

the YWCA's Stepping Stones program, Neville House domestic violence shelter, Illinois State's Student Counseling Services sexual assault prevention services, V-Day, and Planned Parenthood Teen Awareness.

This year, the Clothesline Project joined the Office of Energy Management on the Illinois State Quad to raise awareness about two pressing issues in our community: sexual and domestic violence, and sustainability. Illinois State's Sexual Assault Prevention and Survivor Services and FLAME displayed a second clothesline featuring an activity that helped students visualize boundary lines. Statements provided on paper are attached on the clothesline, based on whether an individual feels the statement was closer to "Good to Go," "Stepping On My Line," or "Crossing Over My Line." Participation, discussion, and a few sunburns were evidence of a successful event.

Rozel White retires

Our beloved office support specialist, Rozel White, retired at the end of September after 15 years of service to WGS. Our faculty and staff threw a retirement party in her honor. She plans to spend her retirement with her family, working with her church on local projects, and starting a publishing business! Sue Tracy, our new office support specialist, has very big shoes to fill but has already risen to the occasion. We wish White every happiness in her new life! We know she'll be just as busy as ever.



(Left to right) Alison Bailey, Roz White, and Becca Chase

How Sallie Mae Stole The Middle Class

Erin Elizabeth tells us that she has been secretly collaborating with Sallie Mae student loans for the last year and a half. Her project was sparked by her growing



concern about predatory student loan lending practices and the potential economic repercussions of such practices. Sallie Mae provided her with raw materials and inspiration to make new works. She sees each work of art as a conversation between the company and herself. Her show is comprised of hundreds of pieces of mail she received from Sallie Mae over the past five years. The show was on display through the end of July.

WGS ALUMNI MATTER

Summer 2012

From the director

Congratulations to our recent graduates! We are looking forward to hearing about the ways you will carry forth the ideas and skills you learned as minors and certificate students. We always love it when our alums drop in to see us. The stories you tell me about where your education has taken you are always inspiring! I'm humbled by the incredibly selfless contributions each of you continue to make to social justice issues. Our alumni are running girls' empowerment programs, lobbying for reproductive justice, writing novels, teaching in universities, directing theater programs in high schools, working in publishing, finishing graduate school, and raising amazing children.

The year started off with a potluck at Julie Jung's house. We've also had a full year of programming. Our cosponsored International Studies Seminar Series hosted Alexis Aronowitz's talk on human trafficking and Elizabeth Heineman's presentation on sexual violence in conflict zones. We also invited Kristie Dotson from Michigan State to present "An Unnatural Disaster: U.S. Black Women and Calamitous Reciprocity." Tiya Miles gave her keynote to a standing room only crowd at our WGS symposium. She also met with black women leaders in Diversity Advocacy's Sister Circles women's empowerment program. Dotson also works with Sister Circles at MSU, and there is talk of having a Sister Circles exchange program between the two campuses next year. Some of our affiliated faculty worked with Illinois State University's writing program to host @Salon with readings by Lambda Literary Award winner Sharon Bridgforth. The event also featured Jin Lee's photographs. Erin Elizabeth's art show, *How Sallie Mae Stole the Middle Class*, graced the walls of the WGS Gallery this spring.

Feminist Led Activist Movement to Empower (FLAME) continues to light up the campus each semester with its Clothesline Project gender violence awareness events, and the annual V-Day performance of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. They continue to generate funds for local community groups.

I want to thank Kyle Ciani for serving as acting director and for the work she did for our program.

In solidarity,
Alison Bailey

Alumni news



Ryan Radamacher loves life in Arizona! He and Jennifer Witt (another Illinois State graduate) were married in July. Radamacher has a tenure-track position at Northland Pioneer College in the White Mountains of Arizona, where he teaches American literature and several introductory classes.

Liz Sawyer is five months pregnant and due on Labor Day! Her career is a bit on hold. She's turned over the reins of her campus LGBTQ group and is stepping back from other commitments so she can prepare for motherhood.

Julia Drauden began working as an editorial assistant in the business, marketing, and career education department at Goodheart-Willcox Publisher in Tinley Park. She started in January and is thrilled that she can put her publishing training to work!

Rachel Spangler says, "Life here is good." Her son, Jackson, is now 4 years old, and she loves being a mom! As for her other job, it's not too shabby either. Her fourth book, *LoveLife*, was published this month, and her fifth, *Spanish Heart*, is ready for an October release date. Also, she legally married her longtime partner, Susie, in New York last month. Congrats you two!



(Left to right) Susie, Jack, and Rachel



Ani Marisol [Tiffany Starnes] got a new job as the program general manager with the Girls Empowerment Network in Austin, Texas. She is super psyched about the position and says she would not be doing the work she does today without her WGS minor. She recently became a new homeowner.

Diana Onken has been busy fighting the war on women in her role as the deputy director for affiliate and national programs at NARAL Pro-Choice America. In addition to encouraging grassroots action against various anti-choice shenanigans in Congress, she's also working with the NARAL affiliate network to build stronger organizations. Onken is a mom to two young girls and is navigating raising young girls in a society in which gender stereotypes are strong and often unhealthy.



Jenna Goldsmith is completing her Ph.D. work in literature at the University of Kentucky. She returned to Illinois State for the Women's and Gender Studies symposium this year to present her paper, "Getting Your Mind in the Gutter: Non-Jewish Jewish Identity in Alison Bechtel's Graphic Memoir *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*."



Bridget McKenna completed her three-year specialist degree in school psychology from Eastern Illinois University in 2011. She is employed by the Ogle County Educational Cooperative in Byron. She works as a school psychologist in Rochelle, Ashton, and Franklin Grove. She is living with her fiancé in Sycamore. They will be married this summer.

Michelle McCabe is working on her master's degree in applied family and child studies with a specialization in marriage and family therapy at Northern Illinois University. This spring she started her thesis, "The Impact of Childhood Attachment to Caregivers and Later Family Rejection to Gay Males and Lesbians Identity on Mate Selection." She began an internship at DeKalb County Youth Service Bureau at the end of May.



Brandy Peak

Brandy Peak officially completed her master's degree in nonprofit management. "It only took me six years!" she says.

WGS partners with YWCA on Girls Be U program

Former WGS minor Erica Thurman graduated only a few years ago, but she's back in town and working with the McLean County YWCA! As the new director of Stepping Stones, Thurman has helped launch a new program for young women called Girls Be U, or "Girls Building Empowerment and Uniqueness." This empowerment program for teen women is open to high school-aged women. Participants from McLean County area schools will explore their own uniqueness and affirm their positive qualities through an open and creative girl-centered curriculum. Topics to be addressed include health and wellness, relationships, finances, global girls' issues, and other timely topics. As these young women gain greater self-awareness and confidence, they will use these newly-acquired skills and knowledge to become leaders and role models for other participants in the program. The Women's and Gender Studies Program is working with the YWCA to offer a new professional practice internship for this program. Stay tuned!



WGS awards 4th Anne Semlak Memorial Scholarship

The Anne Semlak Memorial Scholarship provides the WGS program with an annual opportunity to recognize a student with outstanding academic accomplishments and social achievements that mirror Anne's contributions to the world. This year, the award went to Sara Zakowski. She is a junior majoring in interpersonal communication with minors in both Spanish and Women's and Gender Studies. She has volunteered with various women's shelters including St. Vincent DePaul Home for women recovering from addiction and teen pregnancy.



She has also worked with Harmony, Hope, and Healing, a creative and therapeutic music program offering dignity and spiritual healing to homeless and poor women, men, and children in the Chicago area. She has also served as a guidance counselor for troubled teens. Her whole family turned out for the award ceremony at the WGS symposium.

Tiya Miles delivers WGS symposium keynote and helps support Sister Circles

Tiya Miles delivered her keynote address, "Writing Black Women into History," to a standing room only audience in the Bone Student Center. Her talk not only highlighted the importance of black women's history, but also gave the audience a glimpse of what it's like to be a black woman doing U.S. history. Miles' scholarship explores the complex interrelationships between African and Cherokee people living and working in colonial America. She is the author of *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (2005) and *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story* (2010). She is a 2011 MacArthur Fellow.



Perhaps her greatest gift to the Illinois State community was the time Miles spent with black women on campus as part of the Sister Circles program sponsored by Diversity Advocacy. The program provides opportunities for black women to come together to discuss questions of black identity, black feminism, and empowerment. Miles shared a meal and discussion with a few dozen women in the Sister Circles program before facilitating an open discussion with the Illinois State community on black feminist issues. Angela Davenport with Diversity Advocacy have plans to expand the Sister Circles program in the fall to include a student exchange with black women at Michigan State University.

Eventful spring semester for FLAME

The spring semester began with FLAME's 2012 production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. Community members, along with the friends and

family of cast members, made this year's raffle one of the most exciting drawings to date. Prize winners got to own a piece of history: a burgundy chaise lounge in the shape of a stiletto heel used as a prop in the show. The event raised close to \$6,000 for



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