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Voices Raised

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON WOMEN'S CENTER NEWSLETTER

THE PATRIARCHAL EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND NATURE

The link between climate change and its effects on Earth's most vulnerable populations, including women, is emerging more as the consequences are increasingly damning. But how did we get here?

Ecofeminism, a branch of feminist philosophy, offers a unique lens to examine not only current climate issues, but the domination and exploitation of Earth and its resources. Ecofeminists link the patriarchal oppression of women and the domination of Earth, leading to detrimental effects globally.

Gaining serious traction in the 1970s, the ecofeminist lens argues that throughout history, men have sought out

ways to dominate and control nature in the same way they have dominated women. Born out of hierarchical structures, or the idea that cultures place more value on certain groups than others, ecofeminists would argue that the hierarchical way of thinking has allowed society to value men over both women and nature.

The idea of hierarchy advances the concept of domination and creates power imbalances. In their book, *Ecofeminism*, authors Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva assert their desire to, "...address the inherent inequalities in world structures which permit the North to dominate the South, men to dominate women, and the frenetic plunder of ever more resources for ever more unequally distributed economic gain to dominate nature." Ecofeminism aims to abolish these divisive and hierarchical structures of both gender and the environment and create environments of equality and respect.

University of Dayton Associate Professor of English, literary critic, and author Dr. Shazia Rahman has dedicated a portion of her career to understanding the ways in which women think about and interact with



Dr. Shazia Rahman, Associate Professor of English

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ECOFEMINISM *(continued)*

the environment they live in and how this alters their sense of belonging. She explains ecofeminism, stating, "When you think of the way patriarchy works, it oppresses women... the same aspect of patriarchy that oppresses women oppresses the environment as well. An ecofeminist would actually refuse to separate the two from each other."

Like any discipline, ecofeminism has several different branches with unique facets, some of which seek to explain the connection between gender and environmental-related injustices all across the globe. Despite criticisms, ecofeminism is a relevant and compelling lens to draw connections between gender and environmental issues.

In her book, *Place and Postcolonial Ecofeminism: Pakistani Women's Literary and Cinematic Fiction*, Dr. Rahman discusses how a person's sense of belonging is affected when the borders drawn by colonizers ignore people's relationship to the land.

Rooted in the same ideology of domination present in the foundation of ecofeminism, Dr. Rahman looks closely at the relationships between the colonizer, the colonized, and the land.

Determined to highlight the voices of less dominant groups and offer new perspectives, Dr. Rahman's book examines specifically how women think about their belonging in the context of their environment.

The first four chapters of Rahman's book look at four different places, both within and outside of the borders of the nation-state. The fifth and final chapter entitled 'Displacement' discusses the various reasons individuals become displaced from the land.

Place and Postcolonial Ecofeminism analyzes stories like *Noor* by Sorayya Khan, *Ramchand Pakistani* by Mehreen Jabbar, *Burnt Shadows* by Kamila Shamsie and more. "I'm

- **Dr. Rahman**

thinking about these novels and films of different places and exploring how it relates to the history of colonialism in the region, as well as examining how patriarchy influences both the land and women's issues," Dr. Rahman said.

Anna Rose Redgate '20

When you think of the way patriarchy works, it oppresses women...the same aspect of patriarchy that oppresses women oppresses the environment as well. An ecofeminist would actually refuse to separate the two from each other.



2020 HERS INSTITUTE

Each year, the University of Dayton commits to sponsor up to two employees to attend the Higher Education Resource Institute (HERS). HERS is a nationally recognized leadership workshop that seeks to elevate women in higher education. Founded in 1976, the HERS Institute has trained over 5,000 women faculty and staff across the U.S. in intensive residential leadership and management development through its twelve-day programs and remote year-long program. This summer, Dr. Re'Shanda Grace-Bridges, Director of Student Transitions and Family Programs will attend the Denver-based institute. Dr. Grace-Bridges will be the seventeenth woman to attend from the University of Dayton.

GENDER EQUITY RESEARCH FELLOWS 2019-2020 RESEARCH

Designed to advance gender equity through the conduct of high-quality research, the Gender Equity Research Fellowship (GERF) launched during the 2019-2020 school year as a collaboration between the Women's Center, Women's and Gender Studies Program, and the Provost's Office. Inaugural fellows Dr. R. Darden Bradshaw, Associate Professor of Art Education, and Dr. Laura Vorachek, Associate Professor of English, developed individual projects, gathered data, and will make recommendations and release their findings at the end of the academic year.

Best Practices for LGBTQ+ Faculty & Staff

Energized by UD's dedication to honor the dignity of every person, Dr. R. Darden Bradshaw drew inspiration from her own challenges as an LGBTQ+ faculty member on campus. Determined to gain insight to other LGBTQ+ faculty and staff experiences, Dr. Bradshaw centered her GERF research around uncovering where the university is succeeding in equitable practices for LGBTQ+ faculty and staff, where practices contradict the university's mission, and where there is room for growth.

Dr. Bradshaw asked research participants how they have or have not experienced equity in policies and practices, how that behavior manifested and how the university can make changes for the better moving forward. "I think we have seen a much greater focus

on how we can support LGBTQ+ identifying students—how can we provide services for them and be completely present in encouraging and acknowledging the complexity of our intersecting identities. But I think that the acknowledgment of that for faculty and staff has not always been present."

Dr. Bradshaw's research has been comprised of three parts to examine what she refers to as "the three P's": policies, practices and perspectives. Dr. Bradshaw conducted interviews and focus groups of faculty and staff to code consistencies on campus. She and her team then compared UD's policies and

practices to 25 peer institutions to better understand current progress and future goals. Finally, Dr. Bradshaw conducted interviews with senior administrators at UD to gain perspective on what they believe are best practices for LGBTQ+ faculty and staff, and discover where divergence may occur between administrators' perception of

equitable practices and what LGBTQ+ individuals experience.

"People want to be heard. I want to be a witness to their experience. I want to honor their experience. I want to truthfully and with integrity reflect their experience back. And that is quite a responsibility," Dr. Bradshaw stated. Through her work, members of the UD community will understand one another with a more equitable and empathetic perspective. "When we begin to see each other in the full complexity of our humanity, we cannot participate in

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- Dr. R. Darden Bradshaw



SUFFRAGE, BUT FOR WHOM? ONLINE RESEARCH GUIDE AVAILABLE

activities often not discussed or cited in the literature with the goal of creating a more holistic and inclusive understanding of the women's suffrage movement. Use this research guide as a starting point to discuss suffrage as we recognize 2020 as the centennial celebration of women's suffrage in the United States.

This guide attempts to critically examine the dominant narrative of U.S. women's suffrage by highlighting stories and historical

2019-2020 RESEARCH *(continued)*

oppressive behavior,” Dr. Bradshaw said.

Mentoring Toolkit Development for Junior Women Faculty

The benefits of mentorship in the workplace are well-researched and well-established. Mentorship programs create collaborative and open learning environments, improve employee retention rates, have overall higher rates of job satisfaction and report better employee outlook on their place of work. In a university specific setting, research shows faculty-to-faculty mentoring programs are incredibly important. However, according to Dr. Laura Vorachek, not everyone has equal access to mentoring. Especially in cases of informal mentoring, the ‘good old boys club’ limits the opportunities of women and people of color. This is what inspired Dr. Vorachek, a nearly 13-year employee of UD and Director of Faculty Formation in the English Department, to research the state of mentoring at UD and make recommendations for best practices moving forward.

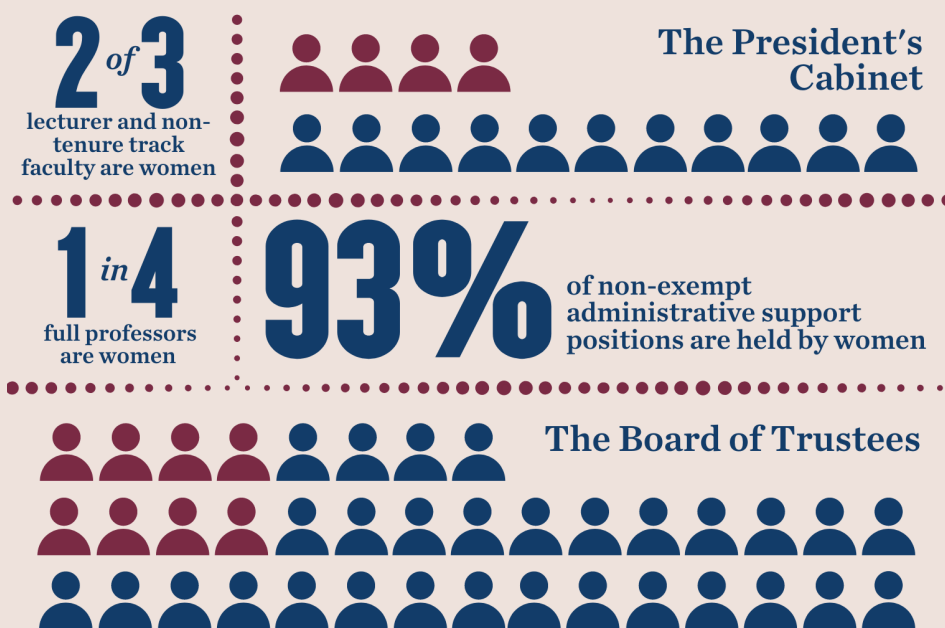
“The research shows that mentoring is tremendously important in terms of faculty success in a wide range of areas: teaching, getting external funding to conduct research, overall experience—this list goes on,” Dr. Vorachek stated. “One of the things I have done in my role as the Director of Faculty Formation is institute a

formal mentoring program within the English department. In doing the research to see what would work best for the English department, I started to think ‘big picture’ for best practices across campus which inspired me to apply for the Gender Equity Research Fellowship.”

Beginning this past fall, Dr. Vorachek interviewed several department chairs across campus to get a sense of what is currently going on with informal and formal mentoring among faculty members across different departments. This information helped map the current state of mentorship at UD. Dr. Vorachek also sent a survey to all recently tenured and pre-tenured faculty to understand their personal experiences with mentoring while at UD. Looking at areas where faculty members have received mentoring, what types of mentoring were most common, and if any peer-to-peer mentoring occurred, Dr. Vorachek interviewed survey respondents to gain a more in-depth perspective of the mentoring experiences of pre-tenured faculty.

“People have been very receptive to the research. Even if departments do not have a formal mentoring program, I have been delighted to hear people express what they would like to know more about. The people I have talked to are very interested in the idea of mentoring,” Dr. Vorachek said.

Anna Rose Redgate '20



REPORT CARD STATUS OF WOMEN AT UD

The 2018-2019 academic year marked the publication of the inaugural *Status of Women at UD* Report Card. Focusing on the representation of women employees across the life of the institution, the report card uses data collected each fall from the university's Institutional Research Office and highlights women's representation in academic and non-academic leadership. [View the 2018-2019 report card here.](#)



The 2020 Women of UD Honorees at the Women's History Month kickoff celebration on March 4.

In honor of Women's History Month, the Women's Center coordinates an annual exhibit highlighting the contributions women have made at the University of Dayton and beyond, both past and present. The 3rd annual exhibit, *Voices of Courage*, recognizes women who have had a profound impact in a variety of areas and fields, and those that champion and model an inclusive and equitable campus and community. The honorees were nominated by the campus community and selected by a dedicated group of students, faculty, and staff. The honorees were photographed by students from Professor Glenna Jennings' photography class and were brought to life in the exhibit by students from Professor Kathy Kargl's graphic design class.

2020 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH VOICES OF COURAGE

To learn about each of the 2020 Women of UD honorees, please click on the respective honoree photo or visit the Women's Center website.



EMILY A. HICKS



CHLOE MASSIE-COSTALES



LAURA BISTREK



KATHLEEN ROSSMAN, OSF



DR. NOVEA MCINTOSH



MERIDA ALLEN



SUKI KWON



BEVERLY JENKINS



NAN WHALEY



NEOMI DE ANDA, PH.D.

2020 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH VOICES OF COURAGE



MARGARET PETERS



DR. LESLIE H. PICCA



2020 Women of UD honorees Chloe Massie-Costaes (L) and Kathleen Rossman, OSF (R) pose for a photograph at the Women's History Month kickoff celebration held on March 4.



MELISSA LONGINO



DR. CASTEL SWEET



DR. CORINNE DAPRANO

Click
here to read
President Spina's
blog post "Voices of
Courage" about our
2020 honorees on his
blog, "From the
Heart".

VOICES OF COURAGE BOOK DRIVE

*Find and ship books directly from
our wish list [HERE!](#)*

In celebration of Women's History Month, the University of Dayton Women's Center has partnered with The Conscious Connect, a non-profit organization in Dayton, Ohio dedicated to school-age and neighborhood literacy. We are collecting books for YWCA-Dayton which serves women with children from infants to 18 years old. It's critical that children see themselves represented in books and have access to positive role models of courageous women. Our goal is to collect books focusing on women in STEM, historical figures and strong women role models, and books that highlight dealing with trauma in a positive manner, all with an emphasis on racial and ethnic minorities.



UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON WOMEN'S CENTER

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As the situation concerning COVID-19 evolves, the University is committed to protecting the health and safety of our campus community and in an abundance of caution, all University-sponsored events and gatherings have been postponed until further notice. This includes the inaugural Gender Equity Research at UD Colloquium, Caregiving Resource Fair, and all Women's History Month programming.

We will update the campus community once these events have been rescheduled. Check out our [calendar](#) for all future programs and events.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK LISA BORELLO, PH.D.

As a sociologist, I'm energized by research - the anticipation of identifying a gap in what's been studied before, the joy of connecting with others through interviews, and the thrill of uncovering patterns and piecing it together. As a practitioner of diversity and inclusion work, I also strongly believe that data-driven, evidence-based efforts are critical to advancing gender equity at UD. In short, if we don't understand the problem, we cannot find a solution. And if we can't effectively define and measure 'success', then it won't be possible to know if we've achieved our goals.

In the Women's Center, we've spent much effort over the past two years building capacity to institutionalize efforts to support and study gender-related issues at the university. In collaboration with the Women's and Gender Studies program and the Provost's Office, we launched the inaugural Gender Equity Research Fellowship program, supporting both faculty and staff projects that aim to impact positive change on campus.

Another important component of the Center's research efforts focuses on understanding the composition of our workforce, particularly with respect to leadership. When we first set out to create the *Report Card on the Status of Women*, we had a simple goal in mind - provide a clear and transparent picture of how women are faring at the university. After spending nearly a year researching similar reports and developing clear graphics to convey complex data, we're proud to have completed our first report card as a way to measure progress, celebrate achievements, and acknowledge where additional work is needed.

While these efforts have centered primarily on faculty and staff, I would be remiss to not mention the critical role that undergraduate students have played in these projects. As research assistants supporting GERF fellows (earning academic credit along the way) and as paid research assistants developing and presenting on the report card, students have been absolutely instrumental in this work. Providing these experiential learning opportunities and building the next generation of researchers is among our most important achievements.

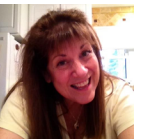
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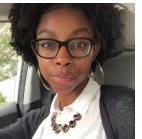
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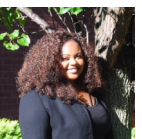
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