recently hosted an event called *Reproductive Justice: What are your Choices?* The focus of this event was to educate women on their reproductive choices through comprehensive resources and education as well as to introduce the re-emergence of Students United for Reproductive Justice (SURJ) for fall 2019.

The mission statement of SURJ is to strive to bring awareness to issues surrounding access to contraception, abortion, adoption, motherhood, and many other topics regarding women's

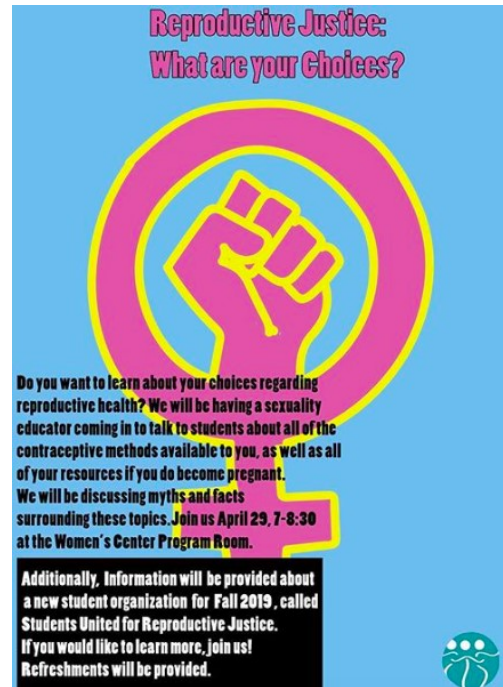


Photo Thirty

Some thoughts/hopes for SURJ from the incoming SURJ Executive Board:

Carly Martin the incoming SURJ President asserts, "I think it is important for all women to know how to be safe and to know all their options regarding their reproductive rights. Our group wants to advocate for the right for women to choose what they want and what they don't want to do with their bodies."

Grace Mandy the incoming SURJ Vice President comments, "SURJ hopes to create more educational events on campus and to bring health experts who work either on or off campus, such as Planned Parenthood, to come talk about contraceptive methods, pregnancy options, and any type of general information regarding reproductive justice."

For more information or to get involved with SURJ for the fall 2019 semester please contact: grace.mandy@uconn.edu or carly.martin@uconn.edu.

PHOTO CREDITS

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Photo Twenty-seven

Courtesy of <https://www.behance.net/gallery/62893611/Women-Supporting-Women>

Photo Twenty-eight

Courtesy of <https://www.france24.com/en/20190225-india-oscar-winning-documentary-period-end-sentence-stigma-menstruation-zehtabchi>

Photo Twenty-nine

Courtesy of <https://www.arre.co.in/gender/oscars-2019-period-end-of-sentence-menstruation/> Artist: Shruti Yatam

Photo Thirty

Courtesy of the Women's Center Instagram

Photo Thirty-one

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