



CAROLINA WOMEN'S CENTER

THE CENTER FOR GENDER EQUITY

# 2015 YEAR IN REVIEW



“

At the  
Women's Center,  
I am surrounded  
by supportive and  
thoughtful mentors  
who inspire me to  
use my voice.

”



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL



## DEAR FRIENDS OF THE CAROLINA WOMEN'S CENTER,

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT** of the Carolina Women's Center during the past year. With your help, we have continued to expand the programs, services, and opportunities for students, staff, and faculty at UNC while continuing to pursue gender equity across campus and in our community. Together, we can work to make sure that gender is not a barrier to anyone's success at Carolina.

The Carolina Women's Center enjoyed many successes this year, from earning a renewal of our Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women *Grant to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Dating Violence on Campus* to our ongoing efforts to foster family-friendly policies and practices. We are fortunate to be surrounded by colleagues who work in partnership with us on these efforts, and we continue identify new opportunities for engagement on a range of gender equity issues every day.

As we take a breath at the start of the New Year, we have an opportunity to reflect on the many contributions of our volunteers. One of the greatest assets to the Carolina Women's Center is our robust student corps. Our student interns, volunteers, and employees work hard every day to identify campus needs and create programs to specifically address those needs and gaps. Their creativity, enthusiasm, and drive fuel the Center and keep us on our toes. We are deeply grateful for the inspiration they bring to the Carolina Women's Center.

We are incredibly proud of our efforts over the past year, and we are looking forward to the challenges that the next year will bring. We will continue to deepen our partnerships, our programming, and our commitment to promote gender equity for everyone on campus. With your support, we hope to continue these efforts to reach more people in the coming year.

Many thanks for everything you do to promote gender equity in your communities.

Sincerely,

CHRISTI HURT,  
*Director*

## GENDER VIOLENCE SERVICES

For the Gender Violence Services Coordinator, 2015 has been a year of growth, both in the number of UNC community members served and innovative programs. As the GVSC, Cassidy Johnson acts as an advocate and provides survivors with emotional support, answers questions about reporting options at the University, assists in navigating through the reporting process, and connects survivors to support options at UNC and in the community. She supports all members of the university community who have experienced gender-based violence, either before or during their time at UNC. As one of the campus's few confidential resources, she is not required to report incidents to the Equal Opportunity and Compliance office.

As students, faculty, and staff have learned about the GVSC, Cassidy has focused almost exclusively on working with individuals to help them heal. As the university works to implement and improve its prevention, response, and disciplinary procedures, the demand for Cassidy's services does indicate that survivors are seeking support and the resources they need.

The exception to the GVSC's focus on direct services is the Delta Advocates program, a partnership with Student Wellness, Equal Opportunity and Compliance, and Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and Community Involvement. Through peer education, campus outreach, and survivor support, the Delta Advocate program unifies the sorority and fraternity community in preventing sexual and interpersonal violence and trains individuals within each Greek organization to provide an empathetic and informed response to survivors. The program was initially piloted with members of Panhellenic Association, and this year it expanded to begin serving all women and female-identified members of Panhellenic Association, Greek Alliance Council, and National Pan-Hellenic Council.

The Women's Center is proud to continue offering services to our Carolina community members who have been impacted by gender-based violence.

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When I'm having a crisis and feeling overwhelmed, my first thought is to come to the Carolina Women's Center. And when I'm having a good day and looking to relax and share with others, I'll go to the Carolina Women's Center. It's a perfect place to study, but also a great space to know that my whole self is safe and taken seriously.

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## PARENTING

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2015 was a big year for the CWC in family advocacy. We updated and revamped the website “Parenting@UNC” to be more comprehensive and user friendly, and we also collaborated with a number of dedicated graduate students. Responding to a compelling case by the Student Parent Advocate, the Graduate School revised its parental leave policy to allow both UNC-affiliated parents (rather than just one parent) to take parental leave. The graduate students hosted the first (of many!) welcome event for new student parents as part of the graduate student orientation program. The CWC also hosted another first: a student from the School of Social Work, Olivia, used her placement to assist student parents trying to balance academic and personal commitments. She also worked on a project to assess the places and ways in which undergraduate student parents struggle to negotiate university policies and resources.

We also worked to improve policies and resources for parenting faculty and staff. With the Employee Forum’s expertise and support, we identified areas of need for staff, and the Committee on the Status of Women (COSOW) lobbied the Provost and the Chancellor to commit significant funds for the creation of much-needed lactation rooms across campus. With our partners in Facilities, we are in the process of constructing or assisting in the construction of six new designated lactation rooms! And we have two more years of funding! COSOW also co-authored an updated “Lactation Toolkit,” a guide to lactation rights and needs for employees and supervisors, currently awaiting approval. Finally, recognizing that frequently the biggest obstacle to parents is lack of awareness about the existing resources and policies, the CWC is working with partners across the university to increase faculty, staff and students’ knowledge of all the benefits and support that UNC offers.



## FOR OUR STUDENTS

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2015 was another year of growth for the CWC's student programming. We strengthened and improved our existing programs, and we implemented new educational and leadership development opportunities.

### CAMPUS COFFEE CONVERSATIONS

Our Campus Coffee Conversations, co-hosted by the CWC and UNC Men's Project, are a monthly dialogue series dedicated to fostering informative, insightful, and engaging conversation about gender equity and violence prevention. This year, we covered the intersection of race and gender, healthy college relationships, consent, and trigger warnings in the classroom.

### AWARENESS INITIATIVES

The CWC works with campus and community partners to coordinate a number of educational programs and awareness campaigns surrounding Gender Week (March), Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April), and Relationship Violence Awareness Month (October). Two examples include an event for Carolina community members to meet representatives from offices that provide resources and support to survivors of sexual violence and a photo campaign that allowed UNC students to share what a healthy relationship looks like to them.

### STUDENT-LED PROGRAMMING

We are proud to serve as an incubator for students to develop their own programs. Many of our most successful programs have been student designed! 2015 saw the third year of Body Politics, a performance-based event that examines cultural ideals of body image; the fourth year of The Naked Truth: How the Media Shapes Us, a biannual media literacy presentation; and the revamp of Rock the Risers, a program that encourages attendance at UNC Women's Athletics events. We can't wait to see what our students come up with next!



## ALTERNATIVE BREAK EXPERIENCES

Now in its third year, the CWC's Alternative Break program continues to thrive. By working alongside the same organizations each year, we have been able to develop strong and mutually beneficial partnerships with a number of North Carolina rape crisis centers, domestic violence response centers, and child-serving organizations.

In March, we sent nine students back to eastern North Carolina to work alongside a sexual assault resource center in New Bern and a child-serving organization in Wilmington. The students helped with facilities maintenance and beautification, attended a screening and discussion of a documentary about masculinity in America, took a multi-hour training on child sexual abuse prevention, and engaged in critical conversation with non-profit directors and staff about how each organization's work is shaping our local communities.

In October, another group of nine students returned to western North Carolina to volunteer with a bar outreach program conducted by a rape crisis center in Asheville. The program, which trains bar staff to recognize and prevent drug and alcohol facilitated sexual assault, served as the blueprint for our Chapel Hill-based outreach program, Raise the Bar. A number of students who participated in the fall break trip returned to campus and became involved with Raise the Bar.

Our Alternative Break trips give students the opportunity to connect their academic interests and social passions with service and community engagement. These experiences foster connections between students with shared interests in gender equity. Additionally, each break is student led and provides opportunities for development in peer leadership. As one student leader for the fall break trip said, "The semester I spent working with CWC on the Alternative Fall Break program was one of the most formative placements I have experienced so far at UNC ... I am very thankful for the incredible mentors and students I had the chance to connect with while at CWC!"



Working at the Women's Center has proven to be one of the most transformative opportunities I have experienced here at UNC. I have expanded my views on gender and society and have learned the importance of identity. My work at the Women's Center has challenged me artistically, intellectually, and academically. I am confident that by working at the Women's Center I am one step closer to having a fully realized vision of who I am as a student, artist, and human being.



## HAVEN TRAINING

The HAVEN Program is a collaboration between the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office, Carolina Women's Center, Office of the Dean of Students, and Student Wellness. It teaches participants the skills and resources to be an ally to someone who has experienced sexual, interpersonal (relationship) violence, or stalking. The three-hour training emphasizes the importance of listening, responding compassionately, and connecting survivors to resources on campus and in the community.

## THE MOXIE PROJECT

The Moxie Project, also in its third year at UNC, combines academic learning with a community engagement experience. During their spring semester, our six Moxie Scholars completed a three-credit course, "Oral History and Women's Activism in the South." Then, over the summer, they participated in eight-week internships with Triangle-based community organizations: the Pauli Murray Project, Women AdvANCe, and North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Our Moxies did everything from developing curricula for elementary and middle school students to writing newsletters to planning a leadership development conference for North Carolina youth. One Moxie Scholar said, "I learned so much from the Moxie Project. I think it did a great job of connecting academics to the real world, and I made so many great connections this summer. It really opened up a whole new part of my Carolina experience, and gave me a lot of insight into what I want to study with my remaining time at UNC, and what kind of work I want to pursue after graduating." The Moxie Project is a collaboration with the Southern Oral History Program, the Women's and Gender Studies Department, the History Department, and is supported by the Office of the Provost.



The Carolina Women's Center was instrumental in advancing the science for women's bladder health across the lifespan. As a result of this award, I was able to conduct a study that provided new information about how women perceive bladder health and aided in the revision of an existing questionnaire. The CWC award led to new research collaborations and innovative studies that will benefit women's health.



## FACULTY AND STAFF

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The CWC continued to develop and strengthen its relationship with faculty and staff across the University. By building relationships with faculty and staff, as individuals and organizations, we learn where we are needed to improve policies and resources around gender equity and to provide programming in response to faculty and staff needs.

Much of our energy to improve conditions for faculty and staff focused on our Core Area of Family Advocacy (described in more detail in the “Parenting” section), but we also worked with faculty and staff governance groups to deal with challenges integral to the CWC’s mission. The Community and Diversity committee invited the CWC to present on gender-related issues for its “diversity syllabus,” a year-long series of moderated conversations in Faculty Council. The Faculty Welfare and Fixed Term Faculty committees continued their work to improve the experience and working conditions for non-tenure track faculty, who are disproportionately female. The Status of Women committee both partnered with the CWC to develop an updated Lactation Toolkit and focused on issues of equity, transparency and accountability.

In response to faculty and staff needs, the program coordinator worked with several offices across campus to support existing and develop new programming:

- HAVEN training for faculty and staff, with staff from the Dean of Students and Equal Opportunity and Compliance Offices, educates participants in how to effectively support survivors of sexual violence;
- “Advice on Selecting a College, Tips on Applying, and Insight into Financial Aid,” with staff from the Offices of Admissions and of Scholarships and Student Aid and from the Writing Center, offered UNC employees guidance through the thicket of their own and their children’s applications to college;
- “Navigating the Complexity of Gender in the Workplace,” with the Association of Women Faculty and Professionals and the Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, focuses on strategies for interrupting daily workplace gender inequity; and
- a workshop, with Translational and Clinical Sciences (NC TraCS), identified how gender bias shapes letters of recommendation.

This year’s Faculty Scholars Program, which awards grants of \$10,000 each, gathered three scholars with amazing projects. Supported by the Office of the Provost, this funding enables Faculty Scholars to focus on scholarly and creative projects that further gender equity broadly and reflect the mission of the CWC. During Fall 2015, recipients conduct research for their projects, prior to presenting a public lecture in Spring 2016.

An assistant professor in the Anthropology department, **Dr. Jocelyn Lim Chua**’s project, “When War Comes Home: Violence among U.S. Veterans and their Families,” seeks to understand violence among returning US veterans and their families to “develop a gendered reading of homecoming after war.” Exploring archives, legal texts, and a range of fictional texts, **Dr. Tanya Shields** (associate professor, Women’s and Gender Studies) “reconsiders the status of women as proprietors and laborers [of slave plantations in the U.S. South and Caribbean] and how these roles have a sustained impact on current socio-sexual economies,” in her project “Gendered Labor: Place and Power on Female-Owned Plantations.” **Dr. Kumarini Silva**’s “Circulating Romance: Global Gendered Fantasies” examines the material and economic history of Harlequin Mills and Boons in Colombo, Sri Lanka to “map[] the ways in which contemporary narratives of femininity and the feminine reinforce historical socio-political and economic conditions that disadvantage women, on a global level”; Silva is an assistant professor of Communications.

## OUR MISSION

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Is to create an inclusive education and work environment where gender is not a barrier to success, difference and diversity are celebrated, and everyone is safe to live, learn, teach, and work without threat of harm or unequal treatment.

## STAFF

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**Christi Hurt**, Director

**Cassidy Johnson**, Gender Violence Services Coordinator

**Clare Counihan**, Program Coordinator (Staff and Faculty)

**Shelley Gist**, Program Coordinator (Students)

### STUDENT STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND INTERNS

Rachel Allen, Desiree Arauz, Brittany Baporis, Lauren Bishop, Diamond Brown, Mijal Bucay, Dara Burg, Vanessa Canuto, Sylvia Chen, Casey Crow, Brianna Davis, Allison Eames, Sammie Espada, Brittanie Fisher, Shawna Gladney, Tomiko Hackett, Emily Hagstrom, Emma Holcomb, Bailey Jackson, Devin Johnson, Amanda Kubic, Debanjali Kundu, Joy Liburd, Olivia Linn, Hannah Love, Jamie Martina, Katie Murray, Maria Aguilar Noyola, Yaa Ofori-Marfoh, Jonathan Olivares, Shruti Patel, Hannah Saggau, Shiyon Shoyoye, Hannah Smoot, Hannah Strickland, Anna Taylor, Emily Venturi, Callie Wallace, Jasmine Wiggins, Kelly Whalen

## WAYS TO CONTACT US

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My biggest  
takeaway of working  
at the Carolina's  
Women's Center is  
sharing a passion and  
vision for a world of  
diversity and equality  
with a growing  
community of people.

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THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* NORTH CAROLINA  
*at* CHAPEL HILL

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Non Profit  
Organization  
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The CWC is  
such a warm  
and inviting  
space! I always  
feel welcome  
when I walk in  
the door.

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