

Annual Report | 2015-16



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.

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Director's Message

am very happy to report on another successful year for the Center for Women's and Gender Studies (CWGS). The center continues to excel in research, teaching and engagement within FIU and the South Florida community. Women's and Gender Studies also prides itself in showing strong leadership in the advancement of women, diversity, equity and LGBTQ+ visibility.

One of this past year's highlights was the successful launch of the Office to Advance Women, Equity & Diversity. Associate Provost Dr. Suzanna Rose, one of our affiliated faculty, is heading the office. She will be implementing programs in order to foster a university community that supports equity, diversity and the advancement of women and minorities.

Currently, our center is working towards two major initiatives. The first is the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE FIU Institutional

Transformation Grant to transform FIU into a more women and minority friendly institution. The second is a grant from the Ware Foundation to implement programs and courses promoting awareness of women and gender violence internationally and encourage advocacy.

In the 2015-16 academic year, a total of 10,570 students were enrolled in Women's and Gender Studies courses. Our number of full-time equivalent students continues to increase. We are also showing great success in our certificate programs, particularly with the expanding participation in our Queer Studies Certificate.

We also widened our academic reach by increasing the number of CWGS affiliated faculty from 126 to 146. Our students have shown a commitment to both their studies and community engagement. Many have served as interns in programs dedicated to gender rights and organized events. Non-curricular activities featured more than 30 widely attended events including research conferences, faculty seminars and cultural activities. Among our signature events were speakers Toni Porter, Sia Figiel and our main co-sponsored event Violence against Women in Shakespeare's *Othello*, presented by Sara Munson Deats.

Lastly, for their commitment, advocacy and efforts, I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to all faculty, staff and community activists whose contributions and hard work have made this an excellent year for women's and gender rights, our students and the FIU community.

Warm regards,

Yesim Darici

Director, Center for Women's and Gender Studies

Professor of Physics

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PROMOTING THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN



Perhaps the most exciting development in the 2015-16 academic year is the now-open Office to Advance Women, Equity & Diversity (AWED) headed by Associate Provost and College of Arts, Sciences & Education Associate Dean Dr. Suzanna Rose. A professor of Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies at FIU, Dr. Rose's research interests in women and career development (among other intersectional interests) perfectly align with AWED's mission to build and offer effective programs that achieve and sustain faculty equity and diversity as an essential element of FIU's academic excellence.

Amid the pageant controversy, it became clear that women's concerns, positions, and visibility needed more advocacy. The AWED office is dedicated to focusing on an institutional climate of gender equity and inclusion. The office aims to bring the discussion about diversity and gender balance to the forefront of university concerns, and to be able to foster forums that nurture those attitudes. Some of those forums include faculty workshops and mentoring programs that can enhance the professional roles of women and minorities, as well as help dismantle harmful attitudes that can hold everyone back from building inclusive communities.

The AWED team is always brainstorming new ways to integrate interdisciplinary focus to the office and the FIU community at large. For more information on any new AWED initiatives, please visit awed.fiu.edu.

Advocating for Women's Issues at FIU

On January 25, 2015, FIU hosted the Miss Universe pageant which was controversial among some faculty and staff. Since the event, Dr. Yesim Darici, the director of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies, has taken the initiative to fairly represent women's issues, concerns and voices at FIU. She is part of the Council for the Advancement of Women and Minority Faculty established by the Office of the Provost. This is just the beginning of a more inclusive environment at FIU.



SPOTLIGHT

Yesim Darici

Dr. Yesim Darici was the recipient of the President's Acesss and Equity award. She was honored at an event on March 7, 2016. Below is a transcript of the speech given that night to introduce Dr. Darici and the award.

"And now we will introduce to you the president's access and equity award. This award carries a cash value of \$1,000.00. The honoree of this award is being recognized for demonstrating efforts exceeding their job responsibilities in order to support the goals and objectives of diversity and inclusion. This year's recipient of the president's access and equity award was nominated by 10 of their colleagues, including their supervisor. This individual has made contributions, not only to our FIU, but also nationally, to build an inclusive climate in academic science for women and underrepresented minorities.

Among several of her recent accomplishments at our university, this recipient galvanized a group of women faculty to propose a plan designed to improve the institutional climate for women and minority faculty. The effort, ladies and gentlemen, has led to an unprecedented accomplishment, with the establishment of the new Office to Advance Women, Equity, and Diversity (AWED) here on our campus. This recipient is known to be an innovator and a strong influencer for instilling principles of equity and diversity across the university. Put your hands together, ladies and gentlemen, for Dr. Yesim Darici!"



Eric Carpenter

In continuance with last year's initiative aimed at addressing violence against women, one of our affiliated faculty and Law Professor, Dr. Eric Carpenter, has published two articles which tackle issues of the intersection of power, patriarchy, and perception in cases of sexual assault.

The first article, "The Hierarchy or Patriarchy" was published in the *Hastings Law Journal*. Dr. Carpenter found a flaw in previous studies that do not necessarily measure patriarchy as a pressure which can influence attitudes towards dorm rape. This new perspective sheds light on how guilt is perceived in these scenarios.

The second article, "An Empirical Look at Commander Bias in Sexual Assault Cases," was published in the *Berkeley Journal of Criminal Law*. The article examines the notion that commanders do not handle reports of sexual assault properly, exacerbating the military's problem with this type of crime. Dr. Carpenter studied how commanders evaluated sexual assault cases from 2008-2011. His findings go against conventional wisdom on the topic and, thus, will help to better address sexual assault in the military. Both articles seek to find the truth about sexual assault and how to decipher insidious attitudes that help perpetuate these crimes.

Asia Eaton

Dr. Asia Eaton is an Assistant Professor in Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies.

In her third year as CWGS and psychology faculty, Dr. Eaton has authored three refereed publications, presented at 21 conferences, is a faculty advisor for the Women's Studies Student Association (WSSA),

and is a reviewer for five prestigious academic journals. Dr. Eaton's work is truly intersectional, examining the complicated power dynamics between women and the workplace, relationships, and society.

Dr. Asia Eaton is a professor, mentor, scholar, and researcher with cutting-edge and relatable work that is owed continued support and recognition. It is because of her dedication that she has been nominated by her peers and her students for an Excellence in Advising and Mentorship Award at FIU (2016). The winner of the award is announced in the latter part of the 2016 academic year.

SPOTLIGHT



Caressa Rolle

Degree: B.A. in Psychology

Certificate: Women's and Gender Studies

Caressa Rolle is an invaluable student, researcher, and undergraduate ambassador for the Center for Women's and Gender Studies. Rolle is pursuing a bachelor's in Psychology and a certificate in Women's and Gender Studies. She is also a research assistant in Dr. Asia Eaton's PWR lab.

Through her work and resources at the PWR lab, she was able to present her Honor's Thesis Research Project, "Pregnancy Disclosure at Work: A Comparison of Men's and Women's Experiences" at three different conferences. One of those conferences was the center's own Women Sexuality and Gender Student Association's Annual Conference. Rolle was also the only undergraduate grant recipient to receive a \$500 stipend to the SMA Pre-Doctoral Consortium.

In addition to her role as a student and researcher, Rolle has added mother to her list of accomplishments. She delivered a beautiful baby girl this summer. In the future, Rolle plans on earning her Master of Public Administration to start a nonprofit that addresses barriers women face within themselves, in the home and at work.

SPOTLIGHT

TruLe'sia Newberry

Majors: Political Science and International Relations **Certificate:** Women's and Gender Studies

In August of 2015, TruLe'sia Newberry started her yearlong fellowship with the grassroots activist organization aimed at eliminating poverty, Roots. Newberry has a personal interest in ensuring vulnerable youth populations have access to the education that can dismantle cycles of poverty. She grew up in the South Side of Chicago and lived with the limitations of lower socioeconomic classes. Inspired by her childhood to help others, Newberry learned how to lobby her representatives to end poverty at Roots. Her fellowship includes meetings with congressional representatives in order to maximize her impact and help the most people possible.



Caroline Parker '08



Caroline Parker, a former graduate of the Women's Studies Certificate program, is making huge strides in the South Florida museum community. Just recently, Parker was named the Executive Director of the Coral Gables Museum. Many in the South Florida community know the Coral Gables museum as a pillar of local history and a staple of community.

Before being named Executive Director, Parker was Director of Programs at the museum. In September of 2015, she organized an exhibit called "American Women Rebuilding France, 1917-1924". The Coral Gables Museum partnered with American Friends of Blerancourt and the French Consulate of Miami, as well as local communities like FIU, to promote this event and related lecture series. Ms. Parker was instrumental in situating this discussion within the larger context of Women's History.

Of her incredible new position and her relationship with FIU, she says, "I am proud to serve at the head of one of Coral Gables' finest cultural institutions, and as such, I am striving to uphold the values this program has instilled in me from administration to public programs and everything in between." Make sure to stop by the Coral Gables Museum to see Parker's work and to enjoy some local history.

Julio Capo '11



alumnus, Julio
Capo, wrote an
article featured in
the Washington
Post in response
to the tragic
Pulse nightclub
shooting. His
piece "Gay bars
were supposed
to be safe
spaces. But they
often weren't,"
examines the
complicated

FIU and CWGS

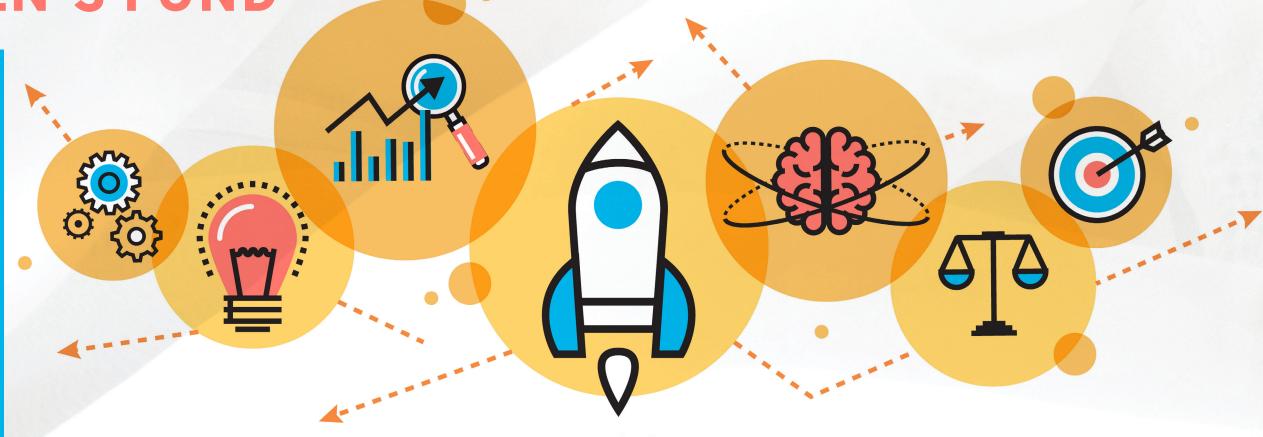
history of displacement and the threat of violence towards the gay community and how that affected a gay bar's ability to be a safe haven for its patrons. Capo notes that gentrification has shut down many notable establishments in the gay night-life scene, and remarks that this inevitability of gentrification needs to be discussed in order to truly understand what is happening to LGBTQ+ community spaces.

In addition to this piece, Capo has been featured in *Time, HIVplusmag,* and *Cuba Counterpoints*. Julio Capo is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he teaches LGBTQ+, Latino, and Caribbean history.

INTERNSHIPS: THE WOMEN'S FUND

he Center for Women's and Gender ■ Studies (CWGS) recognizes that the fight for equality and justice extends further than the classroom. In order to create a more comprehensive curriculum. the center offers a variety of internships to students who are pursuing our degree programs or certificates. The center partners with multiple community organizations in order to present a wide breadth of options for our students. Some community opportunities include the Women's Fund of Miami-Dade County, the Women's Emergency Network, and Equality Florida, among others. For students who are looking for more on-site internships, CWGS offers internships in our offices and also internships in the Women's Center on both campuses.

Interns engage with their respective organizations in ways that are more than clerical. Many help organize community events, even implementing their own projects. At the internship for CWGS, interns helped organize the annual conference on behalf of the Women, Sexuality, and Gender Student Association. In addition, their work was invaluable in creating a social media presence for the center, as well as developing and organizing signature events for our student organizations which continue long after the students leave.



Therese Homer



Therese Homer was an intern with the Women's Fund of Miami-Dade, under the supervision of Mary Andrews. Part of her job for the Women's Fund was to organize their annual Malone Awards event, which recognizes police efforts in combatting human trafficking. She also helped collect data for victim advocates within the police departments so the Women's Fund could collaborate with them in

future projects. At the City of Miami police department, Therese organized community educational talks on trafficking, victim advocacy, domestic violence and prevention, as well as informational resources for attendees.

Therese's commitment to advocacy and assisting women is definitely seen not only in her internship tasks and completion of responsibilities, but in her everyday life. Homer is currently extending her advocacy efforts in her position as a Violent Crimes Intervention Administrator with the City of Miami police department.

Vanessa Yanek



Vanessa Yanek is a very committed and involved student at CWGS. Scheduled to graduate with her Bachelor's in Arts in Psychology and Women's and Gender Studies in 2016, Vanessa is a member of Dr. Asia Eaton's PWR lab and also used to intern with Mary Andrews at the Women's Fund.

Vanessa is bright, energetic, knowledgeable, and eager to learn. In her time at the Women's Fund, she brainstormed with the organization on how to better mentor and reach young women and girls in high school and beyond. Yanek is also a talented artist. While she was interning, she was able to make a permanent impression in the form of a mural in the office. Andrews said she is grateful for Vanessa's work at the Fund and only wished she could have been there longer.

DEGREES OFFERED:

Bachelor of Arts in Women's and Gender Studies*

Dual Degree in Multiple Academic Units (come by DM 212 if you have questions about dual degree opportunities)

Women's and Gender Studies Undergraduate Certificate*

Graduate Women's and Gender Studies Certificate

Queer Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Graduate Studies Certificate

*Indicates onsite and online completion options

GEEKIWOOD SHOWCASES NON-TRADITIONAL STEM CAREERS AT FIU



FIU and Geeki Girls Gatherings collaborated for a second year to present the GeekiWood conference Dec. 5, 2015.

The conference is a unique event where producers, educators, technicians and scientists come together to blend the magic of film and television with real science to empower middle school girls, giving them a greater appreciation for science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

"We were thrilled to provide girls from more than 50 different schools with the opportunity to learn more about science and engineering at the second annual GeekiWood conference," said Suzanna M. Rose the newly-appointed associate provost for the Office to Advance Women, Equity and Diversity at FIU. "Providing young girls with hands-on experience in interactive workshops about DNA, forensic science, coding and robotics, gives them the opportunity to consider careers in STEM. We want FIU to be a destination for girls to study science."

A student expo featured FIU student organizations and researchers showcasing their STEM-related work.

Demonstrations consisted of how to turn a liquid into a solid with the tap of a finger, building an electromagnetic field, building robots and more.

More than 350 attended the conference this year and learned about the science behind TV shows including "CSI." The students participated in trace evidence workshops and a fingerprint identification presentation. Participants also learned to make high-quality movies using Windows Movie Maker and to build their own robots.

For 16 young girls from Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the opportunity to participate in GeekiWood 2015 was made possible by donation from a member of the Miami Alumnae

Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. — a sorority of predominantly black, college-educated women.

"Through our Delta Academy, we provide unique experiences for girls from North Dade and South Dade in grades 6 through 9," said Lekeshia Bush, Delta Academy co-chair for the Miami Alumnae Chapter. "We look for opportunities to expose them to non-traditional careers they otherwise would not know about."

Bush is a pharmacist. She was fortunate to have known someone in this profession who inspired her to go into a field though she was among the minority — only 2.3 percent of pharmacists are African American. Bush is determined to give back.

"I remember that spark when I knew I wanted to be a pharmacist," Bush said. "I'm trying to instill that same spark back. Middle school is that key age where you are first able to act, to go from being interested to actually pursuing that interest. That's why our work is so important."

Delta Academy provides an opportunity for local chapters of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. to enrich and enhance the education girls and teens receive in public schools across the nation with a focus in math, science and technology. The Miami chapter meets at Booker T. Washington Senior High School to outline the unique experiences they can provide for the girls in the community. GeekiWood was one of many they have planned.

Geeki Girls, Inc. is a non-profit organization. The 2015
GeekiWood Conference was organized with the support of the
Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the
Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and
Board of County Commissioners in collaboration with FIU.

EVENTS

From Pedestal to Ditch: Violence against Women in Shakespeare's Othello

February 9, 2016 | MARC Pavilion | Modesto A. Maidigue Campus



Distinguished university Professor Emerita, Sara Munson Deats, delivered a presentation about the effects of harmful attitudes toward women under patriarchy titled "From Pedestal to Ditch: Violence against Women in Shakespeare's Othello." CWGS director, Yesim Darici, introduced Professor Deats and her expertise in 16th and 17th Century British literature and its particular intersections with women's issues. Professor Deats used her extensive scholarship on Shakespeare to discuss how these attitudes manifest in Othello to an audience of both college and high school students who attended the event. The presentation was part of the national traveling exhibition First Folio! The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare by the Folger Shakespeare Library. The Center for Women's and Gender studies worked

with the English department to host this event which was sponsored by several local venues including The Betsy-South Beach, the Offices of the President and Provost, and the British American Business Council of Miami, among others. The folio event at FIU was the exhibit's only appearance in Florida.

Women's Lives in the Pacific

October 20, 2015 | Modesto A. Maidique Campus



Samoan author, Sia Figiel came to FIU to give a talk on *Women's Lives in the Pacific* and to read from her book *Where We Once Belonged* in Dr. Moura-Kocoglu's class on Global Women's Writing (WST 3120). Figiel is the first woman novelist from Samoa, and has an artistic breadth that spans both performance poetry and fine art. Figiel's first book, *Where We Once Belonged*, won the Commonwealth Writers Best First Book Prize for the Southeast Asia/South Pacific region.

Breakfast with Tony Porter: Engaging with Men in the Elimination of Violence Against Women

November 20, 2015 SIPA 100 Modesto A. Maidique Campus



Tony Porter
is an author,
educator, and
activist who
cares about
advancing
social justice
issues. One of
his main foci
is getting men
involved in

activism, especially the parts of activism that are often dubbed as "women's issues." This type of inclusion is what Porter spoke about when he addressed an auditorium full of FIU students and community members. The lecture series aims to engage men in the battle against violence against women, making the solution a men's issue, too.

WSGSA Conference

November 3, 2015 MARC Pavillion Modesto A. Maidique Campus



This past year, the Women's Studies Graduate Student Association (WSGSA) hosted its 16th annual conference. The conference includes panels, discussions and artwork that pose critical questions from feminist,

queer, postcolonial and other related perspectives. This year's conference highlighted various topics including intersectionality in psychology and coming out in the workplace.

OTHER EVENTS

For a complete list of past events, go to womensandgenderstudies.fiu.edu

ELAINE GORDON SCHOLARSHIP IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

The Elaine Gordon Scholarship program was established in 2000 to honor the life and work of Elaine Gordon, a former state legislator who championed equal rights for women for 22 years. Elaine Gordon's family has generously donated to the Center for Women's and Gender Studies in her honor. Every year, Ms. Gordon's memory is honored via a scholarship that is awarded to students who demonstrate exceptional potential in women's studies, service-based fields, and academics.



Sergio Andrade - Award Recipient Degree: B.A. in Psychology B.A. in Women's Studies

Sergio Andrade is a junior completing a double bachelor's in Psychology and Women's & Gender Studies. He is currently a Research Assistant for Dr. Erica Musser's ABC-ERICA Lab housed in the Center for Children and Families. He is also completing an internship at the Center for Women's and Gender Studies and is expected to continue his internship with Dr. Musser in the fall. Upon graduating with his two bachelor's degrees, Sergio plans to attend graduate school to further extend his studies in aiding victims of domestic violence. In addition, he is currently president of the Women's Studies Student Association (WSSA).

Sergio's interest in equality finds its home in a small city in Peru, where he was born. Sergio was surrounded by strong women his whole life who faced hardships and still emerged "with their chins up." His status as a first generation student also has informed his sense of obligation for equal rights, protection, and opportunities for women.

Sergio aims to help alleviate and investigate issues related to domestic violence through his studies. In the future, he wants to work closely with those who find themselves in dire situations due to issues like intimate partner violence so that everyone can emerge from adversity with their "chins up."

Wendy Ruiz - Award Recipient Degree: B.A. in Political Science Certificate: Women's and Gender Studies

A Mexican-American daughter of farmworkers, and first generation college student, Wendy is completing a certificate in Women's and Gender Studies and a bachelor's in Political Science. She is planning to pursue a Master's degree in Educational Policy Studies with a focus on an effective education reform that narrows the gap between underachievement and educational attainment for underprivileged minority students.

While keeping up with her academic demands, Wendy has been involved as a member, mentor, and tutor with Student Support Services (SSS) at FIU. In addition, she has organized community service projects with Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), as well as leadership programs which provide educational opportunities for other students. She has also been active as a youth leader in We Count, a nonprofit organization that addresses social justice and immigration issues, and as a member of their board of directors. In addition, Wendy has completed internships with several organizations such as the Highlander's Seeds of Fire Program and the Harvard Latino Leadership Initiative Program.

Wendy hopes to not only help provide an education to future students, but to inspire them to view their own possibilities for leadership and professional accomplishments as limitless.

FACULTY FEATURES



Meri-Jane Rochelson Retirement

Dr. Meri-Jane Rochelson has been a professor at FIU for 32 years, and is also a valued affiliate faculty of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies. This summer, she is retiring her mantle of beloved professor and co-worker from FIU's department of English.

Dr. Rochelson was primarily situated at FIU's BBC location. She taught a variety of English courses, with a specialization in Victorian, Anglo-Jewish, and Women's literature. During Dr. Rochelson's illustrious tenure at FIU, she published many works discussing her aforementioned interest and their various intersections of race, gender and sexuality. Dr. Rochelson is still slated to publish books, even after her retirement, proving her lifelong dedication to scholarship and the pursuit of knowledge.

The Office of the Provost hosted a retirement party for Dr. Rochelson on August 25, 2016 at MMC. Though she will be sorely missed, we look forward to watching Dr. Rochelson transition into her retirement and continuously flourish there, as she always has throughout her time with us at the CWGS. We thank her for her contributions to our department and many others. Enjoy your retirement, Dr. Rochelson!



Joyce Peterson Retirement

Dr. Joyce Peterson, Professor Emeritus of History and CWGS affiliated faculty, has retired after serving the FIU community for over 30 years. Dr. Peterson's involvement and accolades are numerous. During her prolific tenure, she has served on multiple committees dedicated to women's involvement and

representation in the FIU community. Dr. Peterson has also published many feminist focused articles such as "Choosing Motherhood: Matilda Robbins' Story," "What to do About Motherhood," and "Academic Women and their Unions," among other scholarly works.

In addition to contributing to feminist scholarship, Dr. Peterson also leaves behind a legacy of hundreds of students and faculty who have been influenced by her work. As a testament to her legacy, Dr. Peterson has won the Access and Equity Award, the President's Administrative Excellence Award, and the Scholarship Awarding Global Excellence (SAGE) Service Award. Dr. Peterson loved imparting knowledge and said that she "very much enjoyed teaching AMH3050 History of Women in the United States."

We hope Dr. Peterson enjoys her well-deserved retirement and are thankful for her foundational work in the Center for Women's and Gender Studies and its promotion at the BBC campus.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Michael Alias Giada Amarini Grisel D'Elena Maria Barbaran Torrie Boone Laurent Martinez Jeanette Mendoza Amy Perez Stephanie Ries Caressa Rolle Samantha Syms Jasmine Zino

CERTIFICATE

INTERNSHIPS

Giada Amarini Audrey Aradanas Torrie Boone Patria Capitan Esther Cespedes Camilla Correa Laura Gonzalez Chelsea Leather Kianna Marichal Amanda Raude Gloria Selva Mariana Zuluaga

Jessica Alfonso

Jonathan Cedeno Rachel Coalburn Angelica Diaz Laura Hernandez Faith-Althea Hope Jonald Joseph Kianna Marichal Kimberly Ortiz Yanet Ruvalcaba Gloria Selva Vanessa Yanek

Mariana Zuluaga

SPOTLIGHT

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GAYLE BAINBRIDGE WINS WOMEN OF IMPACT AWARD



From left to right: Gayle Bainbridge, Judge Nushin Sayfie, Daisy J. Baez, Irene Vulgan Kogan, Dr. Anna Benjamin Price, Carolyn Nelson-Goedert, Joyce M. Postell

Esteemed CWGS contributor and advocate for women, Gayle Bainbridge, won the prestigious Women of Impact Award in March 2016. The Women's History Coalition of Miami Dade County presents the award every year during women's history month to honor "special women for the unusual contributions for the betterment of women."

Ms. Bainbridge is a woman who tirelessly commits herself to the community and women's issues. She is a lifetime supporter of the Center for Women's and Gender Studies and is also an active participant in the FIU Alumni Association. The award recognizes the strides Ms. Bainbridge has made towards community and women's causes, and honors them accordingly. The CWGS is proud to have the support of someone like Ms. Bainbridge: a woman who manages to make a difference through every aspect of her life.

BY THE NUMBERS



Graduates

23

Undergraduate internships

31

Events hosted, sponsored or co-sponsored



77

Enrolled majors



80

Enrolled certificate earners



169

Active Students

146

Faculty

10,570

Students Enrolled in Women's Studies Courses



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