



# Center for WOMEN'S AND GENDER Studies

Annual Report 2018-19

# Center for **WOMEN'S AND GENDER** Studies *Annual Report | 2018-2019*

The FIU Center for Women's and Gender Studies promotes scholarly inquiry related to women and gender. Through interdisciplinary courses in women's studies and cross-listed courses in other disciplines, the center enhances student knowledge about women, feminism, and the significance of gender in diverse cultures and contexts.

- 1** | Director's Message
- 2** | Student Spotlight
- 3** | Alumni Spotlight
- 4** | Faculty Spotlight
- 6** | Center's Achievements
- 7** | Faculty Achievements
- 8** | Events

- 10** | Future Plans for the Ladies Empowerment & Action Program
- 11** | FIU Changemakers
- 12** | Initiative Updates
- 14** | Congrats Grads!
- 17** | By the Numbers



## Director's Message

This year for the Center for Women's and Gender Studies (CWGS) has been both exciting and innovative. Our center continues to improve and create new strides at FIU and in our South Florida community. The efforts this year continue to prove that education, research and involvement are our strongest pillars for our center's foundation in progressing the advancement, empowerment and advocacy for women, LGBTQIA+ rights, diversity, equity and inclusivity at FIU.

CWGS's three initiatives – Women in STEM, Gender Violence Prevention and FIU's 100 Women – are still going as strong as ever. One of the center's biggest highlights from this year was the inaugural celebration of U.N. International Day of Women and Girls in Science as a part of our Women in STEM initiative. We established a tradition of dedicating and celebrating the successes of women in STEM and are looking forward to improving and expanding this event in years to come. The Gender Violence Prevention initiative invited famous panelists for the third year of FIU Rising, featuring representatives from the Department of Homeland Security, International Rescue Committee and One Billion Rising Miami, as they discussed the international movement to end violence against women. For this year's FIU 100 Women initiative, we honored four social justice leaders from our community and showcased their activism.

The center continues to emphasize student success, faculty success and our mission. The opportunity to expand on creating changemakers is happening through the new and exciting development of

Dr. Vicki Burns' innovative course, "Peer Leadership, Violence, and Social Change," scheduled for the Fall 2019. As well, after the announcement of our newly revamped Queer Studies certificate, we are integrating our LGBTQIA+ students and the unique forms of expression and capabilities on campus. Our widely attended curricular activities were appraised and included faculty panels, counterdemonstrations, film screenings and research conferences. We are also working with the Florida prison system through the the Ladies Empowerment and Action Program (LEAP). This new relationship between FIU and LEAP will shed light on empowering incarcerated women and continue to let us reach new heights and help many more lives.

On the international stage, I was able to share the achievements of FIU for the remarkable advancement of women faculty.

I send my deepest gratitude and thanks to all students, faculty, staff and community activists. We are as strong as our supporters and their contributions and commitment have made this again a successful year for the center, FIU students and the larger FIU community.

Warm regards,

**Yesim Darici**  
Assistant Provost, STEM  
Director, Center for Women's  
and Gender Studies  
Professor of Physics



# Student **SPOTLIGHT**



## Keishla Santiago-Ortiz

B.A. in Psychology  
B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies  
S.M. in Interdisciplinary Studies, and Undergraduate  
Certificate in Queer Studies

Expected Graduation: Fall 2018

A mother of one and former corporal in the United States Marine Corps, Keishla Santiago-Ortiz is a committed student in a unique situation. One of her biggest goals is advocating for female veterans. Originally, Keishla was a Psychology student with this dream in mind and unsure of how to pursue it. Once she took a course with CWGS, Keishla soon began a dual degree with Women's and Gender Studies.

Keishla's concentration has always been to support and advocate the unique situations that female veterans go through. "Acquiring services from the V.A. (Department of Veteran Affairs) is difficult since it doesn't consider the specific necessities of their female veterans," she explains, "most of the priority goes to men." Additionally, military rape culture is rarely acknowledged on the media and the military space is overwhelming with toxic masculinity. While the government has taken steps to avoid this, it is still prominent as the voices of survivors are silenced as the military court is often its own judge and jury.

After graduation, she is pursuing a Master's in Social Work at FIU.



## Megan Yavar

B.A. in Psychology  
B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies  
Minor in Mathematics  
Undergraduate Certificate in Queer Studies  
Elaine Gordon Scholarship Recipient

Expected Graduation: Summer 2020

Megan Yavar knew she had a calling in women's rights and LGBT+ rights since she was young. At age 13, her older brother came out as transgender. During that transitional time, she recognized how LGBT+ identities were mistreated and she wanted to make a difference.

Megan utilized her positions in student organizations to discuss these issues. She served as the President of the Women's Studies Student Association for 2018-2019 and Social Event coordinator for HYPE. Her involvement in these clubs included the discussion of intersectionality. Being as inclusive as possible and informing others that they don't need to choose one identity over the other, creates a healthier outlook and welcoming environment.

Megan's future is set towards continuing her education. She plans to apply to the University of Michigan.

## Zakiya Becca

B.A. in Communication Arts  
S.M. in Women's and Gender Studies, 2017



Zakiya Becca as HandsOn Broward's Volunteer Coordinator promotes, supports, and coordinates change in a community after tragedy. As a key member, she recruits and manages volunteers for various communal opportunities in the Broward County area.

Zakiya and other members of HandsOn Broward met with friends and families of the 17 victims of the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas tragedy and these meetings led to the creation of 17 service projects in honor of the victims.

In the future, Zakiya plans to apply to graduate school to study Marriage and Family Therapy. With her degree in Communication Arts and Women's and Gender Studies, creating meaningful differences in the lives of women is of importance to her.

## Claudia Navarro

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies  
S.M. in Interdisciplinary Studies, 2018



Claudia Navarro is a domestic worker organizer at the Miami Workers Center. She unites the community of domestic workers from the Miami region and informs them of their rights through the Femme Agenda. The Femme Agenda is the feminization of poverty, where women have a history of being disproportionality disadvantaged in comparison to men. For Claudia, creating a community of workers who can raise their

voices against those who infringe their rights is important.

Claudia plans to pursue another B.A. in Economics at FIU along with a Master's in Policy Making. She wants to focus on the differences in economically developed countries through an intersectional lens to create solutions for making sustainable work.

## MEET OUR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS



### Vanessa Vieites

Vanessa Vieites is a dissertation year doctoral candidate in Psychology, specializing in Developmental Science. Her psychological research focuses on the relations

between spatial memory, spatial experience and brain structure/function as well as the development of gender differences in spatial abilities.

When Vanessa is not working or doing research, she is reading and writing about issues surrounding sexual assault. She frequently publishes op-eds online. She is also a member of the National Association for Science Writers, aspiring to inform the lay public about social science research findings from an intersectional feminist lens.



### Andria Rivero

Andria Rivero is a first year Master's candidate in English literature.

Her current thesis work includes 19th century British author, Henry James, children subjects and the adverse effects of silence over sexual abuse.

Andria is very active and invested with student organizations on campus as a member of the Graduate English Association and treasurer of the Women's Studies Student Association (WSSA). As treasurer, Andria has helped to create and establish events to facilitate the conversations of feminism and social activism at FIU. As a graduate assistant at CWGS, Andria works closely under the program coordinator and director. Her responsibilities include student advising, assisting professors with ongoing projects and event coordination like FIU's first "International Day of Women and Girls in Science" for Spring 2019.



## THE CASE OF LEBANON DR. JESSY ABOUARAB

Dr. Jessie Abouarab, a former CWGS graduate assistant, has returned to FIU as an adjunct professor at CWGS. Dr. Abouarab was featured in the center's last annual report and was a Ph.D. candidate in International Relations with a graduate certificate in women's and gender studies. Organically, she transitioned from a graduate assistant that taught introductory

### Dr. Ana Luszczynska



Dr. Ana Luszczynska, director of Graduate Studies in the Department of English, associate professor and affiliated faculty of CWGS is more than excited about the prospect of her students seeking out interest in women's and gender studies. "It's changing the trajectory of how to see

a new frame of reference," she says, "and that's when innovation happens!"

In the past twenty years, academia saw the emergence of new critical interests such as trauma studies, Hispanic and Latinx studies as well as disability studies. These studies provide an academic discipline and focus on identities and populations that are otherwise overlooked. This is also true for women's and gender studies. Women's and gender studies helps widen a student's arsenal of literature and knowledge that is helpful in higher education, social engagement and in life.

English majors have the opportunity to access and engage with infinite intersections of theoretical work with literature when they consider a dual degree, second major, and certificate in women's and gender studies. Over twenty instructors and professors from the English department are affiliated faculty and cover topics including women writers, postcolonial theory, intersectional theory and queer theory.

### Dr. Leslie Frazier



Dr. Leslie Fraizer, director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Psychology, associate professor and affiliated faculty with CWGS is excited at the prospect of her students considering to pursue a dual-degree with women's and gender studies. "A student interested in a career in

psychology benefits from the curriculum in CWGS and a student who wishes to pursue a career stemming from CWGS foundations will benefit from the foundation in psychological sciences," says Dr. Fraizer.

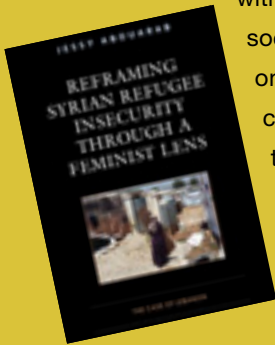
As one of the most coveted options for psychology majors at FIU, double majoring or receiving certification in Women's and Gender Studies is among the most rewarding and engaging paths for students to take for their academic and professional careers. Issues that include women's health in minority populations are linked to health disparities and quality of care. And, because of the differential role of gender in developmental, evolutionary, social, health, and clinical science, there are areas within psychology that pertain specifically to scientific investigation of women's and gender roles.

Having a foundation in feminist theory or queer theory matched with different fields like industrial psychology



courses with the center to now an adjunct instructor, who continues promoting advocacy and activism in her students.

Dr. Abouarab has always provided her students with an environment that promotes social awareness and changemakers on a transnational scale through collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity. Her life and career have been driven by a strong passion for human rights, women's rights and gender equity. Her thesis from her doctoral program is now a book in the making, *Reframing Syrian*



*Refugee Insecurity Through A Feminist Lens: The Case of Lebanon*, that will publish in Summer 2020.

“CWGS has provided me the platform to grow on a personal and professional level. They have given me all the tools to prosper in research, academia and teaching,” says Dr. Abouarab. “From international conferences, to foster shelters with unaccompanied alien children, to rural agricultural areas of Lebanon with female activists, to the hallways of FIU classrooms, CWGS has always been a second home for me.”

or education psychology, there are unique and valuable prospects outside of typical coursework that dual-majors can benefit from. Potential career options for students who dual-degree in Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies have professional opportunities including research scientists, counsellors, lawyers and therapists, which focus on gender, sexuality and women's issues.

## Dr. Paige Telan



Dr. Paige Telan, a senior instructor of Psychology in BBC and one of the center's affiliated faculty members at the Biscayne Bay Campus (BBC), teaches highly regarded and popular courses such as WST 3015: Introduction to Global Gender and Women's Studies and SOP 3742:

Psychology of Women. Dr. Telan recalls that many of her students are psychology majors and after taking her courses, they begin to pursue learning and acquiring a second major or even a certificate in women's and gender studies.

Students in her courses also frequently discuss major movements like #MeToo and #NiUnaMenos during class discussions. “There are so many possibilities at BBC,” she says. “CWGS and its courses and events provide the potential in helping students recognize key issues. It allows

students to have an awareness that they never had before and they can expand it critically in class, on campus and in their everyday lives.”

Already, BBC is hosting innovative and socially imperative events like the Women Who Lead Conference, a two-day panel of speakers that is designed to enhance the leadership developed of female students at FIU. Just like MMC, BBC has recently begun hosting roundtable discussions on a monthly basis. Dr. Telan is excited about the prospect of holding and leading roundtable discussions that further the conversations on gender and mental health that can be accessible to students at BBC.

## Dr. Brian Peterson Memorial



The Center for Women's and Gender Studies honors and remembers one of our valuable colleagues, Dr. Brian Peterson. He was a lifelong friend of CWGS and a long-time supporter of women faculty at FIU and much more. As a beloved faculty member, Dr. Peterson was the primary undergraduate advisor for the History Department, an affiliated faculty member for the Honors College who taught many of their first-year courses and was one of the longest-standing representatives in the Faculty Senate.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

# CENTER'S ACHIEVEMENTS



Just like other FIU faculty, it has been a very busy year for the director for the Center for Women's and Gender Studies. She had the prestigious honor of being invited to the 2018 Brand/MARKA conference in Turkey. This conference serves as Turkey's largest business platform where brands come together with discussions and specialists about the latest trends and future of brands. At the event, Dr. Darici presented "A Life Story: Ignoring Boundaries and Marching through Systematic Bias."

Overseas, Dr. Darici arranged and coordinated a private tour of CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, in Switzerland for Dr. Sani Sener, the founder, president and CEO of TAV Airports Holding AS.

Dr. Darici presented "Women in STEM" as an invited speaker for the 34th Turkish Physical International Physics Conference. Her presentation emphasized unconscious bias and its impact on women in STEM fields when it comes to job recruitment and working in the field.



## Selected Faculty ACHIEVEMENTS



At FIU, Dr. Darici was a guest speaker for Next Horizon: The Campaign for FIU after the campaign reached an incredible milestone! Showing her panther pride, Dr. Darici told the audience that there isn't any other place like FIU. "You can go to another school, but you will not be as happy there as you will be here. You want to spend your life here at a place that supports women, diversity of ancestry and thought, immigrants, doers and dreamers. We teach generations. We teach families and communities," said Darici.

Dr. Darici published the Strategic Career Development for STEM Women Faculty as a book chapter for IGI Global's "Faculty Development for Digital Teaching and Learning" in July 2018. In this chapter, Dr. Darici and co-authors explore the importance of social media and digital formats for creating communities for women faculty, research and evaluation, while also reviewing for two strategic career development projects for STEM women faculty that were funded by the National Science Foundation, the Awareness, Commitment and Empowerment project and the FIU ADVANCE Institutional Transformation project.

**DR. IRMA T. ALONSO** – Awarded Faculty Choice Award for the category of Student Engagement in online course, ECS-3021 - Women, Culture, and Economic Development.

**DR. DOROTHY CONTIGUGLIA-AKCAN** – Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians – February 2019

**DR. KIRSTEN WOOD** – Awarded sabbatical for 2019 and Faculty Fellow in the Office to Advance Women, Equity, and Diversity for the academic year of 2018-2019.

**DR. CAROLINE SIMPSON** – Awarded Faculty fellowship by the CASE Dean's office to work on faculty diversion and inclusion for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019



**DR. BARBARA KING** – Published "Does STEM Stand Out? Examining Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Persistence across Postsecondary Fields" in Education Researcher, 48(3), 133-144. Co-written by Riegler-Crumb, C., and Irizarry, Y.

**DR. AMY HUSEBY** – Published "Queer Social Counting and the Generational Transitions of Michael Field." Women's Writing 26.2, special issue in honor of the 25th anniversary of British Women Writers Conference, "Generations" (Spring 2019): 199-213. / Awarded Center for the Advancement of Teaching Fellowship, Florida International University (2018) + FIU College of Arts, Sciences & Education Excellence in Teaching Award (2018) + Faculty Lead, Mellon Humanities Edge Miami Dade College/FIU Curriculum Alignment Grant (2019) + Center for the Advancement of Teaching Gateway Course Innovation Grant (\$7,500) (2019).



**DR. VICKI BURNS** – Received CASE Award for Excellence in Teaching in Fall 2018, Awarded FIU Top Scholar Award for Globally Engaged/Culturally Responsive Training in Spring 2019.

**DR. MICHAELA MOURA-KOÇO LU** – Received CASE Award for Excellence in Teaching in Fall 2018.



**DR. LYNNE BARRETT** – Published "Explore Florida!" Miami 100 Project, Summer 2018, Broadsheet Limited Edition, Extra Virgin Press. Exhibited, Anderson Center at Tower View in Red Wing, Minnesota, Summer 2018, and Extra Virgin Press Gallery, Dec. 2018, Miami, FL, and soon to be publishing "Making Good Time: True Stories of How We Do, and Don't, Get Around in South Florida."

**DR. BANU JUNG** – Recipient for In The Company of Women award in Science and Technology.

## EVENTS



### “Queen Of Hearts”: A Drag Show Experience

On Valentine’s Day, Wonderland came crashing onto FIU’s MMC campus Co-sponsored by the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies (CWGS) and created by the queer studies certificate program, FIU’s WST-3641: LGBT+ and Beyond had their very first drag show experience on campus. “Queen of Hearts” was coordinated by Dr. Justin Grant, associate director of writing and rhetoric, and director of the queer studies program, along with his interns, Marcel Hartley and Joey Gebella (also known by their drag persona, “Daphne Lux”).

Daphne hosted the show in AHC4 101 and Marcel served as the D.J. The line-up included local Miami queens: Hope Hillcum, Juanita Labanjee, Mosaic, Barbitchuates and Opal Am Rah. Each queen dominated the stage with their own acts, lip-syncing to popular songs such as Ariana Grande’s “Seven Rings,” Gloria Estefan’s “Wepa” and Bonnie Tyler’s “I Need a Hero.”

The event concluded with a roundtable discussion with the queens about their motivations for doing drag, their participation in the LGBT+ community and what drag means to them on a personal level.

“The event transformed the classroom into a queer performance space where everyone in attendance became an active participant. It was so rewarding to create such an inclusive environment. I’m looking forward to putting on more Queer Studies events in the future,” said Dr. Grant.

### Caribbean Studies Association Conference

The Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) has reached out around the world and across different academic fields in the pursuit of promoting Caribbean studies in a multidimensional lens since 1974. CSA includes the Caribbean Basin region, which is made up of Central America, the coast of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Northeast Brazil, and the Guianas (Guyana, Suriname and the French Guiana).

For the 43rd Caribbean Studies Student Association Conference, panelists met at the Habana Libre Hotel in Havana, Cuba for four days with panels focusing on topics like the resistance and emancipation from colonial countries and language ideology and social status. Dr. Susanne Zwingel, professor of politics and international relations, Marion Bethel, expert from the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) along with Melissa Boissiere and Tamanisha John, international relations Ph.D. students, held a panel on global gender norms in the Caribbean.

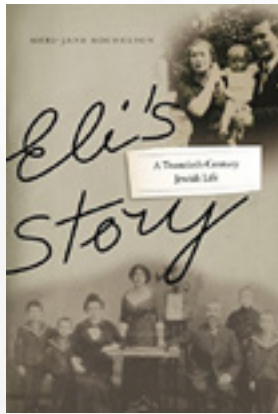


### Not A Statistic: Indigenous Women Facing Global Challenges

FIU’s Global Indigenous Forum, co-sponsored by the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies, The Global Indigenous Forum, United Nations Women at FIU, and Women Studies Student Association hosted this panel on October 11, 2018. This event focused on the numerous challenges faced by indigenous women globally as mainstream media has begun focusing on this demographic as mainly a statistic. Topics not discussed in media include centuries of the rates of missing and murdered indigenous women, and centuries of disposition and oppression that indigenous women survived.

Center instructor, Dr. Michaela Moura-Koço lu, served as the moderator with a well-established panel, featuring: Betty Osceola, Miccosukee tribal member and activist; Dr. Bina Sengar, visiting Fulbright Faculty from India with expertise in indigenous peoples of India; and Dr. María-Luisa Veisaga, a Quechua from Bolivia who works as a Senior Teaching Lab Specialist at FIU with her research focused on the chemical properties of medicinal plants.





## ELI'S STORY: A TWENTIETH-CENTURY JEWISH LIFE

In honor of FIU professor emerita Dr. Meri-Jane Rochelson's book, *Eli's Story: A Twentieth-Century Jewish Life*, the FIU Department of English, the Holocaust Studies and the Center for Women's and Gender Studies held a book launch and reception at Books & Books in Coral Gables on October 7, 2018.

*Eli's Story* is a biography written by Dr. Rochelson about her father, Dr. Eli. G. Rochelson, MD. (1907-1984), as it chronologically follows his experiences

and memories that expand over two world wars, migrations, the Holocaust, and the effort to rebuild his professional credentials and identity, as well as restore his family life. Dr. Rochelson's own sources came directly from her father as he was interviewed by his son, Burt Rochelson, in the mid-1970s.



## "At The End Of The Rainbow": Queer Mixer

At the end of the spring 2019 semester, the queer studies certificate program celebrated not only FIU's WST-3641: LGBT+ and Beyond class, but it also highlighted local FIU queer talent. FIU's Women Studies Student Association (WSSA), Council for Student Organizations (CSO), and Center for Women's and Gender Studies cosponsored the mixer which celebrated the accomplishments of their students of the past academic year!

Dr. Justin Grant, associate director of writing and rhetoric and director of the queer studies program, with his interns, Marcel Hartley and Joey Gebella, hosted the mixer in AHC4101 with community partners and a queer performance showcase. The partners that tabled at the event included Sexual Health Alliance Revolutionizing Positivity (SHARP), a student organization focused on promoting sexual health and creating a healthy space for sexuality exploration, Simple Pleasures, a student organization bringing awareness to the sexual inequalities, and the Florida's Department of Health "Getting 2 Zero" campaign.

For the April 18th mixer, there were drag queen performances from Mosaic, Daphne Lux, Juanita Labanjee, and Jahsyra. Singing talent included Louanne Clerger and Amelia Leon. It ended with a dramatic monologue reading from Marcel Hartley.





## Future Plans for the **LADIES EMPOWERMENT & ACTION PROGRAM**

**50%** A fact from the story here to add something to the page. Something Here

One of the biggest challenges in the American justice system is the high percentage of recidivism of formerly incarcerated people. The incarceration rate in the United States as of 2018, stands with 2.2 million adults being held in prisons or jails. Upon release, more than 50 percent of the ex-incarcerated population would be re-arrested while 35.1 percent would go into probation. However, gender plays a significant role. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, over a quarter of women released from prison within the first six months will return to prison, while the chances of returning skyrocket to more than 68.1 percent during a five-year period.

In Miami, the Ladies Empowerment & Action Program (LEAP) was founded in 2009 in order to help incarcerated women find opportunities and paths in their unique situation in prison. Workshop participants are encouraged and supported by the program to address the circumstances that lead women to prison, including domestic violence and substance abuse, while also building their futures once they finish their sentence.

In conjunction with LEAP, FIU's Initiative for Gender Violence Prevention is developing a workshop, "Women's Holistic Leadership," that will be integrated into LEAP's larger



educational curriculum. This workshop will be offered throughout the year at the Dade Correctional Institution in Homestead and will be focused on entrepreneurial studies to help them after their release.

Dr. Shedrick Boren, an affiliated faculty member with the Center for Women's and Gender Studies, serves as a member of LEAP's board of directors. He is among the most actively supportive and proud of FIU's participation with LEAP as he's worked for, and on the behalf of, vulnerable populations for over 30 years.

The center is planning to expand their partnership with LEAP.



# FIU CHANGEMAKERS

In April 2016, Provost Kenneth G. Furton was proud to announce that FIU, Miami's only public research university and one of the largest universities in the United States, was designated as an AshokaU Changemaker Campus. Under the leadership of Emily Gresham, the AVP of Research and Economic Development and co-founder of StartUP FIU, FIU was recognized as a leading institution committed to social innovation, entrepreneurship and advances in lieu of Ashoka's mission to create "everyone a changemaker world." Ashoka is the world's largest network of social entrepreneurs with nearly 3,300 Ashoka Fellows in 70 countries putting their system changing ideas into practice on a global scale. The Center for Women's and Gender Studies is already ahead in creating Changemaker Courses on campus to empower and provide students with the essential tools to become social innovators and entrepreneurs.

Dr. Vicki Burns, instructor for the Center for Women's and Gender Studies, and Sondra Skelaney, program director for the Initiative for Gender Violence Prevention, joined AshokaU's #MillionsofChangemakers campaign. This movement was a vow of commitment for colleges and universities to focus on changing campus culture, campus operations or education offerings to motivate, aid and honor changing on their campuses. Dr. Burns, in collaboration with several departments on campus, will launch a new course titled "Peer Leadership, Violence and Social Change" in Fall 2019. The goal is to empower enrolled students to become changemakers and leaders in violence prevention. These students will then train 1,500 peers to do the same. Skelaney will create a facilitator guide and training presentation for her course, "Sex Trafficking: Building Solutions," (WST-3114). This would be a chance to reach out and share her course format with other faculty and in academic conferences, making the course format much more available for lecturers.





# Initiative UPDATES



**T**he Center for Women's and Gender Studies proudly hosted its annual event, FIU's 100 Women: Women and Social Justice, during FIU's Diversity Week. The initiative acknowledges women from FIU and various fields in order to champion their stories and achievements and to create an inspiring culture of diversity, collectivism and collegiality. This year, CWGS brought together a panel of women scholars, students, advocates and community leaders to celebrate the roles they have played in social justice activism.

The 2019 panel included: Michelle Alvarez Romera, assistant director of Business Career Management, faculty fellow in the Honors College; Grisel D'Elena, International Relations student and Honors College academic advisor; Victoria Nelson, resident of Resident of Stonewall Pride Alliance (FIU chapter), political/pop culture commentator and LGBTQA ambassador at FIU's Multicultural Programs and Services Office; and Jasmen Rogers-Shaw, community organizer of Miami Workers Center.

Dr. Alvarez Romera focused on marketing, professional development, business law and ethics. Her inspiration and drive on these topics came from a toxic work environment from her first firm, which resulted in a report that was soon dismissed. While she changed career paths, Dr. Alvarez uses experiences like this to help motivate and push her students.

D'Elena discussed her experience with helping locally at FIU and internationally in Southeast Asia. Alongside the director of National Voices of Education, Equality and Enlightenment (NVEEE), Jowharah Sanders, they developed into the Peace Ambassador Leadership Summit



## Women in STEM International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Celebrating its fourth year, the United Nations' event was recognized across 68 countries on Monday, February 11, 2019. The International Day of Women and Girls in Science doesn't only celebrate the efforts and breakthroughs of female scientists in their fields, it also spreads awareness and supports women emerging in male-dominated STEM fields. FIU's Center for Women's and Gender Studies (CWGS) has now started a new tradition to recognize this important day annually.

On the GC lawn, over 60 female world-renowned scientists, FIU STEM faculty and undergrad students had their names and respective fields showcased on signs. Not far along from the signs that students walked by, were telescopes, which students could use to observe the sun, the moon and Venus.

Numerous scientific demonstrations like FIU Honors College EdgeLab's 3D Printer and Society of Physics Students' bicycle wheel gyroscope were displayed in the Graham Center. Dr. Yesim Darici, the Assistant Provost to STEM, director for the Center for Women's and Gender Studies, and professor of Physics, made



free, delicious vanilla ice cream using liquid nitrogen! Students were automatically entered into a raffle when they signed in. The winner received a luncheon with their favorite female STEM professor.

The Provost's Office, Department of Physics, FIU Honors College and multiple student organizations like the Women's Studies Student Association (WSSA), the Advancement of Women in STEM (AWES), Society of Physics Students, Astronomy Club at FIU and Sigma Pi Sigma came together and created this memorable event. It was with their support and contributions that we were able to honor women in science and to encourage more women to study science.

(PALS), a two-week program where high-school students stay on FIU's campus and attend empowerment workshops.

Nelson explored the difficulties for women of color when their abortion access is limited in the health care system. Over 250 bills were introduced in 2019 across 50 states that limited abortion access – such as fetal heartbeat bills – which indicate that as soon as a fetus' pulse is registered, the abortion will be considered illegal. In response, Nelson created the Flower Garden back in 2015, a platform created to inform and create conversation for black women about the latest issues and concerns, including reproductive rights.

Rogers-Shaw helped create the Femme Agenda, an intersectional lens that looks at poverty through the eyes of indigenous women and black women. Rogers-Shaw's efforts are state-wide and include initiatives like Women's Circle, a space where black gender-nonconforming and women learn and use political colloquium to label difficulties that they've faced their entire lives and Black Girls at the Capitol, a restorative circle where black women and girls meet with Florida legislatures to discuss and learn how laws are made and impacts them.

## Gender Violence Prevention Initiative

The Initiative for Gender Violence Prevention's mission is to build the bridge between preventative education and the community with focus on eliminating discrimination and violence, advocating rights and bringing awareness into current topics including the LGBTQ+ rights, human trafficking and intimate partner violence. It is through this program that CWGS can provide education and outreach for women and gender nonconforming individuals who may be affected by these situations or who are wanting to make changes in said subjects.

Returning for its third year, FIU Rising! Ending Global Violence Against Women took place on February 14, 2019. Featured panelists and speakers included Sandy Skelaney, Regina Bernadin from International Rescue Committee, Katina Hernandez from the Department of Homeland Security and Mary Barzee Flores, former federal judge nominee (by former president Obama) and current Congressional candidate. Marya Meyer, organizer for One Billion Rising Miami, acted as the moderator for the event. Meyer, as well, gave a presentation on the international movement to end violence against women in Skelaney's WST-3114 course.

# CONGRATS

## LIST OF BACHELORS AND SECOND MAJOR GRADUATES FROM 2018-2019

**Ghislaine Gil** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Jahmel Proff** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies,  
Minor in Criminal Justice

**Mireya Aviles** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies,  
Minor in Psychology

**Laura Munguia-Aguirre** *Fall 2018*

B.A. In Women's and Gender Studies

**Allicia Rolle** *Fall 2018*

B.A. In Sociology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Ashley Wagner** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies,  
Minor in Psychology,  
and Certificate in Queer Studies

**Diara Dumas-Wiggins** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies,  
Minor in Travel and Tourism Management

**Krystle Cintas** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Brittany Hill** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies,  
Certificate in Queer Studies

**Camila Neira** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Sociology, Second Major in  
Women's and Gender Studies,  
Certificate in Queer Studies

# GRADS!

**Keishla Santiago Ortiz** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies, Second Major in Interdisciplinary Studies, and Certificate in Queer Studies

**Jordan Wright** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies

**Victoria Love** *Summer 2018*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Rayna Milfort** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies

**Natalia Bruni** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Isabella Garcia-Pinon** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in English, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies, Minor in French Language Culture, and Certificate in European and Eurasian Studies

**Maria de Lourdes Barrios** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, B.S. in Biological Sciences, and Certificate in Queer Studies

**Svetlana Gorin** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Second Major in Interdisciplinary Studies, and Certificate in Queer Studies

**Kathleen Groth** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Jessica Armella** *Spring 2019*

B.S. in Communications, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Aleyah Smith** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies, and Minor in Criminal Justice

**Carolyn Davis** *Summer 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Minor in Religious Studies

**Nicole Desir** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Psychology, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Michelle Gonzales** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Philosophy, Second Major in Women's and Gender Studies

**Lynsey Pharazis** *Summer 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Minor in Psychology, and Certificate in Queer Studies

**Nadia Al Houli** *Summer 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Minor in Psychology

**Alyssa Pepio** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies

**Charlsey Jed** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies

**Rhiannon Futch** *Summer 2018*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Minor in Psychology

## CERTIFICATES

**Alecia Rodriguez** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Psychology, Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies, and Certificate in Conflict Resolution

**Yarelis Carbera** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Communication Arts, Minor in Psychology, and Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies

**Daniela Nicole Deas** *Summer 2017*

B.A. in Women's and Gender Studies, Second Major in English, Certificate in Global Black Studies

**Bridarra Lovett** *Fall 2018*

B.A. in Psychology, Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies

**Michelle G. Thompson** *Spring 2019*

Ph.D. in Philosophy, Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies

**Paula Avegia** *Spring 2019*

B.A. in Philosophy, Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies, and Certificate in Law, Ethics, and Society



ONLINE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN

# Women's and Gender Studies



FULLY ONLINE  
DEGREE

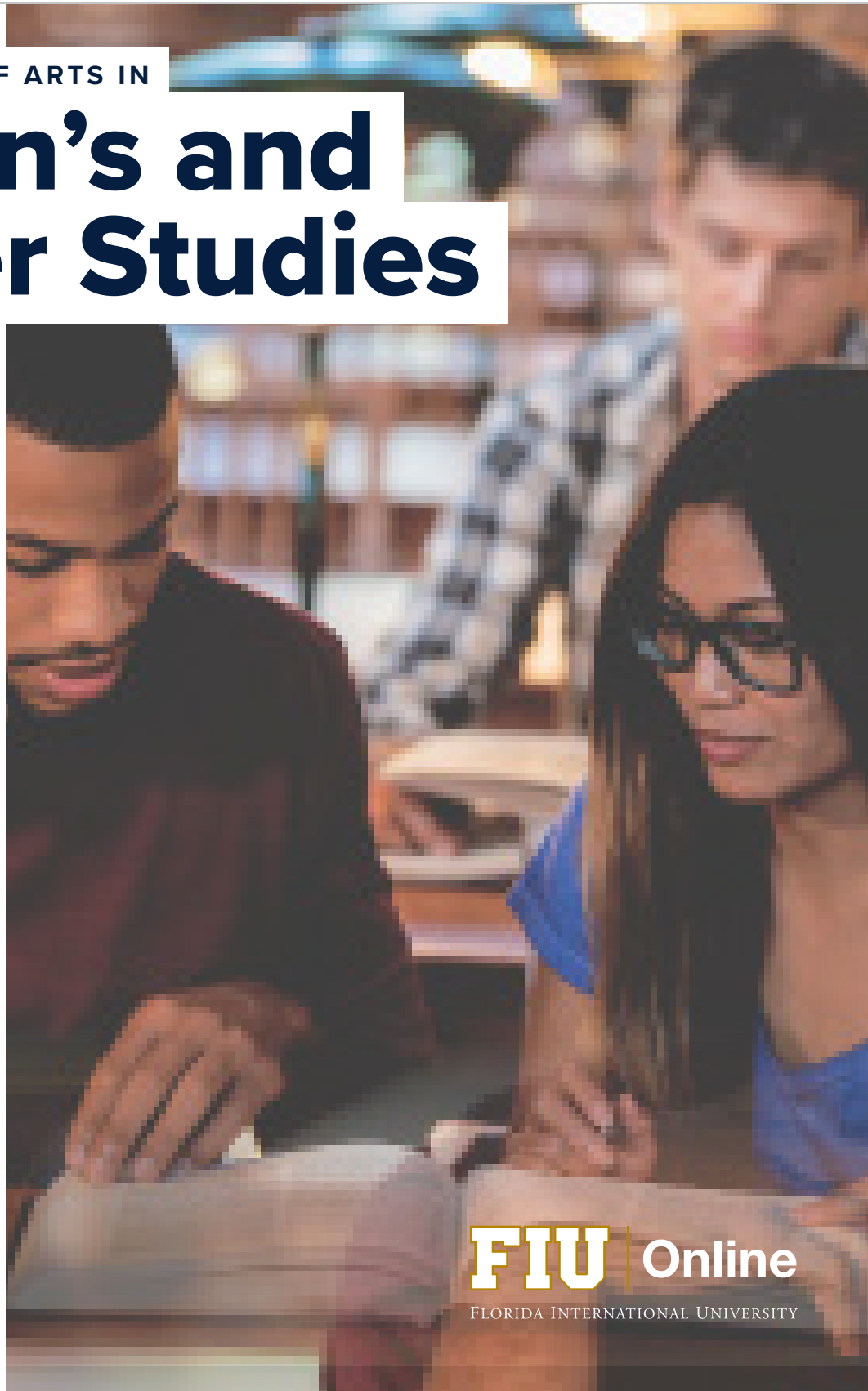


120 CREDITS

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The fully online Bachelor of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) is an interdisciplinary study of women and gender in cross-cultural and historical perspectives. You'll explore how women's lives have been shaped by history, culture, nationality, class and other elements of diversity. The courses in the program are coordinated through FIU's Center for Women's and Gender Studies, founded in 1982, and one of the oldest such scholarly centers in the country. Students have the opportunity to conduct research with faculty on issues related to women and gender.

The Women's and Gender Studies major explores sex-based bias throughout society—in the workplace, in school, and at home. You'll hone your analytical, critical thinking and writing skills and become engaged with issues of social change, activism and citizenship. The program is interdisciplinary, and students may select courses from a variety of disciplines, giving you the flexibility to create a program that best reflects your interest and goals.



**FIU** | Online

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

# Women's and Gender Studies BY THE NUMBERS



29

Graduates

20

Undergraduate  
internships

15

Events hosted, sponsored  
or co-sponsored



84

Enrolled majors



96

Enrolled  
certificate earners



180

Active students

168

Faculty

9,669

Students Enrolled in Women's  
Studies Courses

500

Students advised



CWGS is one of the top 10  
departments and centers for  
global learning at FIU.

[cwgs.fiu.edu](http://cwgs.fiu.edu)



@FIUCWGS



<http://bit.ly/FIU-CWGS>

**Center for Women's and Gender Studies**  
Modesto A. Maidique Campus  
11200 S.W. 8th Street, DM 212  
Miami, Florida 33199

305-348-2408 | [wstudies@fiu.edu](mailto:wstudies@fiu.edu)  
[cwgs.fiu.edu](http://cwgs.fiu.edu)

