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2018: Daria Graham

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During Women's History Month, the University of Dayton Women's Center coordinates, as an experiential learning opportunity for students, an annual exhibit highlighting the contributions women have made at the University of Dayton.

Theme for 2018: Trailblazers

2018: Daria Graham

Written by Leslie Picca, Ph.D.

For nearly 30 years, Daria Graham has been quietly and modestly reshaping the student experience at the University of Dayton. A Dayton native, Graham graduated in 1994 with a Bachelor's in Business Administration; she returned to UD to hold positions in Housing and Residence Life, Center for Student Involvement, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and the Office of Student Leadership Programs where she served as the inaugural director. She earned a Master's Degree in College Student Personnel in 2002, and will earn her Ph.D. in Educational Leadership in 2018. She currently serves as the Associate Dean of Students and Executive Director for the Office of Multicultural Affairs, among numerous other roles she serves on campus.

As a highly respected administrator in the Division of Student Development, Daria has built a career on educating undergraduate and graduate students both inside and outside the classroom, and creating an infrastructure for student success, including enhancing the campus climate particularly for diversity and inclusion. Daria oversaw the creation of the UD Co-Curricular Transcript for students providing them with an official record of developmental activities outside the traditional classroom.

Daria has held teaching positions in the Department of Music, Department of Counselor Education and Human Services, and in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, where typical student comments include "her class has changed my view on the world." She regularly educates her colleagues in workshops and training sessions on topics such as intergroup dialogue, diversity, social justice, intersectionality, and leadership. Her list of presentations at regional, national, and international conferences is immense.



In 2016, she was selected as the UD delegate for the Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) Leadership Training Institute at Bryn Mawr; she also participated in the Chaminade Seminar. Both of these experiences pushed Daria to single handedly create a Women's Leadership Immersion for 40 UD women, drawing upon her deep connections in the Dayton region. For Daria, the creation of the women's retreat was a way of giving back to the campus community the blessings and skills that she was exposed to, and paying it forward to a new cohort of young women.

The list of committees that Daria has served on at UD is vast and expansive. From convening the UD Black Employee Association, to serving on working groups for Commitment to Community (C2C) and CAP, Daria prioritizes relationships, action, and education. Her voice is one of reason and good humor, with a goal-oriented way of moving the campus forward in alignment with university mission as grounded in Marianist traditions. As a Marianist Educational Associate, she focuses on an awareness of campus blind spots, particularly for marginalized populations.

Her impact expands UD and spills over to the broader Dayton region. She convenes and is a member of the Black Alumni Association, and was a longtime committee member of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration in the City of Dayton. As a musician and woman of faith, she is called to share her musical talents with choral teams, particularly with Mt. Olive Baptist Church where she served as Director of Worship Arts Ministry for ten years. Many call Daria an advocate, educator, mentor, leader, friend, and a true inspiration.