This has been a wonderful year at the Women’s Center. We hosted many wonderful programs, were able to reach an even bigger audience for our programs, services and resources, and we started a new community outreach program: the Young Women Leaders Program.

Women’s Center programs featured a range of wonderful speakers from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds, who enlightened us on the dynamics of mother-daughter relationships in the African American community, the politics of body hair, and the importance of men in the struggle to end sexual violence, to name just a few. Our International Women’s Day Festival featured more than 40 performers, vendors, and educators and attracted a record audience. One of our program highlights this year were the book parties we hosted for Katarzyna Marciniak and Ayesha Hardison from the Department of English, and Marilyn Greenwald from Journalism.

After a year of planning, we inaugurated the Young Women Leaders Program (YWLP). Originally conceived at the University of Virginia’s Women’s Center, the program was introduced to us by Leah Brown, an undergraduate in African American Studies and an alum of the UVA YWLP program herself. YWLP pairs undergraduate women students with middle school girls from the Athens Middle School to develop leadership potential. During the Fall, we selected nine fantastic undergraduate students who were trained by Dr. Lisa Harrison of the Patton College of Education. Beginning in January, they were paired with six middle schoolers that had been selected by the guidance counselor, Dr. Emily Rittenhouse. Together, mentors and mentees explored study skills, nutrition, exercise, and healthy relationships, attended the International Women’s Day Festival, and went on outings across town. This program, we believe, perfectly exemplifies the mission of the Women’s Center and will make a great impact on our community.

We are excited to welcome Delaney Anderson to the Women’s Center Survivor Advocacy Program. Delaney joined us in November and is a graduate of the Florida State University’s Master in Social Work Program. Delaney brings much needed experience in program administration, client services, and supervisory skills to the Program. I’d like to especially thank our Graduate Assistants, Katie Merkle and Bill Arnold, who worked tirelessly during the transition period. Members of the Women’s Center team were selected to participate in the President’s Advisory Committee on Sexual Misconduct. Delaney Anderson and myself presented to the Committee on the services we provide and how we can best serve survivors.

As many of you know, this marks my last annual report. I have assumed a new position as Executive Director of Eden House, a non-profit that provides comprehensive recovery services for victims of human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation in New Orleans.

My eight years at Ohio University have been fabulous and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as the Founding Director of the Ohio University Women’s Center. I could not have had a better job, better colleagues or better students, and I have grown tremendously over the last eight years. Thank you for making it happen and being such strong supporters of our Women’s Center. I am looking forward to seeing the Center grow over the next eight years.

In Feminist Solidarity,
Susanne B. Dietzel

Table of Contents

- By the Numbers 2
- Program Highlights 2-3
- Advocacy and Outreach 3
- Research Support 3
- Women’s Center Staff 4
- Help Support the Center 4
Program Highlights

Queer Women in Film

We played a series of films depicting the lived experiences of queer women both in the United States and throughout the world. This series included films such as Orchids: My Intersex Adventure and Passionate Politics: the Life and Work of Charlotte Bunch.

Red Party: A Menstruation Celebration!

We had a day of period-positive events ranging from crafts, discussions regarding menstruation in a variety of contexts, a screening of the film Red Moon: Menstruation, Culture, and the Politics of Gender, and a raffle of alternative menstrual products.

Walk A Mile in Her Shoes

Ohio University held its 6th annual Walk A Mile in Her Shoes. About 70 men showed their support to end violence against women by teetering down Court Street in high heels, while about 30 women served as sideline support.

International Women’s Coffee Hours

We held 7 Coffee Hours dedicated to engaging with international students and community members from all over the world. Women from Saudi Arabia, China, Japan, Belarus, Oman, India, and elsewhere came to discuss topics as diverse as housing in Athens and the role of feminism in Islam.

Celebrating Women Leaders On & Off the Court

For its 6th year, the Women’s Center and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program recognized 80 female leaders from groups as diverse as Athens Black Contemporary Dancers and the Margaret Boyd Scholars Program at Ohio University during the Women’s Basketball game.

Book Parties

We celebrated the publication of three books by faculty members at Ohio University: Immigrant Protest: Politics, Aesthetics, and Everyday Dissent edited by Katarzyna Marciniak Writing through Jane Crow: Race and Gender Politics in African American Literature by Dr. Ayesha Hardison and Pauline Frederick Reporting: A Pioneer Broadcaster Covers the Cold War by Dr. Marilyn Greenwald

International Women’s Day Festival

This spring, we celebrated our 7th annual International Women’s Day Festival. This year’s theme was “Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture it!” We had a total of 635 participants, which included vendors, performers, educators, attendees, staff and volunteers.
Advocacy and Outreach

YWLP

This year the Women’s Center piloted the Young Women Leaders Program. This program pairs undergraduate women with students from Athens Middle School, allowing these two groups of women to form a mentor-mentee relationship. The mentors met with their mentees on a weekly basis, having discussions about a range of topics in accordance with a curriculum that the Women’s Center has been developing over the last couple of years. We look forward to continuing this program in the future and are proud of our inaugural group!

Better Bystanders

Bill Arnold and Daniel Parsons founded a student organization called Better Bystanders in order to facilitate discussions regarding sexual assault prevention with students and community members.

J. Jack Halberstam

J. Jack Halberstam, noted professor, author, and gender and queer theorist, gave a talk entitled “A Path So Twisted: Thinking Wildly With and Through Punk Feminisms.”

Love Your Body Day

We had a full day of body positive events, celebrating the lived experiences of people of all genders and their bodies. We displayed student and community members’ art, practiced “office yoga,” learned about female anatomy with Dr. Jane Balbo, discussed “socially unacceptable” bodies with Dr. Jalen Hutchinson, and talked about body hair with the Body Hair Acceptance Project.

OUSAP and OUPD present a Brown Bag Lunch & Learn

The Ohio University Survivor Advocacy Program and the Ohio University Police Department presented a brown bag regarding stalking and how to report it entitled “Stalking. Know it. Name it. Stop it.”

Ice Cream Social for Graduating Seniors and Friends of the Center

To conclude another amazing year, the Women’s Center invited all of its graduating senior staff and friends of the Women’s Center for an ice cream social. What's better than sprinkles and feminism?

Program Highlights Continued

Susanne Dietzel: You Will Be Missed

We would like to say a heartfelt goodbye to our director of the Women’s Center for the last 8 years. The center’s continued growth and development are a testament to her caring, determination, and leadership. We wish her the best of luck in New Orleans!

Welcome Delaney Anderson

We’d like to extend a special welcome to Delaney Anderson, our new OUSAP Program Coordinator! Delaney comes to OU from Florida where she received a MSW from Florida State University and worked in survivor advocacy.

Show off your Women’s Center pride by purchasing one of our mugs for $8 or a shirt (sizes S-XL) for $10.

Susanne Dietzel: You Will Be Missed

We would like to say a heartfelt goodbye to our director of the Women’s Center for the last 8 years. The center’s continued growth and development are a testament to her caring, determination, and leadership. We wish her the best of luck in New Orleans!
Meet the Women’s Center Staff

Dr. Susanne B. Dietzel, Director
Sarah Tucker Jenkins, Program Coordinator
Delaney Anderson, MSW OUSAP Coordinator
Kat Wargo, OUSAP Coordinator

Emily Burns, Graduate Assistant
Bill Arnold, Bystander Intervention & Prevention Educator
Kaitlyn Merkle Graduate Assistant for OUSAP
Hannah Abrahamson, Student Worker

Madeline Toerne, Student Worker
Anna Bekavac, Student Worker
Leah Brown, Student Worker
Kyle Serrot, Student Worker

Help Support the Women’s Center

The Women’s Center gratefully accepts gifts and donations to help us develop our programs and advance the mission of the center. Simply send a check made payable to:

The Ohio University Foundation
P.O. Box 869 Athens, OH 45701
All donations are tax deductible. Please make sure to write Women’s Center in the subject line.

We also accept books, magazine subscriptions, art, and your volunteer labor! For more information about volunteering at the Women’s Center, please see our website:

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Hours: M-Th 8am-7pm, F 8am-5pm

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Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram: OUWomensCenter
Subscribe to our newsletter on our website

This annual report has been compiled by Hannah R. Abrahamson, BA ’15. Thank you for your contributions to the Women’s Center and good luck in your future endeavors.