

Volume 10: Spring 2023

UNI WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

A newsletter



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HELLO
SUMMER!

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UNIWGS



UNI WOMEN'S &
GENDER STUDIES



WOMEN'S AND GENDER
STUDIES PROGRAM AT
UNI

UNI

University of
Northern Iowa.

University of
Northern Iowa
Women's and Gender Studies

**Danielle McGeough**

Dear friends of UNI,

As the Interim Director of the Women's and Gender Studies Department, I am thrilled to share a springtime update on the growth and renewal of our program.

Over the past year, our program has blossomed, much like the beautiful flowers and trees on UNI's campus would have if it had quit snowing this spring. WGS's affiliate faculty and board members have continued to cultivate groundbreaking research, and have shared their work at conferences and events across the country. Heather Jerónimo, a WGS Advisory Board member and Associate Professor in Languages and Literatures, for example is sharing the work from a recent book publication in a new one-time course offering: *Queer Families around the Globe*. By the end of the course, students will recognize the wide spectrum of lived experiences of queer families from around the world, becoming versed in the unique challenges of these families, as well as the joys and successes shown in their representation.

In addition to the work of our faculty, our students have engaged in outreach and programming that have helped to pollinate the wider community in important conversations about gender and social justice. Three of our graduate students visited Hansen Elementary in Cedar Falls and spoke with 85 students about the importance of being active in the community and what the Women's and Gender Studies program does to make our community a safer and more equitable place.

Our annual Women's History Month celebration, bloomed into a colorful array of diverse speakers whose expertise ranged in topics from "whole life doula" to leadership. In collaboration with the Center for Multicultural Education, we hosted a panel and luncheon, featuring speakers from the Great Plains Action Society and Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islander in Solidarity.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to nurturing our mission of promoting gender equity, diversity, and inclusivity. We will continue to offer innovative courses that challenge our students to think critically about the intersection of gender with race, sexuality, class and other social identities. And we will continue to provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters personal growth and intellectual curiosity, like the springtime showers (or snows) that nourish new growth.

Thank you for your continued support of the Women's and Gender Studies Program at UNI. We look forward to another season of growth and progress!

Sincerely,

Danielle McGeough, Interim Director of WGS

Thank you



Galentine's Day - February 13, 2023

Celebrating Galentine's Day has become a tradition in the Women's & Gender Studies program. On February 13th our GAs had a tabling event to allow students to celebrate their favorite gals and pals. The tabling event included card making and decorating station, snacks for students to enjoy, and free SWAG.



What our GAs like about this type of event is that it is celebratory and fun, which is needed in these difficult times in terms of the fight for gender equality. Make sure to join us in our next year's Galentine's Day celebration!



Lobizona & Lunch: Read, Eat and Discuss - March 1st, 2023

On Wednesday, March 1st, the Women's & Gender Studies Department hosted an event titled "*Lobizona* and Lunch: Read, Eat and Discuss." The department purchased books and pizza for any UNI student and staff that registered. Participants read *Lobizona* by Romina Garber and attended a get together to eat pizza and discuss the book.



Engaging conversation surrounding the plot, character development, and resulted in everyone looking forward to the sequel. If you're looking for a great fantasy read, check it out!

International Women's Day: Tabling Event - March 8, 2023

As we did last year, for this year's celebration of International Women's Day, our GAs had a tabling event at Maucker Union. The event included highlights of international women that have dedicated their lives for gender equality, each in their own field in their countries. Women highlighted were from Pakistan, Ghana, Palestine, Iran, and the United States. Students who stopped by the table had the opportunity to learn about the current fights these feminists are taking part in.

The event also included a board on which students were invited to share about their own activism towards a more equal society, and celebrate their womanhood.

Finally, as we are used to in WGS, the event included snacks for students to enjoy.



Here's what our GAs are thinking of on International Women's Day:

Women's History Month for me is the celebration of womanhood and the progress we've made in the last century in terms of gender equality. In this month we think about all the women that fought for justice, and for our right to become equal citizens. We also acknowledge that the fight to create a better world for everyone is still not over, and we still have a long way to go.

International Women's Day is a time to reflect on the strength and persistence of strong women around the world. It shows how far women have come, but also shows there is more room for progress to be made. Learning about international feminists teaches us that feminism and activism shapes women's lives and leaves an impact on societies around the world.





Women's History Month: Lunch & Panel - March 20, 2023

On Monday, March 20th, the office of Diversity, Inclusion & Social Justice and the Women's & Gender Studies Program hosted an event, "Women's History Month Panel & Luncheon." The panelists were Trisha Etringer, Nicole Sallis, Jennifer Leatherby, and Lata D'Mello. Each panelist is a leader within the community. Trisha Etringer is the Operations and MMR Director with the Great Plains Action Society. Nicole Sallis is a global consultant, retreat strategist, NLP-certified Practitioner of Transformation, and personal power work. Jennifer Leatherby is a multimedia artist, educator, activist, and whole life doula. Lata D'Mello is the Assistant Director of Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity and also a WGS alumna.

The panelists were asked a variety of questions related to Women's History Month such as:

what womanhood means to you & explain how you have seen yourself represented or left out of mainstream narratives about women. When asked about the idea of Women's History Month and how our collective understanding of women's history should change, the panelists talked about how the language used needs to be more inclusive. It is important to learn the histories of other groups of people to better understand the way that they experience different forms of oppression apart from your own. Everyone needs to ask themselves how they are going to be more inclusive, and to challenge those around you that seek to silence minorities who have a history of being silenced. History tends to repeat itself, and we need to be able to identify patterns that show that society is trending backwards.



Hansen Elementary Activism Presentation - April 3, 2023

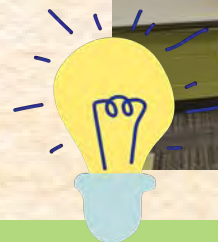
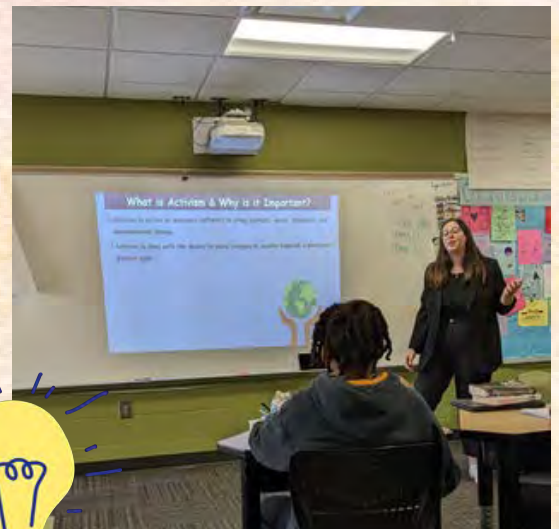
As a part of our program's tradition in community engagement, our GAs: Saja Abd Elhai, Meghan Cutcher, and Noshaba Shafiq, had the opportunity to deliver a presentation titled "Introduction to Activism" to the 5th graders at Hansen Elementary School. This is the first time since COVID-19 that we are back to in-person presentations and it was a great start to the month of April.

This engaging interaction allowed the students to broaden their understanding of what activism is and the different ways they can take part, especially in the Cedar Valley. They also learned about the activism and projects we do in WGS. Students shared their opinions, experiences, and activities they have participated in, and were curious about activism and issues our international GAs are engaged in, in their home countries.

Both the students and GAs benefited from exchanging in open dialog, and we are definitely planning to do it again next Spring.



It is very encouraging to see how involved these young students are in community activism, and inspiring to see how excited they are about making their communities better.



Sexual Assault Awareness Month - April 4 & 26, 2023

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. For years, at WGS, we have been marching during the month, in an attempt to bring awareness to sexual assaults, in a "Take Back the Night" march. However, after COVID-19, it's been challenging to bring students to participate in marches. As a result, this April we decided to partner with the Office of Compliance and Equity Management for several tabling events in Maucker Union.

The tabling events included a variety of resources for students on campus, coloring sheets to de-stress, and an invitation to raise awareness to sexual assaults.

**Riverview Center's Evening of Light Fundraiser with Aly Raisman - April 21, 2023**

In our continuous work for Sexual Assault Awareness month, two of our graduate students were invited to attend a fundraising event for the Riverview Center. The event included a catered dinner, raffles, and a conversation with U.S. Olympic gold medalist Aly Raisman. She spoke on her new book *Fierce*, her participation in the body positivity movement, and most specifically her advocacy surrounding sexual assault awareness. Her experiences as a survivor and an advocate provided for a lively discussion. It was a pleasure to hear her speak and learn from her!

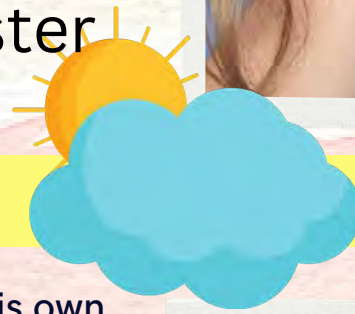


Meghan Cutcher (she/her)

“I've really enjoyed my first year with the Women's & Gender Studies Program at UNI. The classes have been fun and engaging, and I've made good friends. I'm currently working on my prospectus which will focus on abortion access in the United States. One accomplishment of mine is that I was awarded the Frances L. Webster scholarship from the WGS Program for the 2023-2024 school year!”



Winner of Frances L. Webster Scholarship



Archer Trip (he/they)

“As a transgender man that has created his own queer found family, I truly believe in the importance of community as well as the healing power of reading queer literature. I am an activist in my job as I am a student worker at GSS, as well as my part-time job as I work within the small queer-owned business TriipleThread where I am the Pride Department Head. One of my favorite hobbies is reading, and therefore within my job on campus, I created the Queer Book Club (which meets every Thursday from 5-6pm at GSS). This is a great opportunity to share recommendations, meet other readers, and finally have a time to rest and relax as we all can gather around queer literature of any genre!”



Winner of Agathon Fellowship



**WE ARE THRILLED TO
ANNOUNCE THAT
ONE OF OUR
STUDENTS IS**

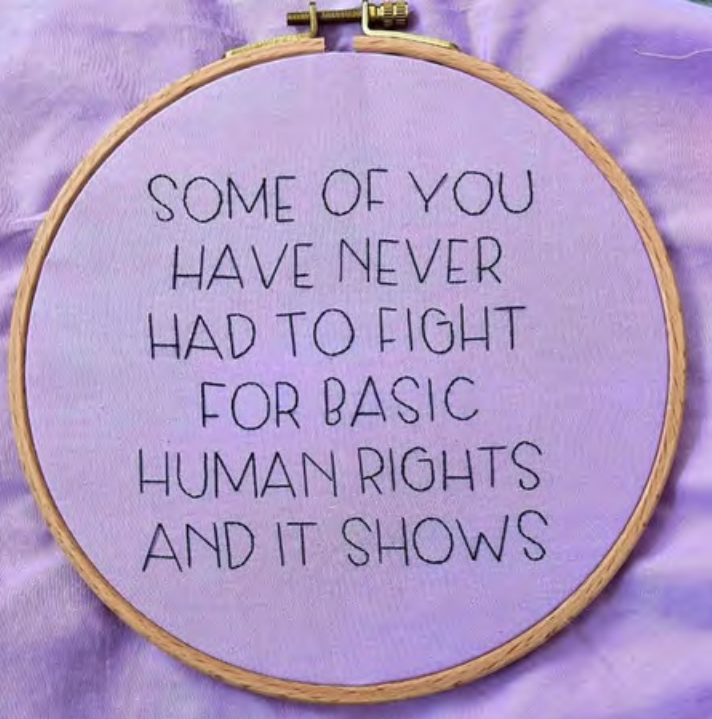
graduating!

Gideon Bawuah

Gideon is graduating this spring after a very busy semester doing his internship project at Friends of the Family (FOF) and defending his Research Paper "*Victim Service models for Homelessness Caused by Domestic Violence: Implication for Implementation in Ghana*" Due to his role at FOF, he was awarded the Tomson Internship Award! He had this to say about his internship:

"My role as a cultural liaison involves working closely with culturally specific agencies and exploring more about the services they provide to their targeted population in Iowa. I also work with the community outreach specialist to embark on intervention services for the general population or victims about to be evicted from their homes due to rent issues or any other issues likely to make a person homeless. Another role I am passionate about, and my internship came with, was as a housing advocate. I work closely with housing advocates to provide trauma-informed housing and comprehensive support to guests in the Waverly Shelter. In addition, I work directly with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other violent crimes who are currently fleeing violence."





NOTABLES AND QUOTABLES



LESSONS FROM CATS



1. Find the brightest spots to bask in
2. Don't give a single f*ck in the world
3. Attack and remove pests from life
4. Respect your + others boundaries
3. Show love to the ones you love

