

VOICES

The Women's Center Newsletter

University of Connecticut

December 2002

The Next Thirty Years of the Women's Center

Part 4 of a 4 part series

By Jennifer Babulsky

The Women's Center has overcome countless hardships in its thirty years on campus. With a past filled with both positive and negative experiences, some wonder what the future will hold.

Many people involved with the Women's Center said they hope the Center would continue to do much of what they do currently.

"I hope the Center continues to create new programs and help raise awareness on different issues," Tina Andrade, a 3-year employee of the

Center said.

Students said they hoped to see existing programs such as Take Back the Night, Love Your Body Day and other programs continue well into the future.

The Women's Center's future also entails a move with the other cultural centers to the new Student Union, which is tentatively slated to be completed in 2005.

The move may provide a greater opportunity for interaction among all the cultural centers.

Andrade said she hoped the move would also provide a greater connection between the Women's Center and men

on campus.

"Hopefully more men will come into the Center since it will be centrally located," she said.

The new move also will provide a safe environment for students and faculty, Andrade said.

The safe atmosphere and closeness of the cultural centers will provide an opportunity to discuss issues and get things done, she said. "The increase in cultural center interactions will allow people to work for a common cause," she said.

The question remains as to what the common cause is.

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Leigh Johnson-Abt Joins the Ranks of the Women's Center Advisory Board

By Jennifer Babulsky

Being involved in women's issues is nothing new for Leigh Johnson-Abt, who recently became a member of the Women's Center Advisory Board and who was one of the winners of the 2002 100 Years of Women Scholarship.

Johnson-Abt's mother has been involved with the Center on and off for years, she said. It was her mother who first told her about the Center and about the scholarship.

She said she had to write an essay and get recommendations in order to be considered for the scholarship. Once she found out she was one of the winners, she was filled with joy and excitement.

"I was very excited and proud," she said. "It was one of the biggest honors of my life."

Johnson-Abt said that her part on the Advisory Board entails helping to plan events involving all the cultural centers, discuss various issues and to think about different programs.

She said it is extremely important for the different cultural centers to stay involved with each other and participate in co-sponsored events.

"It is good to unite with the cultural centers," she said.

The short time Johnson-Abt has served on the committee has been beneficial, she said.

"I enjoy talking to all of the women and it is a good way to show how I feel about feminism," she said.

Johnson-Abt, who is a first year student at UConn, said she has always been interested

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SNEAK PEEK

A Quick Guide to What's Inside

The Future of the Women's Center

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Check out What Events We Have Planned!

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Read about a new member of the Women's Center Advisory Board
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Reminders and group information

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Calendar of Events

February

24 Eating Disorders Week

Stop by the Women's Center this week to get information on anorexia, bulimia, body image and healthy eating habits. There will be free buttons, stickers, pens and more available.

Monday to Friday, 8 a.m.—5 p.m. Women's Center Lounge

25 Massage: Part of the Life Balance Series

Atlantis Therapeutics will provide free massages on a first come first serve basis. Join us for relaxation and refreshments! Co-sponsored with Health Education, Student Health Services.

Tuesday, 6 p.m. Women's Center Lounge

26 4th Annual Body Pride Fair: Listen to Your Body

Celebrate your body! Explore healthy eating and wellness, body image and size acceptance. Free food, massages, music, raffle prizes and more. Co-sponsored with Counseling Services and Student Health Services.

Wednesday

March

3 Women's History Month Opening: Female Rebels and Mavericks with Max Daschu

Join Max Daschu, scholar of global women's history, for a slide talk about audacious women who break the rules: adventurers,

UConn NOW Events

By Michelle Noehren

The UConn chapter of the National Organization for Women has a lot of great activism in the works for the current semester! Partly due to the anti-choice takeover of the House, Senate and executive branch of our government, this semester we decided to focus around issues of women's reproductive rights. We will be continuing the petition we created last semester that allows our representatives to know that we are against any restrictions placed on women's reproductive freedoms.

We are also planning an event, tentatively scheduled for March 10 at 7 p.m. This event will be aimed at explaining the current legislation that threatens women's reproductive rights as well as providing people with a diverse group of panelists who will talk about their experiences and opinions on why we need to work to ensure that women have the fundamental right to control our own bodies.

UConn NOW is back with a revived passion to educate the community about the harmful effects of sexism on women and men and to help work for a future in which women's rights are considered, by society at large, to be basic human rights.

If you would like to hear more about UConn NOW, email us at huskyNOW@yahoo.com or feel free to come to our meetings on Mondays at 7 p.m. in SU 375.

Vagina Monologues

By Jennifer Babulsky

The Vagina Monologues is a play based on interviews, by playwright Eve Ensler, with a diverse group of women, giving voice to a chorus of lusty, outrageous, brave, highly original and thoroughly human stories.

What better way to celebrate women and life than participating in *The Vagina Monologues*. The play is sure to entertain audience members and show the diverse experiences of women.

Anyone looking for a night of laughs and enlightenment should go to *The Vagina Monologues* on February 12 and 13 at 8 p.m. at von der Mehden Recital Hall. The play is organized by the UConn VDay Campaign and is co-sponsored by the Women's Center and SUBOG.

Anyone interested in getting involved in the production or would like more information, please contact Valencia at 860-486-4738.

Can You Help?

Lindsey Howie, a Women's Center intern, has taken on the task of trying to compile a comprehensive account of everything the Center has done since its early beginnings. Fortunately, another woman has already documented the first 10 years, but the Center has been alive and kicking for an additional two decades! Lindsey would appreciate any information, stories, or contact information for interviews.

Please contact Kathy Fluckiger at 486-4738 or Kathy.Fluckiger@uconn.edu with any contributions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Student Parent Organization is being planned on campus for the fall. The organization will be designed as a forum for undergraduate and graduate students with children to address university and life issues relevant to the experiences of student parents. One does not necessarily need to be a parent to become involved. For more information, contact Laura Steck via e-mail at lauraweststeck@yahoo.com.

A new student organization, War Resisters, has formed on campus. For more information about the UConn chapter, contact Suzy Stockton, campus representative, at suzystockton@virgilio.it. Information about the War Resisters League is available at www.warresisters.org.

There are two opportunities each week to vigil for peace. **Storrs** - Tuesdays 4-5 pm, North Eagleville Rd & 195. **Willimantic** - Thursdays 5-6 p.m., corner of Main & Jackson St. Bring signs, candles and anyone who is willing to stand for peace.

The Rainbow Center is looking for people to become peer educators. If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or an ally who is interested in getting involved at the Rainbow Center as part of its Speakers Bureau, contact Stephanie Marnin at rnbwdir@uconn.edu or 860-486-5821.

War Resisters League (WRL) UConn is planning to have a bus go down to Washington, DC on January 18 for the peace march. They need to make a tentative list of people who are interested in going to make this official. For more information about the march go to www.internationalanswer.org. To sign up for the trip, send an email to Suzy Stockton at wrluconn@yahoo.com.

If you have any announcements that you would like to be included in *Voices*, please contact Jen Babulsky,

(Continued from page 1) *Women's Center Future*

Kim Sanchez, a new employee of the Women's Center, said common causes could range from safety on campus to international issues.

"I would like to see people getting more informed on all issues," Sanchez said.

Sanchez said issues people should be more informed about range from safety on campus to violence against women.

The future of the Women's Center may also influence the future of the UConn campus as well. Sanchez said improvements need to be made to numerous campus services including the Escort Service. She said people involved in the Women's Center and the other cultural centers may be able to help those improvements move along faster.

Sanchez said she had no doubt that the Women's Center would be able to survive the next thirty years.

For thirty years, the Women's Center has provided countless services to the campus and surrounding community. Some people have a hard time wondering what the campus would have been like had the Center not been formed.

Although there is no way to predict the future, there is little doubt in the minds of many people on the campus that the Women's Center will survive, thrive and continue to help people the way it has done since its first day on campus.

CORRECTION

In the October 2002 issue of *VOICES*, Bessy Reyna was incorrectly called the first coordinator of the Women's Center. Ms. Reyna was actually the co-coordinator with Susan Weldon. We regret the error.

New Course for Spring 2003: Social Psychology of Women's Bodies

People's bodies have an enormous impact on their experiences, their actions and reactions and their very sense of self. This course aims to take in and absorb the complexities surrounding women's bodies and develop and appreciation for them. This will be accomplished by reading and discussing emerging theoretical and empirical literature in various areas of social science in relation to women's bodies (including psychological, sociological, anthropological, and political readings).

This course is being offered as a special topic in Social Psychology, Psyc346, section 2. It will meet on Wednesdays from 1 pm - 4 pm and will be taught by Professor Gayle Bessenoff.

(Continued from page 1) *Johnson-Abt*

in educating people on various issues. She said that she did her senior project on eating disorders and body image.

She said she also hopes she can educate people on what feminism really is. She said she is upset that people have stereotypes on what a feminist is.

"When I say the word feminist, many people think that I hate men," she said.

Johnson-Abt said she wants to teach people that feminists do not hate men but instead want equal rights for all people.

Although Johnson-Abt has a desire to educate people on a variety of issues, she has no plans to make teaching her career. She said she currently is a math major and may want to get into the field of diagnostic genetic science.

No matter what career path Johnson-Abt chooses to travel on, she will always try to make the world a better place by educating others and making a difference in her own way.

"Women can make a difference," she said.

Call for Papers for Conference on Women and Gender

The University of Connecticut Women's Studies Program invites proposals for its **15th Annual Conference on Women and Gender**, an interdisciplinary forum for scholarly and creative work on women and gender. This year's conference will be held concurrently with the Humanities Institute Conference on Violence. Proposals are encouraged from faculty, staff and students of the University, as well as other institutions and community organizations. In particular, proposals are invited that address this year's conference theme: Feminist Voices.

Proposals are invited for individual presentations, complete panels and poster presentations. For individual papers, please submit a one-page abstract. For complete panels, please submit a one-page abstract for each presentation plus an overview that explains the relationship among the individual components. For the poster sessions, please submit a one-page abstract or overview. All proposals should include the speaker/speaker's name(s), affiliation and/or status and contact information (address, email and telephone number).

Proposals should be submitted to :

Women's Studies Conference Committee
Women's Studies Program, Unit 2181
354 Mansfield Road
Storrs, CT 06269-2181

Women's Sports Schedule Winter/Spring

Women's Basketball

12/5	Holy Cross	7:30 p.m.
12/30	Florida State	7 p.m.
1/8	Rutgers	7 p.m.
3/14-15	NCAA Championships	TBA

Women's Swimming and Diving

12/5-7	U.S. Open	TBA
12/6-8	Yale Invitational	TBA
2/14-15	Swimming Qualifier	TBA
2/20-22	BIG EAST	TBA

Women's Ice Hockey

12/8	New Hampshire	2 p.m.
12/30	Boston College	2 p.m.
1/30	Quinnipiac	7 p.m.
2/14	Boston College	7 p.m.
3/1-2	Maine	1 p.m.

Ticket Information...

Tickets for women's sports events are available through the Athletic Ticket Office, 2111 Hillside Road, U-78 Storrs, CT 06269. The office phone number is toll free from anywhere in the U.S. 1-877-AT-UConn or 1-877-288-2666 or 860-486-2724.

VOICES

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Semester Hours: M-Th: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
& F: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Website: www.womenscenter.uconn.edu

Some Reminders...

Join Our Listserv!

Want to keep up with the Women's Center on a weekly basis? Then join the U-WOMEN Listserv, a weekly updated e-mail featuring Women's Center events, on and off campus events, announcements and national/international news. For information on how to subscribe, email j06374@yahoo.com.

Check Out Our New Website

Be sure to visit our newly updated website at www.womenscenter.uconn.edu. You can find out about all our events for the Spring 2003 semester, learn about our ongoing groups, get informed on issues such as dating violence and sexual assault and find out what resources we have at our library. You can even find past newsletters on the site.

Ongoing Groups:

Between Women

A rap group for women who love women...or think they might! Come and discuss fun topics, movies and more with women who share your feelings and experiences. For more information call the Women's Center or email betweenwomen@hotmail.com.

Sexual Assault Survivor's Group

A support group for women who have experienced actual or attempted sexual assault at any time.

Co-sponsored with Mental Health Services. Contact Jenn Fox at 486-4705 for information and registration.

Caregivers of the Elderly

A support group for those charged with caring for an aging parent, relative or friend. This group will take place in a safe, confidential arena in which participants can share emotions, experiences, problems, information and resources, as well as offer support to others. This group meets on Thursdays at 5 p.m. at the Women's Center and is open to anyone interested.

Greetings from the Editor

I would like to thank all those people who contributed articles and information for this issue of *VOICES*. I appreciate all of the contributions people made.

Since this is the last newsletter of the semester, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all readers a very happy and safe holiday season.

VOICES

THE WOMEN'S CENTER...WHERE ALL THE PIECES COME TOGETHER

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