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Voices Raised, Issue 04

University of Dayton. Women's Center

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**"Something
which we think is
impossible now
is not impossible
in another
decade."**

**Constance
Baker Motley**

*First Black Woman in
the U.S. to become a
Federal Judge*

Honoring Our Paths

3rd annual Women's Leadership Conference

The University of Dayton hosted the 3rd Annual Women's Leadership Conference April 17, newly named in honor of Annie T. Thornton for her 43 years of service and dedication to the University of Dayton.

Founded in 2001 by Oluyemi Mahoney, Daria-Yvonne Graham and Debra Monk, the conference seeks to facilitate networking among women and men interested in advances for women by promoting the development and recognition of women in leadership.

According to Mahoney, Kennedy Union Assistant Director, the goal of the conference is to "get women talking about critical issues in their community and to promote a sisterhood that transcends race, religion and socioeconomic status."

Founded three years ago, the conference was Mahoney's brainchild

because she saw that women's accomplishments are often overlooked and unacknowledged in our society.

"Women come from a long legacy of leaders," she said. "Unfortunately because of the society we live in, our ability to guide, motivate, and empower others often goes unnoticed."

With the help of Graham, Assistant Director of Conference and Business Services, and Monk, Assistant Director for Residential Programs, and with the support of UD administration, faculty and staff, the conference soon became a reality.

The conference, Mahoney said, serves as a forum to help address the unique challenges faced by female leaders. It is open to all faculty, staff and students from UD, Wright State University and Sinclair Community College, and to

Dayton-area residents. It seeks to empower these women and men by providing resources and skills that will prepare them to be leaders in the 21st century.

"I think the (conference) can serve as a vehicle to connect our campus with other area campuses and the larger Dayton community," Mahoney said. "It unifies women of all ages and backgrounds; it helps us find a common ground."

The decision to name the conference for Annie T. Thornton this year came about because of Thornton's exemplary leadership and service for the past 43 years to UD. Thornton has mentored hundreds of students in various positions in Dining Services, Housing and currently as the Associate

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And the award goes to... Winners of the 2004 Miryam Award

The Miryam Award has been presented annually since 1996 to an individual or organization that has served the University of Dayton community by enhancing the climate for women and promoting their advancement.

This year the committee was proud to present this prestigious award to both Dr. Kathleen Watters and Katie King.

Watters is busy as an associate professor and chair of the Department of Communication, the largest undergraduate department at UD, but she has always made time to dedicate herself to the advancement of women here on campus.

"It takes a great deal of strength to stand up and say, 'Something needs to be done.' Kathy Watters has done that...and continues to do that for women on campus," said Kennedy Union Director Amy Lopez, introducing Watters at the award ceremony.

As co-chair of a working group that proposed the Women's Center, Watters has played a vital role in its inception and its continued growth, and was even the principal author of its mission statement. She now serves on the Advisory Board for the center.

As a member of the newly created Sexual Assault Task Force, she is assisting in the

review of university policies and practices in dealing with sexual assault and misconduct.

Watters' efforts were dedicated most notably to the Advisory Committee on Women's Issues (ACWI). As co-chair of ACWI, she was instrumental in creating diversity initiatives at the university.

In 2000, Watters led the committee in rewriting an exhaustive report on the status of women at UD and developed numerous objectives and initiatives aimed at improving the campus climate. Some of these initiatives were to

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What's Going On?

Mentoring program begins planning for year two

The pilot Faculty/Staff Women's Mentoring Program started in November 2003 will be coming to a close as scheduled this June.

Participants have shown great support for the program and feel it has been beneficial to their personal and professional growth and development.

The pilot program, which was designed for women faculty and staff at all levels of the institution, met with great success in its first year. The program matched 12 women

mentees on the basis of their professional goals and needs with male and female volunteer mentors who would work with them for the duration of the program to achieve a set of mutually agreed-upon objectives.

Feedback from mentor Lisa Warren, Assistant Director, Career Advising and Recruitment Programs, was typical; "The UD Mentoring Program connected me to some wonderful individuals here at our University and to a wonderful mentee whom I have learned so much from and developed a great relationship with."

Similarly, "The mentoring

program has been a breath of fresh air in my professional life. The opportunity to meet other women on campus has opened doors of support, sisterhood and career networking," said Jessica Gonzalez, Assistant Director of Admissions.

Responses to surveys conducted during the course of the program provided feedback to help strengthen the program in the future, as well as provided insights into how mentors-mentees progressed in their relationships.

The Women's Center is planning to re-launch the program with an expanded

cohort of mentors and mentees in fall 2004. There will be an application process for both mentors and mentees interested in participating.

If you would like more information regarding the program please contact Tarika Daftary, Mentoring Coordinator, via e-mail at daftartz@notes.udayton.edu or at x95334.

For ongoing information and updates on the Mentoring Program, visit the Women's Center web site, womenscenter.udayton.edu.

• Tarika Daftary
Mentoring Program Coordinator

Reaping and Sowing: Women's Studies Then and Now

From the desk of the Acting Director of Women's Studies

We have spent this year in Women's Studies celebrating the past and making grand plans for the future.

It is an exciting time in the life of the program and the institution at large, and my motto, since stepping in as Acting Director in January, has been "make hay while the sun shines."

Last Fall, under the guidance of Director Betty Youngkin, we brought in three of the founders of the WST Program—Elaine Dreidame, Betty Perkins, and Doris Drees—as keynote speakers for the Focus on Women Course, whose theme was "Transforming the Disciplines: Celebrating 25 Years of Women's Studies at UD."

I also interviewed these pioneers on camera, and the resulting conversation provides a glimpse into the

origins of the program and the transformations wrought on campus in the past quarter century. We now have a terrific video and DVD of the interview for our collection.

This semester has been marked by several new WST initiatives. Among these was "Women's Stories, Women's Cameras," an international women's film festival organized by Drs. Marybeth Carlson, Ellen Fleischmann, Caroline Merithew, and Clare Talwaker, with assistance from the Women's Center.

This was just one of many pieces in UD's burgeoning Women's History Month programming.

In February, we also welcomed visiting scholars Beth Ferri and Vivian May from Syracuse University for discussions on the intersections of Women's Studies and Disability

Studies. Such collaboration helps us as feminist scholars to look more critically at our own assumptions and methods, and I hope we'll be able to do more in the future.

As you may have heard, the WST committee has also been working this winter on a proposal for a new major. We believe the time is ripe to add this component to our program, thus enabling students to commit their intellect and passion more fully to the work of understanding and improving the lives of women and, by extension, of children and men.

Faculty would also benefit from the opportunity to teach new courses on women and gender and also to work with WST students in more advanced and innovative ways. Readers who share our excitement about this proposal can look to future columns for updates.

Finally, in December we said farewell to Debra Kain, who served several WST directors as Administrative Assistant over the past 10 years. Deb will be missed by many.

In February, we welcomed Sarah Gallo into the position. She has jumped right in and is full of energy and ideas—including developing an alumni network. Please introduce yourself to Sarah next time you stop by the office (Zehler 303).

Remembering the past and investing in the future. Reaping and sowing. The work of growing Women's Studies continues, thanks to the contributions of faculty, staff, and students, past and present.

• Sheila Hassell Hughes
Acting WST Director

Women's Center Profiles

Women in Juarez inspire students

Instead of spending her recent break lounging on the beaches of Florida or catching up on sleep at home, junior sociology major Meagan Doty decided to break out of the traditional spring break activities and do something different.

Along with 10 other University of Dayton students, Doty traveled to Anthony, New Mexico, El Paso, Texas, and Juarez, Mexico in order to better understand the border and immigration issues that affect so many in the area.

"My hope is that the trip encouraged these students to advocate for the voiceless in these situations and work for justice," said Nicholas Cardilino, Director of UD's Center for Social Concern.

Before beginning the journey that would change many of their lives, the group educated themselves on the issues facing those on the border. They particularly learned a great deal about the murders and disappearances of women that have propelled Juarez into the international spotlight.

Despite all their preparation, they could have never known the impact the experience would have on each of them. Doty was strongly affected by the incredible women she met.

"The women we stayed with in Juarez are some of the most amazing, faith-filled, powerful women I have ever met," she said. "Even though they live day to day in such a precarious situation, they still maintain hope and faith that soars so much higher than any I have experienced."

In addition to the women in Juarez, the group was also fortunate to meet women from the Women's Intercultural Center in Anthony. Despite giving so much of themselves fighting against the system of oppression in the United States, "these women are taking it upon themselves to create a community in which they find value and companionship," Doty said.

The students saw firsthand the economic desperation and oppression, the lack of jobs and the sexism that faced those they met. Adding to the situation is the 300 murdered and 4,000 missing young women from the maquilas in Juarez.

"I was profoundly moved by the women's ability to take a horrible situation and really find the good in life and keep such a strong faith," said Doty.

Doty and her fellow travelers didn't want to let their experience end with their flight home, so they planned a symposium to feature their own and other students' work on women's issues.

The symposium, called "Through Women's Eyes: A Forum on Empowerment," was held in the Women's Center on April 13.

Doty was unsure of how this new event would turn out, but she was confident that anyone who came was "sure to walk away with a greater understanding of women's struggles at home and abroad."

• Ashley Neu
Women's Center
Public Relations

Walking for a cause and a cure

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While many of us are kicking back and resting during our summer vacation, two University of Dayton women will be walking over 300 miles in three months to train for the Susan G. Komen Foundation Breast Cancer 3-Day walk.

Sue Polanka, Roesch Library Reference and Instruction Coordinator, and Kerrie Cross, University Archivist, will be two of thousands of people walking a 60-mile trail from Shakopee, Minn. to St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 10-12, and will raise \$2,000 each for the foundation.

According to the Komen Foundation, more than 200,000 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and almost 40,000 will die from the disease. While the number of fatalities due to breast cancer is declining, essential elements of victims' survival include proper medical care, screening, education and treatment.

The money raised by the 3-Day walk will go directly to fund these needs as well as to research for a cure.

The Komen Foundation will be working in conjunction with the National Philanthropic Trust, an independent non-profit organization which will host the events and receive 15 percent of the proceeds to establish the NPT Breast Cancer Fund. This fund will create a permanent endowment for

breast cancer initiatives for research, treatment, prevention and education.

Both first time walkers, Polanka and Cross decided to take part because of the challenge of completing the marathon and because of the value of the Komen Foundation's efforts in the fight against breast cancer.

"This 60-mile walk is above and beyond what most other organizations ask people to do," Polanka said. "Completing the walk and raising \$2,000 gives us a chance to do some good for someone."

Cross has had several friends over the years who suffered from breast cancer, and she emphasized the importance of raising money for research and detection.

"Our main interest with breast cancer is early detection," she said. "We want to get the word out that the survival rate is so much higher if you are diagnosed in the early stages of the disease."

In preparation for the extensive walk, Polanka and Cross have been walking daily and will gradually increase their distance from three to 20 miles a day over the summer.

They plan to cover over 300 miles this summer and welcome anyone who would like to join them in their work-out.

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Women's Health & Wellness

Making smart - and tough - health care decisions

The freedom to make decisions is important, and valued by many Americans. But why do so many people waive their right to make important decisions about how they want their lives to end?

Most college students would browse this article and skip over it because this isn't something they're dealing with *right now*, but this information is important to people in all walks of life. Life doesn't come with any guarantees,

so living wills and health care proxies fit under the "just in case" clause; they protect your health care preferences and help ease the burden on your family.

Filling out a form called a "health care proxy" is a simple step to assure that someone you trust will be making health decisions on your behalf should you be unable to do so. This person is called a "health care agent." You can also specify the care you would or would not want under various circumstances in a "living

will."

A living will is a type of advanced care directive, meaning that in any event where the person is unable to communicate for themselves they have directions as to how their healthcare is to be handled in advance.

Living wills are a concept that has come into development with advanced technology that prolongs our life expectancy. Our grandparent's generation never had to think about this type of problem. Now we must understand the moral and practical issues of the situation.

The Catholic church says you don't have to go to extraordinary measures to keep someone alive. In fact, the Rev. Chris Conlon, a Marianist priest, said that if he is simply being stabilized by a machine, "turn the machine off, pull the plug."

While this is, of course, a personal choice, Catholic doctrine does provide some guidance in making the decision, as do many other religious institutions.

This choice can be tough, but if people do not have living wills then it is difficult for the individual's family to make the decision whether or not to keep them on life support. We can never truly know what a person would have wanted, unless they had

the foresight to plan for such an event.

The story of Terri Schiavo - the 39-year-old woman now at the center of a right-to-die controversy in Florida - illustrates the difficulty faced by families without living wills. Schiavo was only 26 when she suffered apparently permanent brain damage after collapsing for still unexplained reasons. This situation has not only raised compelling legal and moral issues, but has caused personal pain, confusion, and conflict for her family.

At this point in time, all 50 states have accepted living wills. There is nothing keeping us from choosing the right to die, but the issue must be considered carefully and talked over with loved ones, as well as with physicians and attorneys.

Harvard Health Publications has prepared "A Guide to Living Wills and Health Care Proxies" to help you understand what you need to do to get the end-of-life care you want.

For more information on this topic visit: www.health.harvard.edu, or The Ohio Hospice and Palliative Care Organization at www.ohpco.org/living_will.htm.

• Jaimie Guerra
freshman communication major
and Jennifer Rogers
Women's Center Intern

Ask the Doc

Mary Buchwalder, M.D.

Is there such a thing as a healthy tan?

My friend had a mole removed that was cancer. He's my age (18)- I thought cancer happened only in old folks.

Ken

Skin cancer occurs in all ages. Unfortunately, the most dangerous type, called melanoma, is occurring more and more in people in their teens and twenties.

In 1980, the lifetime chance of melanoma was one in 250. Currently, one in 75 people will get this disease. But it's not a death sentence.

Early melanomas are almost 100 percent curable.

What should you look for? Any mole that itches, bleeds, or changes in size, shape, or color should be examined and probably removed by a physician.

Moles that are

asymmetrical, have irregular borders, uneven color or black, red, or blue pigments, or are larger than a pencil eraser also should be checked by a physician.

And prevention is even better: stay out of the sun from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., always wear sunscreen with SPF of 15 or more, and wear a broad brimmed hat and long-sleeved shirt and long pants to minimize sun exposure.

These precautions will also reduce your risk of other, less deadly skin cancers and chronic sun damage including wrinkles, leathery skin texture and mottling or "age spots" (really "sun spots").

Remember: there's no such thing as a healthy tan; a tan is just a "precancerous glow". But hey, have fun outdoors - just be sensible too!

Dr.B

Women's Centers unite!...

For information from and about other Women's Centers around the country, check out these Web sites:

- Stanford University Women's Community Center
www.stanford.edu/group/womenscntr
- University of Arizona Women's Resource Center
clubs.asua.arizona.edu/~wrc

A longer list of centers can be found at
<http://creativefolk.com/wclinks/htm/>

Conference dubbed for women's rights activist

cont. from P. 1

Director of Kennedy Union. She has also been an active member in her church and her community, Mahoney said.

One highlight of the conference each year is the keynote speaker. Former speakers include Dayton Mayor Rhine McLin, and sociologist and domestic violence expert Dr. Claire Renzetti.

The keynote position this year was filled by Westina Matthews Shatteen, first vice president and senior director of Corporate Responsibility at Merrill Lynch and Co., Inc., and author of *Have a Little Faith* and *Have a Little Faith for Women Fully Grown*.

Among the many workshops offered at the conference were sessions on breast cancer issues and

perspectives, led by Kerry Cross, Sue Polanka and Judy Caruso, and on campus activism and anti-oppression led by Kate Zaidan.

Chair yoga, eating and weight loss, financial strategies for women, spirituality, stress, mentoring and many more topics were all discussed in various workshops.

Although this year's conference has passed, planning has already begun for next year. Mahoney strongly encourages students, in particular, to attend the conference because of the opportunities to network with women from campus and the Dayton community and to learn about critical issues impacting women in society.

• Jennifer Rogers
Women's Center Intern

Walkers aid in funding cancer research

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Participating in this marathon has been no easy task for either of the women, as both hold full-time jobs at UD and have families to care for as well. This is part of the reason Polanka and Cross are petitioning fellow UD employees for donations in order to raise the \$2,000 entry fee.

Letters requesting help have been sent to the friends and family of the two women, and Cross and Polanka will host a brown bag luncheon at Roesch Library this spring where they will show a film about breast cancer and ask

for contributions.

They also hosted a session at the Women's Leadership Conference April 17 to talk about breast cancer, and a donation booth was set up in the lobby during the conference.

To contribute to the fund-raising effort, or for information about participating in the 3-Day walk, contact Polanka at 229-4273, or Cross at 229-4267.

Visit www.3-Day.org for more information.

• Jennifer Rogers
Women's Center Intern

For more information on breast cancer:

- Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
1.800.I'M AWARE, or www.komen.org
- The National Cancer Institute
1.800.4.CANCER, or www.nci.nih.gov
- Cancer Care
1.800.813.HOPE (4673), or www.cancercare.org
- The Y-ME Hotline for psycho-social support
1.800.221.2141, or www.y-me.org

Miryam recipients donate award money to causes

cont. from P. 1

"Hire, Retain and Promote Women Faculty" and "Provide students the educational opportunity to major in Women's Studies."

As a mentor and role model to so many, it is fitting that Watters designated her \$1,000 gift to the Women's Center's new Mentoring Program launched this year.

Senior biology major Katie King was also granted the

Miryam Award this year. The committee was pleased to recognize King for all of her hard work with Students Advocating Female Equality (S.A.F.E.) and the Clothesline Project, a display of t-shirts hand-painted by victims, and friends and family of victims, of domestic violence.

King has dedicated her four years at UD to helping women in other ways as well. One of her most rewarding experiences was her involvement in the Fitz Center's Semester of Service, a program that placed her at East End Community Center to work full-time.

At East End, King spent her days last semester helping to run the youth center and leading the girls' club.

"She has lived UD's mission to connect UD to its surrounding community," said Bob Neary, who nominated King. "She has

led others to raise awareness."

King spent the last two summers in Cameroon Africa working at the Ejed Medical Clinic. She participated in the Cameroon Immersion program in the summer of 2002, and when she was asked to return as an intern for the clinic in

2003, she couldn't refuse.

"Those were the most challenging and life-changing weeks I

have ever experienced," King said. "Those experiences reinforced my love and dedication to a career in medicine."

Eliminating sexual assault is another cause that King holds dear to her heart. Dedicating her time as a sexual assault peer educator, she made it her goal to be a resource for students who have experienced these crimes.

Although the program is not active at this point, King has continued to assist peers and decided to designate her award money to be used for the program.

Both King and Watters were honored with a prayer service in the chapel and a ceremony and reception in the Women's Center.

"She has lived UD's mission to connect UD to its surrounding community."

*Bob Neary
speaking of Katie King*

• Ashley Neu
Women's Center
Public Relations

Voices Raised

Picturing Faith: Religious America in Government Photography 1935-1943

The Women's Center Gallery is hosting *Picturing Faith*, a photography exhibit featuring a collection of black and white photographs taken during the era of the Great Depression, the midwest dustbowl and FDR's New Deal.

Out of the archival collection of approximately 164,000 photos, the Women's Center is displaying 45 photos that provide an historical perspective of America in photography. The collection documents more than America's faltering economy and social dislocation, however.



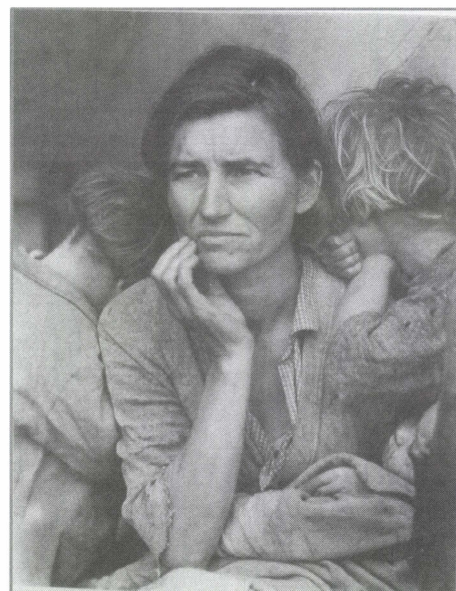
Billboard

Jack Delano
August 1940
Sykesville, Penn.

While the initial purpose of the project was to illustrate how the New Deal was assisting poor farmers, the photographers also wanted to produce a composite picture of American society.

This included migrant workers symbolizing the human tragedy of people forced off their land, and itinerant preachers who took to the road to witness for Jesus.

Through religious expressions, poor Americans exercised some control over their lives and experienced a meaningful world removed from endless toil.



Migrant Mother

Dorothea Lange
March 1936
Nipomo, California

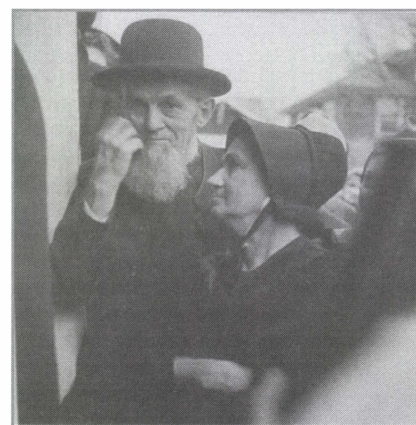
Daughters of the Moon

Dr. Juli Burnell (right), with Sr. Leanne Jablonski, FMI (left), presented the *Daughters of the Moon* Iroquois spirit shield to the Women's Center at a dedication ceremony March 31.

The shield was created by AmyLee, an Iroquois medicine woman and artist, in a celebration of woman's empowerment.

Dr. Burnell purchased the shield and has donated it for display in the Women's Center.

"Through my study with AmyLee, I have been struck by the Iroquois culture's deep valuing of the contributions of women," Burnell said. "This has been instrumental in my coming to appreciate my own gifts. I hope that those who experience the shield will be invited to consider their own worth as women (or the worth of women in their lives) as well."



Mennonite Couple

Marjory Collins
Undated
Pennsylvania

This exhibit was brought to UD by Dr. Anthony Smith of the Department of Religious Studies

Virtual reality check:

Tips for Internet security from UD Public Safety

A female student recently received some sexually explicit and obscene phone calls from a man who found her name, address and phone number on the Web site she set up on the University of Dayton's homepage.

Out of curiosity, I went to the homepages to see what I could find. I randomly checked some female names and within a couple of tries, I found a homepage that contained a student's name, local address and phone number, home address, parents' occupation (it is easier to track down a professional, such as a doctor, lawyer, or CPA) and where she works when she is home for the summer.

When you post something on the Internet you should know that anyone in the world who has access to a computer has access to whatever information you are posting.

Do you want complete strangers to know your personal information?

Do you want them to know what you look like and what your class schedule is?

As you know, we at UD have our share of indecent

exposure complaints, and universities in general attract outside people who commit acts of public indecency. It is not much of a stretch of the imagination to believe that the voyeurs around UD would access a homepage with the intent to gain information, to view photographs in order to facilitate some type of sexual experience or to enable a sexual fantasy.

What can you do to help protect yourself?

The simple answer is, don't post personal information on the Internet. This includes all of the before mentioned information, as well as social security numbers and birth dates on shopping Web sites.

Students, your friends already know what you look like, where you live and how they can get in touch with you. The rest of the world doesn't need to know.

Students can also be peer educators to their fellow students; a kind of, "Hey Sarah, I read this article, so I checked out the homepages of some of my friends. Do you realize how much personal information you are providing complete

strangers?"

As an educator, what can you do? Be aware of the consequences of your assignments. The young lady mentioned at the beginning of this article created her homepage as a homework assignment. Her professor certainly never envisioned the student receiving obscene phone calls, but it happened nonetheless.

Maybe an assignment could be to create the most visually appealing homepage while providing the viewer with the least amount of personal information possible.

A little role reversal might be for the student to educate the faculty member about the potential dangers of certain Web-based assignments and posting personal information on the Internet.

Finally, what can you do as a parent? Speak with your children about the dangers of posting personal information on the Internet. Go to the chat rooms your children visit and see if

inappropriate conversations are taking place.

Do conversations appear to be sexual in nature?

Is your child being asked for a picture of themselves or being asked to meet someone somewhere? Does the person want to know when you (parents) are at home and/or what hours you are at work?

If your child has created a personal or family homepage, check it immediately. You may be surprised by what you find.

Most of us use the Internet for fun, convenience and rapidly finding information. Criminals use the Internet for the same purpose; however, they also use it as a tool to facilitate the commission of crimes.

Don't hand them the tools they need to cause you inconvenience or harm.

• Joseph P. Cairo
Department of Public Safety

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A Good Read...

Search the Women's Center's book and video holdings via the Resources tab at womenscenter.udayton.edu

Leadership:

The First Sex: The Natural Talents of Women and How They are Changing the World

- by Helen Fisher

Self-Help and Empowerment:

Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls

- by Mary Pipher

Feminism and Gender Roles:

Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind

- by Mary Field Belenky, et. al.

Director's Desk:

Sexual Assault Task Force to revise misconduct policy

cont. from P. 8

UD's Sexual Misconduct Policy while concurrently conducting focus groups with over 100 students in order to assess their perceptions of the magnitude of the problem, their awareness of the university's sexual misconduct policies, practices and protocols, and their sense of the impact sexual assault has on the UD student community.

Members of the Task Force are learning much from these efforts, and we expect to share this with the

broader UD community sometime later this year.

It's still too early in the process to draw any definitive conclusions, but already our collective sense is not positive; we expect our work will dispel any notions that sexual assault is not a problem at UD.

Then it will be up to all of us – the entire UD community – to address it.

• Lisa Rismiller
Women's Center Director

From the Director's Desk

Is sexual assault a problem at UD?

April 2004
Issue 4

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To answer that, perhaps we first need to define "problem" as it's used in this context. The big, old American Heritage Dictionary on my desk defines the noun "problem" as "A question or situation that presents uncertainty, perplexity or difficulty." But reading further through the entry, I see the adjective "problem" defined as "Dealing with a social or moral problem." So it would seem that no matter how the word "problem" is used, it's fitting for an issue as serious as sexual assault.

With that matter settled, now we need to ask, "Does sexual assault occur on the UD campus?" In my experience, the answer you get depends on who you ask. Students are generally pretty vehement in saying "no!" or "yes!" to that question. Sometimes they clarify their answers with "It's not any more of a problem here than at any other university" or "It happens frequently, but it never gets reported so there's no way of knowing how often."

Faculty and staff, when asked the same question, have similarly disparate answers. Some say they know sexual assault happens frequently because they teach or interact with students, female and male, who are suffering the consequences of it. Others say they don't know; that it's a "residential life" issue and so they're not aware of it because they don't work in that area.

Ask the staff who work in Student Development, particularly Residential Programs and the UD Police Department, and it's clear – they KNOW sexual

misconduct, including its most serious form, sexual assault, is a problem at UD.

So given that at least some students, faculty and staff perceive sexual assault to be a problem at UD, the next obvious question is: what should be done about it? This is part of what the recently appointed Sexual Assault Task Force is trying to do.

Comprised of caring and committed faculty and staff, the Task Force is charged with "conducting a comprehensive examination of all the sexual misconduct and assault-related processes, protocols and practices in place at UD in order to identify which meet students' needs and which fall short of best practices and should be changed."

With the expertise and assistance of an external consultant, Bruce Burt, Dr. Carol Cummins-Collier, Sr. Jody O'Neil, John Hart, Dr. Kathy Watters, Lisa Sandner, Dr. Mary Buchwalder, Dr. Molly Schaller, Pattie Waugh, Dr. Pat Donnelly, Dr. Stephen Richey-Suttles and I have begun tackling this charge by taking an in-depth look at

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