

## Director's Note

Happy new academic year from the Institute for Women's Studies. Lots has happened since I sat down to write my notes last year.

For those members of our community who have not yet received this news, I am so very sad to say that we are starting this year without our beloved Nichole Ray, who died this summer after living with stage four breast cancer for the past five years. Nichole had a presence that was both serene and bright, and her positive influence on students, faculty and staff will always be with us. We miss her every day. A memorial gathering will be held here at IWS on September 20 from 3-5 pm. All are welcome. Nichole's obituary can be found here: <https://wmst.franklin.uga.edu/directory/people/nichole-ray>.

At last year's IWS Fall Faculty Reception, Nichole gave a moving tribute to our honoree, Dr. Barbara McCaskill. This year, on September 13, we will be honoring Dr. Carolyn Medine, All Shall Be Well Professor of Religion & Director of the Institute for African American Studies.

We also are looking forward to the first Women and Girls in Georgia (WAGG) Conference in a good long while. It will be held on October 18 from 8 am – 5 pm. This year's conference will be smaller and shorter than those in the past, featuring faculty and students from UGA and elsewhere in the state who were recipients of our WAGG grants last year. A schedule of events can be found here: <https://iws.uga.edu/wagg>. All are welcome but must register here: <https://iws.uga.edu/wagg/registration>. Please join us!

I'm excited to announce a new initiative, drawing on funds from our Building Southern Intersectional Futures grant from the Mellon Foundation. Beginning this fall, we will offer several small Feminist Faculty Learning Group grants to faculty who are interested in establishing interdisciplinary discussion/reading/working groups around a given theme. Our hope is that these grants will lead to longer term collaborations among our 100+ affiliate faculty from across the university.

Speaking of the Building Southern Intersectional Futures grant, I'm pleased to report that we funded a total of fifteen projects in the 2023-24 academic year. All involve exciting, engaged research. To mention just a few, Special Collections librarian and IWS affiliate Kathryn Manis is involving students in a project on resources for queer healthcare in Georgia. Graduate certificate/geography PhD student Jess Martinez is working on a project on housing insecurity among disabled tenants and womxn of color, and undergraduates Juliana Nutt and Vybhavi Kotireddy are working with IWS affiliate/assistant prof of physiology and pharmacology Dax Ovid on how life experiences and educational backgrounds influence students' views on reproductive health, education, and access in the Southern United States.

As usual, we hosted several exciting and thought-provoking events last year, including Women's History Month talks by the very amazing Kate Manne and Kellie Carter Jackson as well as the 30th Annual Andrea Carson Coley lecture by June Thomas. Check out these amazing speakers' new books [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#). It was so wonderful to see Dr. Andrew and Kathy Coley in person once again after several years



Dr. Barbara McCaskill, Faculty Award Recipient, stands with Dr. Patricia Richards at the 2023 Faculty Reception.

of virtual talks. Our book club also continued to meet, and emeritus professor Pat Bell Scott once again generously supported creative response projects among graduate student participants. These projects will be featured as part of this year's Friday Speaker Series.

I'm thrilled to report that we are the lucky recipients of a significant gift from our inaugural assistant director, Heather Kleiner, which, with matching funds from the Foundation, establishes the Heather Kleiner Experiential Learning Scholarship Fund. This generous gift will allow us some continuity in funding student research projects (as well as other experiential learning activities) after our Mellon grant comes to an end. We are so grateful for Heather's support!

Finally, we're looking forward to the 50th Anniversary of IWS, which will be celebrated in 2027. We are planning several opportunities for alumni, student, faculty, and community member participation that year. As part of the celebration, we will be kicking off a major fundraising campaign that will allow us to continue doing meaningful work that reverberates throughout the university and community. Find out more (and consider donating) here: <https://iws.uga.edu/support-institute>

Looking forward to another great year. As always, I'm so happy to be surrounded by such fabulous colleagues and students, and always love hearing from our alumni. You make the work we do a joy.

*Patricia Richards*  
**Director, Institute for Women's Studies**

PS – We have a [new Alumni page](#) on our website. Take a look to see where some of our impressive alumni have landed, and other alums, please [send in your own](#) information!

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# In Memoriam | Nichole Ray, 1977-2024

Nichole Ray was Principal Lecturer for the Institute for Women's Studies at the University of Georgia. Some material below was taken from her obituary.

Born in Louisville, KY, Nichole was educated in the Louisville and Georgia private and public-school systems. She was a straight A honor student and a member of the Student Council. Ray graduated with honors from Morrow HS in 1995.

Nichole fell in love with the University of Georgia from her first visit to campus. She started her love of education with the pursuit of her bachelor's degree and continued with her master's and Doctoral degree. Under the direction of Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey, Ray earned a Ph.D. in Adult Education in 2007 with a research focus on the careers of Black women faculty working in research universities.

Ray taught several courses in Women's Studies, including Multicultural Perspectives of Women in the U.S., Introduction to Women's Studies, Black Feminism, Critical Feminist Readings, and graduate seminars on bell hooks, Alice Walker, and Black Women's Narratives. She was also a member of the Institute's curriculum committee and served on the planning committee of the Women and Girls in Georgia Conference, sponsored by the Institute for Women's Studies.

On January 25, 2001, Nichole gave birth to the love of her life, Messiah Sol Ray-Callahan. She was a dedicated and loving mother. Throughout her illness, her desire was to see her son graduate from high school and college, and she did, celebrating his college graduation shortly before her death.

A triple dawg, Nichole's love of education was evident in her insatiable passion not only to teach, but to learn. In 2024 she was promoted to Principal Lecturer for the Department of Women Studies. She was an active participant in the life of the Institute from 1995, as a freshman, to the day of her untimely death on June 12, 2024.



## Memorial Service Remarks from Dr. Patricia Richards Director, Institute for Women's Studies

Dr. Nichole Ray was a treasure. Gentle and kind, vibrant and funny, she was a gift to the universe. Something that has struck me in the conversations and correspondence I've had with others since she died is how many of us mention her light. Nichole surely was a bright light in all our lives. She filled any space she entered with that light, with her generosity, with love.

Nichole knew she wanted to teach women's studies from the first undergraduate class she took at UGA in 1995. Dr. Juanita Johnson-Bailey taught that class and went on to be Nichole's major professor for her Ph.D. in Adult Education, which she earned in 2007. Juanita characterizes Nichole this way: "Nichole was the best and the brightest - a brilliant scholar and one of the best people I've ever known. She possessed a rare intellect and the kindest heart, qualities not often found together."

A lecturer for IWS since 2009, Nichole was promoted to Principal Lecturer this year. This is the highest honor for lecturers. But she was also her harshest critic. When I talked with Nichole about going up for this promotion last year, she was dubious, feeling that she hadn't been able to live up to the sort of performance that merited promotion. I remember sitting in my office going through the requirements for promotion with her one by one and saying, "Nichole, you exceed these expectations!" And of course, her promotion was approved unanimously with an enthusiastic cover letter from the dean of the college.

Nichole was an incredibly hard worker, and she was dedicated to her craft. I remember another conversation with her just this spring, when Nichole, despite the toll the chemo was having on her, exclaimed,



"You know Patricia, I am a worker! I have to work! I like to work. I am not myself if I am not working!" And work she did, teaching four classes almost every semester, serving on our curriculum committee continuously since 2009, volunteering as a mentor to undergraduate and graduate students alike, and regularly being invited to speak at special engagements across campus. Her contributions were so vital that it feels impossible to imagine continuing on without her. Not just because of the labor she put in, but because she did it all with humor, grace, intelligence and dedication. She is and will always be the heart of women's studies at UGA.

The outpouring of love for Nichole from students and colleagues has been immense. I want to read just three of those messages. A former undergraduate wrote, "One of our grad student instructors sent a message saying: "As a professor she inspired many people, including myself, and modeled a pedagogy deeply informed by her own values and ethics. I will strive to be as much like her as a teacher as I can be."

Terri Hatfield, our former programs director and Nichole's good friend, reflected: "I'm so grateful that I existed on this planet at the same time and in the same place as Nichole so we could meet and become friends. Her friendship will be with me always. She inspired me when she was here, and she'll continue to inspire me. I'm going to work like hell to be more like her -- more thoughtful and caring and deliberate, making people feel like they are seen and worthy of being here." It's striking to me how many people saw Nichole as an inspiration, a model to emulate, a person to be more like.

I'll end with the words of Meko McFadden, another grad instructor and a friend of Nichole: "This woman changed my life so much for the better. I will miss her so dearly and will be living forever in gratitude. I don't think anyone who knew her can really encapsulate what a mighty soul she was."

I agree. Nichole indeed was a mighty soul, a bright light, an inspiration. May her spirit continue to accompany us as we forge our collective path without her.

- **Elizabeth Saari Browne**, *Assistant Professor*  
Art & Women's Studies
- **Chris Cuomo**, *Professor*  
Philosophy & Women's Studies
- **Kelly Happe**, *Professor/Grad Coordinator*  
Communication Studies & Women's Studies
- **Cecilia Herles**, *Assistant Director/Undergrad Advisor*  
Women's Studies
- **Ingie Hovland**, *Assistant Professor*  
Religion & Women's Studies
- **Juanita Johnson-Bailey**, *Director and Professor*  
Lifelong Education, Administration and Policy & Women's Studies
- **Joselyn Leimbach**, *Senior Lecturer*  
Women's Studies
- **Rumya Putcha**, *Associate Professor*  
Music & Women's Studies
- **Patricia Richards**, *Director and Professor*  
Sociology & Women's Studies

**Elizabeth Saari Browne** published "Barbe Michel Adam: Recovering Names and Networks in Natural History Illustration," in *Thresholds 52: Disappearance* (April 2024). In October 2023 she was an Invited panelist on "Women Printmakers in the Decloux Collection," for "'A Library of Decorative Arts: Architecture and Ornament Prints in the Decloux Collection, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum," Print Council of America, IFPDA Print Fair, and in June 2024 she gave a talk on "Clodion's Clay Vases and the Origins of Art" at the 36th Congrès du Comité International d'Histoire de l'Art in Lyon, France. Dr. Browne was also the recipient of a Summer 2024: UGA Special Collections Library Teaching Fellowship.

**Kelly Happe** was promoted to Full Professor and served as Associate Head in Communication Studies and Graduate Coordinator in Women's Studies. She also published 3 essays: "Rethinking Utopia as Form: Failure, Time, and the Political

Subject of Anti-Capitalism," "How Euro-American Science Became Dominant: Transnational Circulations of Knowledge and Capital" (with Lynda Olman), and "Violence, Plasticity, and Rhetoric" (with Allegro Wang).

**Cecilia Herles** was invited to give the keynote lecture, "Feminist Futures: Gender and the Politics of Food" at the World Conference on Gender and Women's Studies, London, UK. She co-facilitated "North American Asian Feminist Pedagogical Workshop: Re:Sisters, Re:Seeding, Growing, and Embodying Joy" at the National Women's Studies conference. She was invited to serve on a panel on "Women and Environmental Leadership" at the Villanova Environmental Law Symposium in February 2024. She co-taught *The Woman Warrior* with her North American Asian Feminisms class and Dr. Pushpa Parekh's class at Spelman College in February 2024. Herles and IWS colleagues, Vanessa Raditz, Jess Martinez, Erin McDermott, and Dr. Elise Robinson participated in a roundtable at the WGS South conference in March 2024. Herles led a pre professional office of advising book club meeting on *Rest is Resistance*. She completed the UGA DI certificate and participated in a focus group with the Food Scholars Program at Spelman College. Her paper on "(Re) Imagining Higher Education to Address Sustainable Development Goals: Flourishing through Praxis" was accepted at the international 17th Pascal Conference in Taipei, Taiwan.

**Ingie Hovland** co-edited a special issue on the politics and ethics of citation for the journal *Studies in Religion*, to which she also contributed an article, "Feminist Cites." She published an article on her current book project on first-wave Protestant feminists in *Religion & Gender* and wrote a chapter about her previous book project on "Mission Station Christianity" for the *Palgrave Handbook of Christianity in Africa*. She continues to be interested in student reading; she presented on this issue to UGA students and faculty in a series of workshops and published an article on her latest reading study in *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education*. She enjoyed coordinating a Graduate Writing Group for the Religion Department and the IWS Book Club for IWS.

**Patricia Richards** continues her tenure as co-editor of *Gender & Society*, which is now the #1 journal in women's and gender studies and the #3 journal in sociology, according to the 2023 impact factor report.

## IWS Staff | Updates

**Elise Robinson**, PR and Program Coordinator, presented on "The Original Influencers: Suffragettes and Fashion Activism," at the National Women's Studies Association conference in November, and participated in a roundtable discussion on mental health in WGS programs at the WGS South conference in March, along with Dr. Cecilia Herles and IWS GTAs Vanessa Raditz, Jess Martinez, and Erin McDermott. She was also an invited presenter on "Race, Suffrage, and A Pageant of Great Women" for the North American Victorian Studies Association conference in April. Dr. Robinson continues to assist with the administration of the Mellon Multivocal Humanities Grant recently given to the IWS, and was pleased to facilitate bringing Dr. Kate Manne to campus last year for a visit around her work on fatphobia.

**Carla York**, Administrative Assistant, has once again completed a record number of trainings and certificates this year, including: Supervisory Fundamentals Course, Performance Management Best Practices for Supervisors, Centralized Classroom Scheduling Training, 3 Courses on Imposter Syndrome, and Stop Overthinking & Manage Your Inner Critic. She also manages our Work Study student, Bailey, and has been instrumental in remodeling the IWS conference room, helping with our first WMST Graduation ceremony and starting the Well-being Hub Project.

*The Institute for Women's Studies fosters interdisciplinary study of women and gender, and critical investigations of the complex ways knowledge, experience, and social systems are shaped by gendered norms and assumptions. Our teaching and research emphasize race, ethnicity, nationality, class, age, sexuality, and different abilities as categories of analysis. The Institute for Women's Studies offers an undergraduate major and minor, an undergraduate certificate in LGBTQ+ Studies, and a graduate certificate for master's and doctoral students in any discipline.*



**Lisa Dolasinski** presented “Screening (A)sexual Italian Seniors in Di Gregorio’s Films” at the Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies International Conference (Rome); presented “On Afropessimism and Afrofuturism: The Black ‘Boogeymen’ of Childish Gambino and Ghali” at the Modern Language Convention (Boston); organized, chaired, and presented in “Old Age as Surplus in Italian Literature and Media” at the Northeast Modern Language Convention (Boston); and organized and chaired “Alternative Assessments and Surplus Language Learning” at the Northeast Modern Language Convention (Boston). Dr. Dolasinski was also awarded a grant from the Nina Salant Hellerstein Professional Development Fund, which will be used to support her invited presentation “Serie italiane, feminism, and (Muslim) women: The cases of Imma Tataranni and SKAM Italia,” at The right to be (seen): Afrodescendant Women Artists in Italy and Beyond National Borders (Bucknell University, October 2024).

**Maryann Gallagher** published an article, “Opportunities for Linking Women, Peace and Security to the Department of Energy,” co-authored with Elizabeth Howell (SPIA Master of International Policy student) in the *International Journal of Nuclear Security*. In April she (virtually) delivered a keynote lecture on Women, Peace & Security to the Powering Up – Women in Nuclear Advancing Gender Equality Workshop, hosted by the US Department of Energy’s Nuclear Security Women in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**Stephanie Jones** published two book chapters: “Dismantling patriarchy in teacher education” in the *Encyclopedia of Social Justice in Education* (forthcoming), and “Reclaiming dreams of our shared future: Decolonizing metanarratives about what can/should/will be through imaginative diegesis” in *The Routledge Companion to Decolonizing Art, Craft, and Visual Culture Education*. She also coauthored a number of journal articles, including “Generative AI and composing: an intergenerational conversation among literacy scholars” in *English Teaching: Practice & Critique* and “Making kin with trees: Three educators and children entangled with treescapes” in *Bank Street Occasional Papers*. Dr. Jones gave a talk on “Claiming the Body, Gender, Sexuality, and Sex in Teacher Education” for the University of Alabama and Oregon State University, and was an invited speaker for the 2024 Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential’s Sex Ed Summit. And in spring 2024, Dr. Jones was a visiting scholar at University of Washington, Seattle.

**Jessica Kissinger** won the UGA Lamar Dodd Creative Research Award this year.

**Lih Ben Shitrit** published a new edited volume: *The Gates of Gaza: Critical Voices from Israel on October 7 and the War with Hamas* (De Gruyter 2024). She has also accepted a new position as the Director of NYU’s Taub Center for Israel Studies, and the Henry and Merilyn Taub Associate Professor of Israel Studies, NYU.

**Barbara McCaskill’s** essay on the prolific nineteenth-century Black poet and abolitionist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper is forthcoming in *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, for a 2025 special forum commemorating the bicentennial of Harper’s birth. Dr. McCaskill participated with Dr. Shaundra Walker and Dr. Sidonia Serafini of Georgia College in a video to commemorate the induction of Adella Hunt Logan, a turn-of-the-century Black educator and suffragist, into Georgia Women of Achievement. With Dr. Nicholas Allen, she continues as co-PI. of Culture and Community at the Penn Center National Historic Landmark District, funded by the Mellon Foundation. This third year of the project’s annual spring residencies attracted 106 faculty and students from twelve institutions, including Howard University, Carnegie Mellon University, Morehouse College, and Georgia Tech, who participated over a two-week period. The Culture and Community project received a 2024 Public Humanities Award for Leadership in Practice and Communities, Honorable Mention, from the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes. McCaskill was named a 2024 recipient of the Franklin College’s M. G. Michael Award to encourage new creative initiatives and reward research excellence.

**Cecilia Rodriguez** published a bilingual book of creative writing in December 2023: *Pathways to Silence*.

**Anna Stenport** published several pieces, including “Remediating Sápmi: Hypermediacy, the Global Indigenous Arctic, and Samisk audiovisuell samling (2018-2023)” in *Screen 65.1* (2024), “Remediering av globala, arktiska rörliga bilder och arkiv i relation till projektet Samisk audiovisuell samling” in *Samisk Audiovisuell Samling* (2024), and “Reforming and Revalidating the Humanities Master’s Degree at a STEM-Driven University” in *Graduate Education for a Thriving Humanities Ecosystem* (2023). Dean Stenport also received a grant from the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation for the project “Transnational Women’s Filmmaking in Sweden and Canada during the long 1970s,” as well as a University of Georgia Foundation award.

## 2023/24 | Mellon Grant Updates

In August 2023, the IWS was the proud recipient of a Mellon Foundation Multivocal Humanities Grant to support interdisciplinary work in women’s and gender studies. Over the past year, we have used the grant money to support a variety of initiatives related to our theme of Building Southern Intersectional Futures, including:

- Developing [dedicated web pages](#) for the Mellon grant on our unit’s website, with information and guidelines for undergrads, grads, and faculty;
- Administering two calls for research proposals (one per semester), coordinating the review process and the distribution of funds for researchers and mentors;
- Hosting a well-attended public lecture and book event with Dr. Kate Manne on her book *Unshrinking: How to Face Fatphobia*;
- Convening a meeting with WGSS programs across the state, strengthening a network for communication and support;
- Supporting two creative collaborations, with two more funded for the coming term;
- Hosting noted disability activist and scholar Sunaura Taylor for a lecture and book event in October 2024;
- Offering mini-grants for the formation of Feminist Faculty Learning Groups at UGA and in collaboration with other state WGS programs.

We are especially proud to have funded fifteen student research projects spanning a number of disciplines and practices, from a mixed methods study of barriers and supports for bisexual women and lesbians who have experienced intimate partner violence, to a story map of queer climate justice, to an exploration of southern students’ views on reproductive health issues, to an archival storytelling project centering the housing experiences of disabled tenants and womxn of color. We are excited to see the development of these projects and will be posting regular updates on our website!



## Women's Studies Graduates

### WMST Grad Certificate Completion:

Leslyn Beckles, Mary Frances Early College of Education  
Henry Miller, Communication Studies  
Teddy Perkins, Art History  
Allegro Wang, Communication Studies

### WMST Undergraduate Majors:

Ana Sofia Castresana  
Emma Hilleary  
Amanda McCullough  
Durva Pai  
Isabelle Schwartz  
Roni Ma'Ayan Wagner  
Isobel Wastler  
Catherine Widay  
Talyn Williams  
Marti Wolf



## Undergrad Kudos:

**Roni Ma'Ayan Wagner** and **Marti Wolf** received the IWS Senior Leadership Awards this spring.

**Riley Deyo** participated in the WGS South conference in SC.

**Vybhavi Kotireddy** and **Julianna Nutt** were awarded a Mellon grant for their project on undergraduate attitudes about reproductive medicine in the southern US.

**Dami Odubola**, double major in Women's Studies and Philosophy, was honored with the inaugural Wanda Wilcox scholarship.

**Harini Tirumala** participated in the Richard Macksey National Undergrad Humanities Research conference at Johns Hopkins University.

**Sophie Volpe** participated in the National Collegiate Research Conference in Boston run by Harvard Undergrad Research Association.

## Grad Kudos:

**Gabrielle Compton** was awarded a Mellon Grant for her performance-as-research project "The Malady Mysteries."

**Sophia Flemming** was awarded a Mellon grant for her research on Black women's rhetorical strategies.

**Katie Hurlock** presented work at the National Women's Studies Association Conference in Baltimore. Hurlock also taught for the Cortona and Oxford studies abroad programs this year.

**Jess Martinez** and **Vanessa Raditz's** film *Can't Stop Change: Queer Climate Stories from the Florida Frontlines* premiered at the Transgender Film Festival in Tampa, FL. Martinez and Raditz were also each awarded Mellon Grants for their research on housing experiences of disabled tenants and womxn of color, and queer climate justice, respectively.

**Alexis Lygoumenos** presented her dissertation research at Brunel University's Bodies Conference in London titled: "The

'Ever Presence' of unnamed & unseen female bodies through voices in the 1940 and 2020 film adaptations of *Rebecca*." She also taught for UGA's Oxford summer program.

## Alumni Updates:

**Jennifer John Britto** was accepted into med school at U Illinois Chicago and Wayne State Med.

**Grace Gerely** was accepted into the UCLA Cinema and Media Studies grad program.

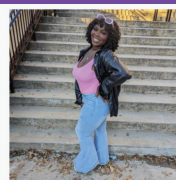
**Sabrina Somphone** got into five out of the nine schools she applied to, and started Georgia State University's DPT program in June.

## New Alumni Page!

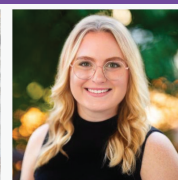
We are pleased to share that we have a whole new Alumni page with updates on all the amazing things our graduates are doing! Just go to <https://iws.uga.edu/alumni> to check out all the information, and be sure to check out the new Alumni Directory while you're there. And if you're one of our alums and you're not listed in the directory yet, just fill out [the form](#) and we will get you up there! This is a great place to keep in touch, share your milestones, and network with other IWS grads, and we want to keep expanding it. You can also always send updates to [wspinfo@uga.edu](mailto:wspinfo@uga.edu) - we love getting your news!



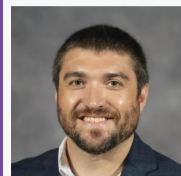
**TAWNIAH BEARD**  
Employee at Delta Airlines



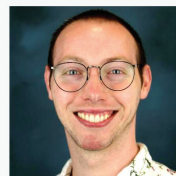
**JALYNN WELLS**  
Marketing Specialist at Duck Creek Technologies



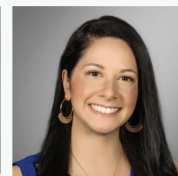
**RACHAEL ANDREWS**  
Marketing Content Writer with Development and Alumni Relations at UGA



**JOSH BEDFORD**  
Assistant Professor, Mikology MTSU



**RYAN BURKE**  
Administrative Associate/Office Manager in the Student Success and Advising Center in UGA's College of Family and Consumer Sciences



**CELINA CORREA**  
AEP of the Claims Department at Commonwealth Insurance





Dessa Cosma graduated with honors from UGA in 2006 with a triple major in Women's Studies, Anthropology, and International Affairs. While at UGA, she was an active member of the Women's Studies Student Organization (WSSO) and was selected as one of the outstanding student leaders to be included in the 2006 Who's Who at American Universities and Colleges.

**Q: Tell us about your current job.**

I am the founding director of Detroit Disability Power, a grassroots social justice organization that works to build the political power of the disability community and dismantle ableism. I started DDP after 15 years of working in various social justice movements (including reproductive, racial, and economic justice). While I loved that work and learned a lot, I also realized how little disability analysis even values-aligned people had. As a disabled person, this was problematic for me as I felt lonely and misunderstood, but I also saw it as a huge strategic missed opportunity for those trying to create an equitable world - how could that be accomplished without attention to the disability community and dismantling ableism!? So I started DDP to both organize disabled folks on issues (like housing, voting rights, transportation, healthcare, etc.) and to help build a disability analysis and disability justice praxis in social justice movements. I'm very proud of my organization and my team (we are a staff of 9 now!). We have won some major campaigns and are building a really loving & powerful community here in Detroit.

**Q: How has your Women's Studies experience shaped your life post-graduation?**

I have been able to travel the world thanks to the work required. The critical thinking and systems analysis I learned in WMST was a catalyst for my career (and my personal fulfillment). I also learned confidence in my role as a person fighting oppression through organizing, particularly as the president of the Women's Studies Student Organization (WSSO). There are also specific classes/readings/lectures that shaped me and my political analysis. A few years ago I emailed Dr. Chana Kai Lee to thank her for how the Black Feminism class she taught changed my life :) Also, I am still friends with people I met in WMST!

**Q: What are your favorite memories from your time in Women's Studies at UGA?**

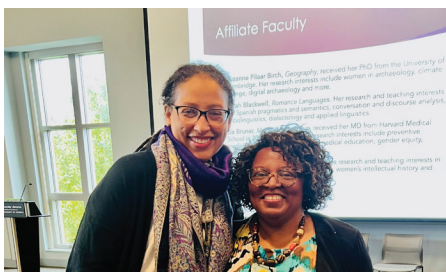
So many classes were good, but two that stand out are Dr. Lee's Black Feminism and Dr. Gowaty's Gender & Biology (I think that was the name), which was all about how there's NOT a gender binary in nature as people assume. We read an amazing book by a transgender scientist that I still reference regularly. I also really loved WSSO and being able to organize events and campaigns on campus. I was an undergrad during the Bush administration, so women's reproductive rights were constantly under attack. We did a lot on campus to raise awareness about this and we also got buses and went to the March for Women's Lives in DC in 2004. At that time, it was the largest gathering of Americans ever (1.4 Million people!).

**Q: Any advice for current Women's Studies students?**

Some people told me that getting a degree in WMST wasn't going to be helpful with a career. That has been absolutely UNTRUE. I love the work I do. I am surrounded by people who are trying to make the world better. I make a good living and I'm making a difference. So grateful for my grounding in feminism through WMST to help get me here.



## Photo Gallery | 2023-2024



**LEFT: Women Faculty Reception**  
Principal Lecturer Nichole Ray poses with Dr. Barbara McCaskill, recipient of our 2023 Women Faculty Award.



**RIGHT: Friday Speaker Series**  
Students explore some of the queer archival materials from UGA's special collections library, shared by IWS Affiliate Dr. Kathryn Manis.



**LEFT: Women's History Month**  
Guest speaker Dr. Kate Manne converses with IWS and Philosophy grad students as part of her campus visit.



**RIGHT: WGS South Conference**  
Women's Studies GTAs Jess Martinez and Vanessa Raditz pose with Program Coordinator Elise Robinson and Assistant Director Cecilia Herles after presenting at WGS South in March.





**LEFT:** IWS Alumna Raquel Willis gives a book talk at the ACC Public Library. **TOP:** Women's History Month Keynote Speaker Kellie Carter Jackson poses with Assistant Athletic Director Courtney Gay. **RIGHT:** Students grab some IWS swag at the Rainbow Resource Fair. **BOTTOM:** Director Patricia Richards and Core faculty Ingie Hovland pose with virtual graduation attendee Isobel Wastler at our first WMST Grad Ceremony.



## Upcoming | IWS Events

### Fall Faculty Reception

**September 13, 11:30am-1pm**  
Special Collections Library

Faculty are invited to attend our annual Reception to socialize, network, and celebrate our community. Dr. Carolyn Medine will be honored with this year's faculty award. Contact Elise at [Elise.Robinson@uga.edu](mailto:Elise.Robinson@uga.edu) for more info.

### Nichole Ray Memorial Gathering

**September 20th, 3-5pm**  
Institute for Women's Studies, Gilbert Hall

Join us as we gather to celebrate the life and legacy of our beloved Nichole Ray. Contact Elise at [Elise.Robinson@uga.edu](mailto:Elise.Robinson@uga.edu) for more info.

### WAGG (Women & Girls in GA) Conference

**October 18th, 8am-5pm**  
Miller Learning Center Reading Room

Our biannual conference has been reimagined this year, featuring a range of research on the theme "Southern Futures." Visit <https://iws.uga.edu/wagg> for details.

### Friday Speaker Series - Fall 2024

**September 6th, 12:40-1:30pm**  
Miller Learning Center 248

**Lioba Moshi**, Emerita Professor of Linguistics  
*Safari Njema: My Journey from Kilimanjaro to America*

**September 27th, 12:40-1:30pm**

Miller Learning Center 248

**Katherine Sobering**, Sociology/Women's & Gender Studies, University of North Texas  
*The Queer Birth Project*

**October 4th, 12:40-1:30pm**

Miller Learning Center 248

**Sunaura Taylor**, Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, University of California, Berkeley  
*Disabled Ecologies: Lessons from a Wounded Desert*

**October 11th, 12:40-1:30pm**

Miller Learning Center 248

**Kimberly Van Orman**, Institute for Artificial Intelligence  
*Artificial Intelligence and Ethics*

**October 25th, 12:40-1:30pm**

Miller Learning Center 248

**Blake Cravey**, Communication Studies/Women's Studies  
*The Rhetorics of Love*

**November 8th, 12:40-1:30pm**

Miller Learning Center 248

**Pat Bell Scott Awardees**  
*Interdisciplinary Black Feminist Studies Research*

**November 22nd, 12:40-1:30pm**

Miller Learning Center 248

**Mellon Grant Awardees**  
*Building Southern Intersectional Futures*

... And more to come!





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*Franklin College of Arts and Sciences*  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

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*IWS News is compiled and edited by Elise Robinson.  
Links can be accessed on the digital version of the newsletter,  
available on our website.*

## Contribute to the 50th Anniversary Fund

***Did you know that the Institute for Women's Studies will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2027? We've been doing the work since 1977, and we're getting ready to celebrate! We are kicking things off with a special 50th Anniversary Fundraiser to honor the hard work and visionary thinking of the founders of Women's Studies at UGA.***

### *We need your support!*

Gifts to this fund support faculty and student research fellowships, travel grants, experiential learning, awards, and dissertation writing fellowships. *Opportunities are also available for named funds* to support specific initiatives and can be devoted to research or programming around subject matters such as LGBTQ+ Studies, Disability Studies, Community Engaged Research, Gender & the Environment, Gender & the Arts, or Gender & Science, to name a few.



#### **Gifts by Check**

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*(Write "Women's Studies 50th Anniversary" on the memo line)*

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*For more information about giving to the Institute for Women's Studies,  
please contact the Franklin College Office of Development at (706) 542-3581.*

## **Every. Gift. Counts.**