

WKU Gender & Women's Studies

Virtual Awards Ceremony Newsletter

As the Gender & Women's Studies program finishes a challenging 2020-2021 academic year, the staff would like to express our gratitude to those involved in programming and support of GWS students/faculty. Through our virtual presence, GWS's events and presentations had a much longer reach this year and the program thrived through our co-sponsorships and partnerships. Through the generosity and flexibility of our donors, GWS was able to award over **\$7200 in aid to GWS students.**

Flexibility and creativity have been this year's themes, so we created a **virtual classroom visit** for affiliated faculty to share/post, promoted/co-sponsored programming from Berea College, zoomed with Shalini Kantayya director of CODED BIAS (2020) and in our student-centered tradition, GIFS committee involved 20 students in presentations at two zoom events. **Abigail Raley**, GWS minor, started the Women Writers Club with ten members collaborating via zoom. Dr. Branham and I presented at the virtual South East Women's Studies Association conference and we look forward to Dr. Jane Olmsted's memoir, *The Tree You Come Home To* (Legacy Book Press 2021) as well as her collection of short stories *Letters from the Karst* (summer 2021).

A deep thanks goes out to the core faculty/staff: Dr. Jane Olmsted and Dr. Kristi Branham, to our quarter-time office associate, Renee Purdy, and to our part-time graduate student, Hector Dominguez, GWS GA.

Special thanks to all those who worked with GWS this year: Dr. Dale Rigby, writing contest coordinator and Dr. Nancy Dinan writing contest judge; GIFS committee: Dr. Ted Hovet and the students of English 295 Pop Culture and Gender who organized and presented our media as well as Ms. Jessica Folk who gave her expertise at the Quarter Life Poetry zoom and organized the Poetry is for All of Us event. The Scholarships and Awards Committee Ms. Trish Jagers, Ms. Elisa Berry with chair Hector Dominguez delivered our recipients to us and thanks to Dr. Bella Mukonyora for organizing the Women in Religion Seminar. A special thanks goes to Dr. Kristi Branham and Dr. Merrall Price, both active members of the GWS Steering committee. Thanks also goes to the English Department's Dr. Alison Langdon, Kimberly Nessler, Mary Johnson and Bailey Cooke for their administrative assistance and guidance.

Thank you to our monthly donors, **Ms. Trish Jagers, Dr. Dawn Bolton, Dr. Lynn Holland, and Dr. Jane Olmsted** whose careers have been dedicated to raising awareness and supporting students. I would also like to thank **Dr. Catherine Ward and Ms. Gail Martin**. Both of these women's careful planning and dedication to the GWS mission has allowed us to weather the changes brought to the program. Due to their care and concern for the program's students and faculty, we were able to build a stronger network across the state with the **Catherine Coogan Ward Visiting Professorship** through co-sponsorships and again offer the **Gail and Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarships** which supported student learning and success during unprecedented times. **Thanks also to all of you for your continued support; if you would like more information on how you can donate to support GWS students, let me know.** Please stay well and safe. **Congrats to our 2021 graduates** and enjoy the celebration below. (Clickable links for zoom presentations on images.)

-Dr. Dawn Hall, GWS Program Coordinator & Minor Advisor + English/Film Professor

GWS Scholarship & Award Recipients



Dr. Lauren McClain

Catherine C. Ward Feminist Action Award
\$500 & Plaque

Carol Clyde Gallagher

Esther Fund Graduate Scholarship
\$1000

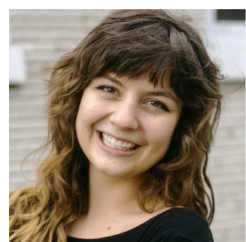


Emma Bell

Catherine C. Ward Undergraduate Scholarship \$1,000
Gale & Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarship \$600

Catherine Sheffield

Seneca Falls Personal Empowerment Award \$500 & Plaque

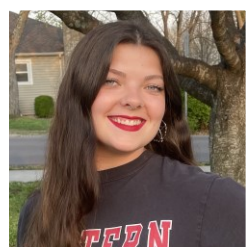
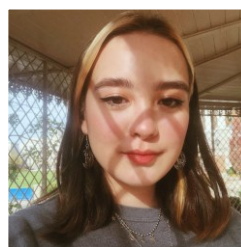


Samantha Mallon

Valere Scott Undergraduate Scholarship \$1000

Ruby Chapdelaine

Gale & Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarship \$600

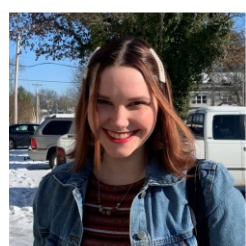
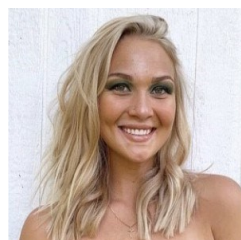


Bailey Cooke

Gale & Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarship \$600

Natalie Crane

Gale & Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarship \$600

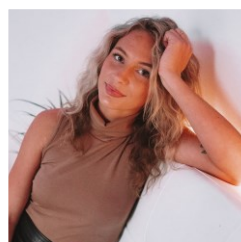


Madysin Morris

Gale & Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarship \$600

Hope Wells

Gale & Amber Martin Learning Assistance Scholarship \$600



Congratulations, GWS Minor Graduates!

"Difference is that raw and powerful connection from which our personal power is forged. As women, we have been taught either to ignore our differences, or to view them as causes for separation...Without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression." - Audre Lorde

Bailey Cooke



My most memorable moment from my time at WKU is Dr. Branham's class. She ignited my passion for feminism and has changed my life!

Jacqueline Fauber



"If women are differentiated only by superficial physical attributes, men appear more individual and irreplaceable than they really are." -Shulamith Firestone

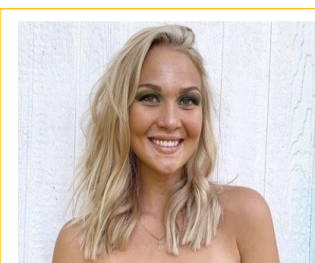
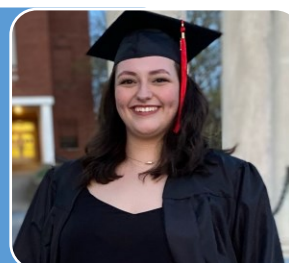
Abigail Raley

Voted Outstanding Minor in GWS

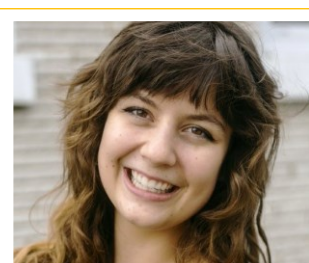


"Sometimes we have to do the work even though we don't yet see a glimmer on the horizon that it's actually going to be possible." -Angela Davis

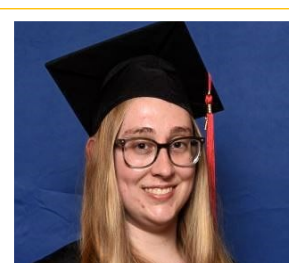
Kendra Rigney



Natalie Crane



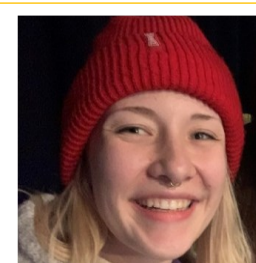
Samantha Mallon



Heather McKinney



Catherine Sheffield



Shelby Watson

Rachel Hunter

Courtney Ingram

Katie Poindexter

Jacayla Reed

Thelise Slemmons

Cassidy Turner

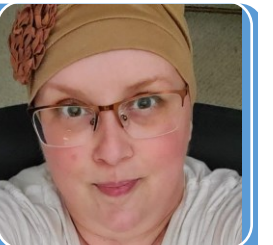
GWS Writing Contest Winners

Graduate Writers

1st, "Triptych"

"When God wants it for you, it will happen."

Larissa Haynes



2nd, "Melancholy Nights"

"Tomorrow morning, your own daughters will stir and glisten like a troubled pool in the sun. You will rise to undress and bathe them, to touch their bright skin, to offer what you can."

Ian Haver



3rd, "Women's History Month"

March has clipped my body to a stage and leaned in, pressed its magnifying eye against my humanness, dissected the tender, still-beating middle, panned for gold in my silt and let the glittering sand fall away"

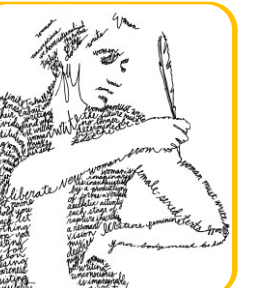
Sarah Olive



Undergraduate Writers

1st, "untitled"

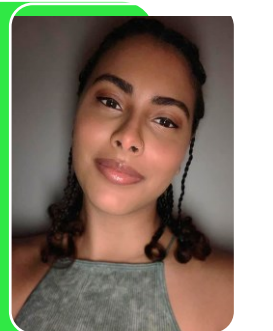
Tonnie Marin



2nd, "It's Just Politics"

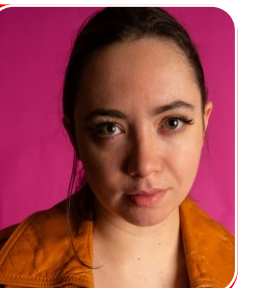
"I wonder if the congresswomen were taught to hold out anything they pick up at the store like me as a kid Not realizing until they got older it's because we are always dressed in suspicion."

Summer Gary



3rd, "The Fly"

Abigail Raley



Congrats, GWS Graduate Certificate

Ashley Bernaugh, SRSC/GWS

Mpho Motseki, SRSC/GWS

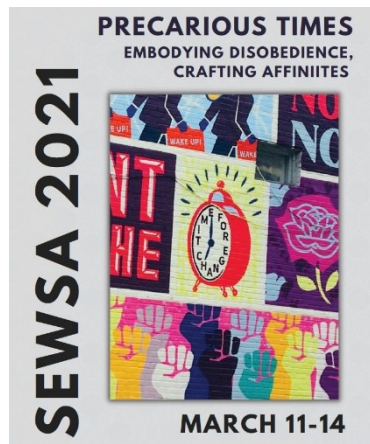
Jordan Steakin, SRSC/GWS

Autumn Taylor, SRSC/GWS

Katie Vanderberg, SRSC/GWS

Megan Horne, GWS

2020-2021 Calendar of Events and Information News and Information



-Members of GWS attended the Southeastern Women's Studies Association (SEWSA) 2021 Virtual Conference: "Precarious Times: Embodying Disobedience, Crafting Affinities."
Dr. Dawn Hall presented in the WGSS Leadership Workshop with Chairs & Directors from five universities in Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina.
Dr. Kristi Branham and colleague Lisa A. Costello from Georgia Southern University presented their research titled "Higher Education and the Precarity of WGSS Programs."
GWS Alum Breanna Carter, MA University of South Florida, presented her research titled "Good Night Stories for Multiracial Children: An Analysis of Multiracial Children's Books as a Tool for Parenting in Today's U.S. Culture"

Co-Sponsorships

Gender Talk w/ Berea College

watch: <https://www.berea.edu/wgs/gender-talk/>

3/17 "White Citizenship As Terrorism: Make America Great Again, Again"

4/14 "A Short History of the Blockade"

3/22 WKU Women & Religion Virtual Hybrid Seminar

4/30 Hope Harbor: Poetry is for Us

Catherine C. Ward Visiting Professorship Lecture Series

2/18 CODED BIAS: A Post-Screening Conversation with Filmmaker Shalini Kantayya

Gender Images Film Series

The Students of ENG 295 Pop Culture and Gender presented:

2/23 *Fattitude*

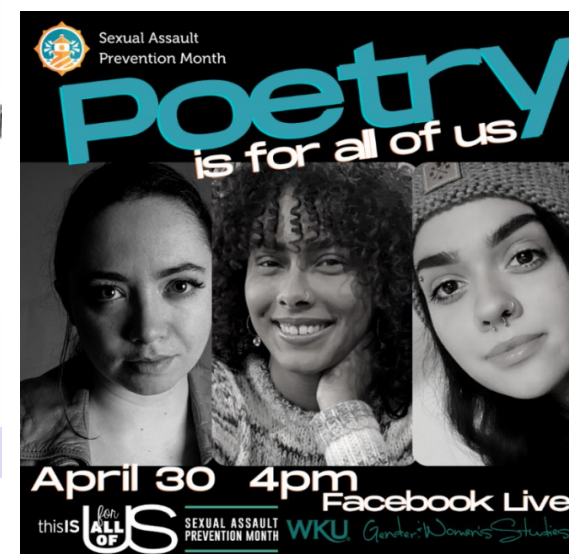
3/23 *Quarter Life Poetry*



23rd annual
Gender & Women's
Studies
Writing
Contest

Seeks fresh, reflective poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction exploring feminist themes/issues

Deadline: 4PM on Friday, March 26, 2020



Women and Religion Hybrid Virtual Seminar

Monday, March 22 11:30am-12:30 pm

DSU Auditorium

Limited Seating for 100 people and Masks Required

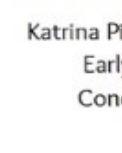
Coordinator: Live/Zoom Public Seminar RELS 333 Women and Religion

Prof. Bella Mukonyora

<https://wku.zoom.us/j/96280565354>



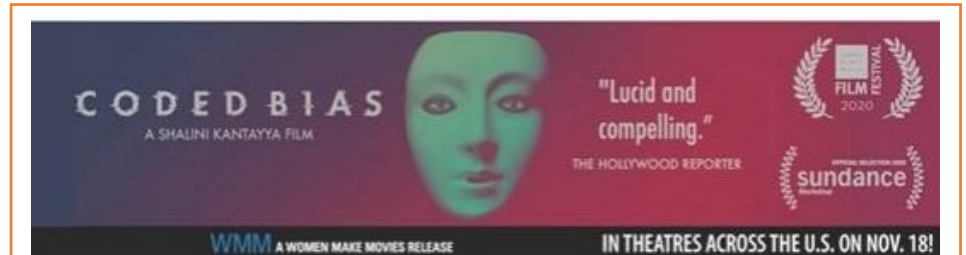
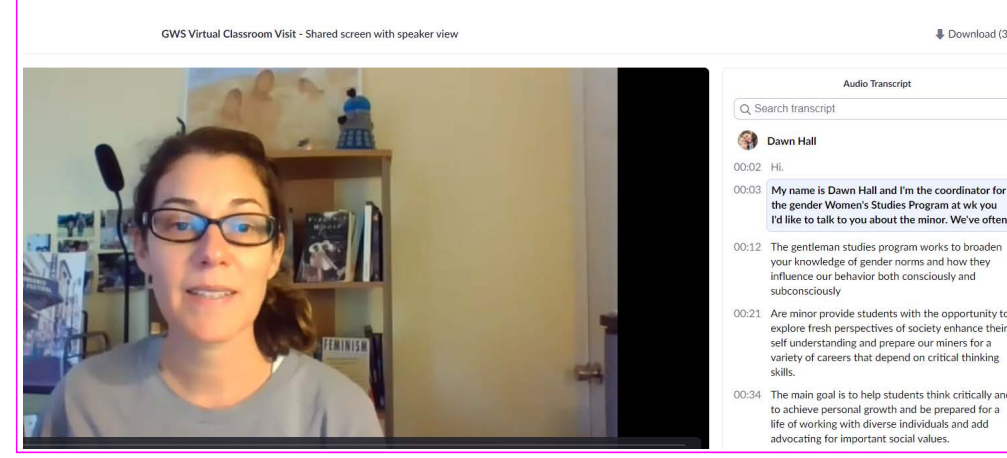
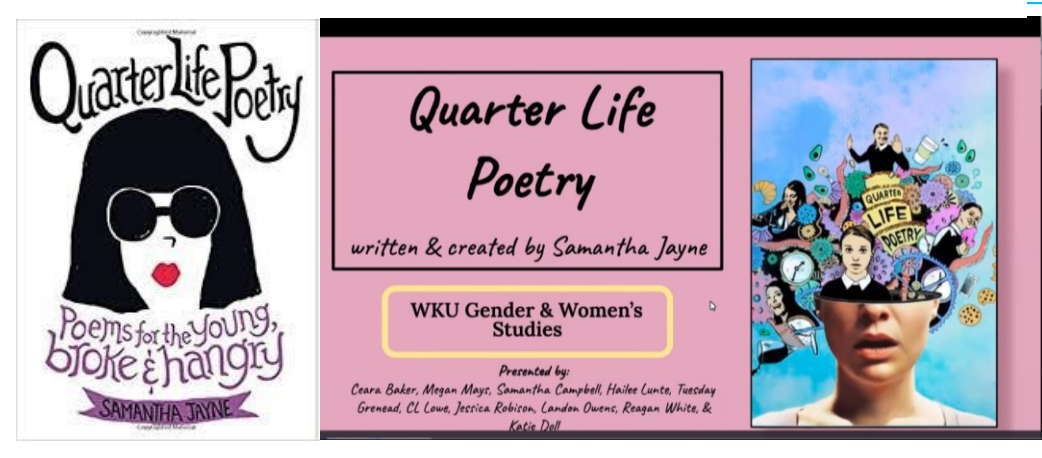
Kathryn McClurkin: "Exploring the Role of Place and Material Culture in the History of Mother and Baby Homes in Ireland"



Katrina Pierson: "Battle of the Sexes: Early Modern European Gender Conceptions and the Huguenot Colony in Florida"



WKU Gender & Women's Studies



Nominated for Best Science/Nature Documentary in the Critics Choice Documentary Awards and predicted by VARIETY to be an Oscar contender for Best Documentary Feature, this film is a must-see!



Outstanding Student Award Social Responsibility & Sustainable Communities in Master of Arts Award



My name is **Renee Purdy**, and I am graduating May 1, 2021 with my Master of Arts in Social Responsibility and Sustainable Communities Program in the Sociology Department. I work at WKU as an Office Coordinator in the Department of Theatre & Dance as well as Gender & Women's Studies Program in the English Department. One of the most rewarding elements of being at WKU has been to be Chair of the GWS Scholarship Committee. It meant so much to see students working so hard on their college education while overcoming so many hardships at the same time. I have also had the great honor of leading so many wonderful student assistants in my time at WKU. I have seen so much growth in these students as they matured through classes and through their jobs at WKU, it has indeed been an honor. Learning about community building and our ties to each other has made such an impact on me while in the SRSC Program, as I now know that when problems arise (as they sometimes do), communities can come together to work on solving the issues at hand, together. After graduation, I would love to take a nice long vacation.

Honoring retiring affiliated Faculty and Committee members of GWS.

Thank you for your years of service, dedication, and commitment to the students of GWS.

Dr. Karin M. Egloff
Dr. Victoria Gordon
Dr. Lynne Holland
Dr. Deborah Logan
Dr. Laura McGee
Jack G. Montgomery
Roxanne Spencer
Dr. Sandra Starks
Dr. Eli Winkler

Modern Languages
Political Science
Dean of Students
English
Modern Languages
Library Public & Technical Services
Library Public & Technical Services
Social Work
English

Gender and Women's Studies Graduate Assistants



Mara Lowhorn

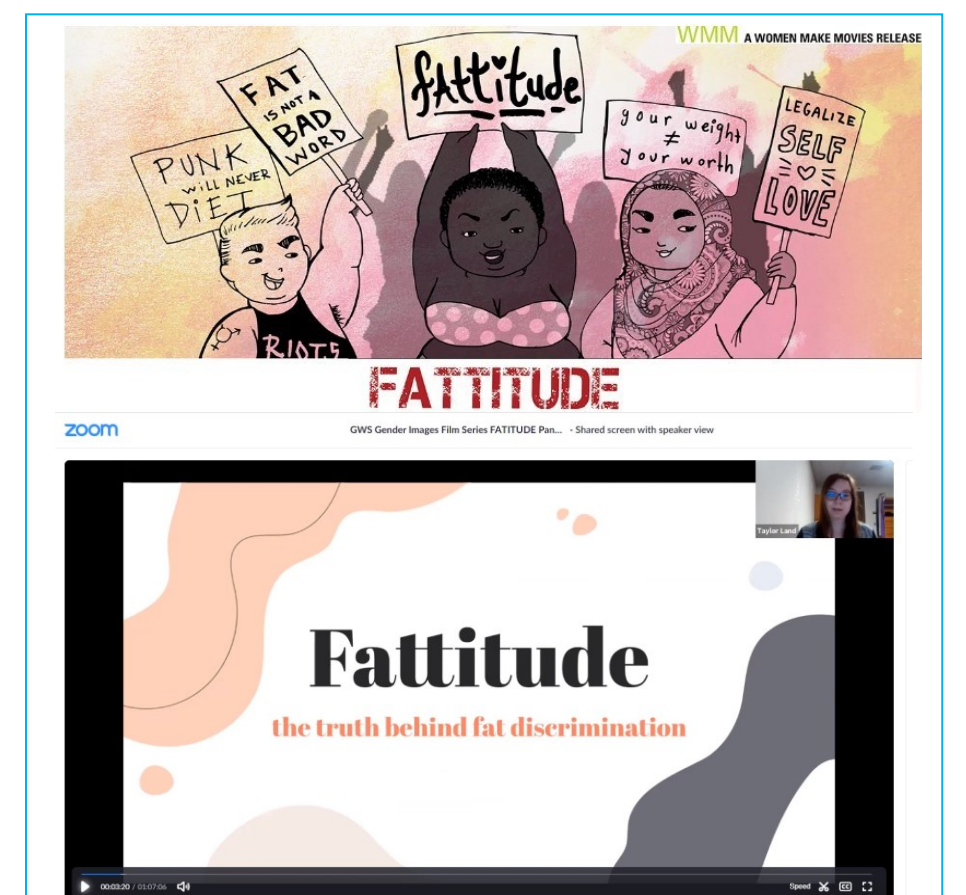
MA, English



Hector Dominguez

MFA, Creative Writing

Mara Lowhorn will join the GWS Program as a G.A. in Fall 2021. Current GWS G.A., **Hector Dominguez**, will graduate in the summer and pursue a Ph.D. in C.W. at the University of North Texas. **Lauren Haynes**, prior '19-20 GWS GA, will be attending University of Pittsburg Law School with full tuition/stipend.



Jane has been an inspirational guide through my years at WKU. Starting as my GWS minor advisor, through today, Jane's leadership and vision have taught me so much. As director of GWS, Jane creativity, drive and persistence enriched WKU and BG community. Thank you and Congrats! Dr. Dawn Hall, ENG



When Jane came to WKU some twenty plus years ago, I anticipated the contributions she would make to the Women's Studies Program as a trained feminist scholar. What a limited vision I had! Jane has been a tireless, creative leader and an advocate for change and social justice not just in GWS but across the campus and in the greater community as well. Thank you, Jane, for all that you have done for WKU, but most of all for your friendship.
Dr. Katie Ward, Retired, English & GWS

"Jane Olmsted has played a huge role in my life for a very long time, so I have way too many stories to just share one. She has been my mentor, my "boss," my co-conspirator, and, most importantly, one of my best friends for over 20 years now. Jane has single-handedly shaped who I am today as an activist, teacher, and leader. I will cherish everything we built together at WKU for the rest of my life, and I am sure we are not finished getting into mischief together. Have an awesome retirement, Boss!"
Dr. Molly Kerby, WKU Assistant Provost

I met Jane ten years ago when I came to WKU to head the Department of Communication. She welcomed me warmly, introduced me to like-minded faculty members, and found a way for my gender courses to be known by her GWS students. Jane energized the study of gender at WKU through events, public presence, activism, and sheer tenacity. Congratulations, my friend, on a professional life well-lived.
Dr. Helen Sterk, Communication

Jane Olmsted has been an outstanding mentor and friend. I met her my first year at WKU. She warmly welcomed me and assisted me in developing elective courses for inclusion into the GWS minor and the SRSC program. I will miss her leadership, warmth, and energy.
Dr. Gayle Mallinger, Social Work

I still remember meeting Jane when she came to campus to interview for a faculty position in the English Department. It was clear from our conversation that she was someone who would push against the status quo, and she has done that to the great benefit of WKU. I have lots of memories of Jane, but one of my favorites is the time she and I conspired to serve wine at a faculty event in the Faculty House. (We got our knuckles firmly rapped by the College Heights Herald!)
Dr. David Lee, History

From the time Jane started at WKU until I retired, she was always a part of my life there. Whether it was serving on the Women's Studies Steering Committee, or hiring faculty in the Women's Studies Program, or my teaching of a graduate class for her, or surviving the Academic Program Review Committee (twice, I think!), we were together through the years. Our friendship grew out of our years of work with each other, but lasts because of the respect and fondness we have for each other. I am honored to call Jane my friend!

Dawn L. Bolton, Marketing Retired

Remember in the 1990s, we sponsored the Women Studies Conference that attracted scholars from the region. So much hard work. But what made is so much fun and SO FULFILLING was working with Jane. Always supportive, always encouraging, always with a ready laugh. I remember the 30+ years of our friendship with much appreciation for the care and support of Dr. Olmsted.

Dr. Sandra Curry Ardrey, Political Science

When I interviewed for Gender & Women's Studies, the Graduate Assistant at the time was telling me about everyone one and he said that Jane works hard and plays hard. When I started working with Jane in 2010, I discovered that to be true. She is one of the hardest working, dedicated, and driven people I have ever had the opportunity to work with. She also knows when it's time to celebrate. During the ten years that I worked for Jane, I have seen her always stop whatever she is doing to lend an ear to students, faculty, and staff. She would move mountains to help those in need of assistance. She's definitely a mover and a shaker that will be a big loss to WKU. I'm glad that I had the opportunity to learn so much from her and to be able to call her a friend as well.

Renee Purdy, MA SRSC/GWS

I owe so much to Dr. Olmsted. I am and will be forever grateful for her wonderful appearance in my life at such pivotal times. Dr. Olmsted was the first professor to really treat me as an equal and in doing so made me feel like I was *really* somebody, that had good to contribute to the world. Participation in the Women and Kids Learning Together Camp was the highlight of my two summers in undergrad at WKU. I learned so much about meeting the holistic needs of the community and about the power of education to empower women and their kids. Nothing I read my freshman year impacted me and inspired me like working at the camp she designed. When I returned to WKU, knee-deep in bad grad school grades and confusion about how to start on the path again to learning, her guiding advice could have not been more perfect. It was just something like, 'well get in there and show them what you can do and if you do well they won't turn you away'. Dr. Olmsted's calm and steady guidance will be so desperately missed. I consider myself so lucky to have had such an amazing professor and advocate in my corner for so many years. I am not sure I would be the person I am today without Dr. Olmsted's support and backing. Dr. Olmsted taught me the value of giving others chances they do not necessarily deserve and the power of redemption to heal old wounds. I will never forget her and her kindness she has shown me. Congratulations on your retirement! Wishing you all the best retirement has to offer.

Ashley Bernaugh, GWS Alum



Dear Jane, I'm honored to wish you congratulations on this occasion. And I don't simply mean your well-deserved retirement. I congratulate you on a fabulous career at WKU, on countless students you have inspired, on a long, long list of faculty you have mentored and helped succeed, on enviable scholarly achievements, on exceptional leadership of your department, and, most of all, on the friendships you have nurtured among your colleagues through the years. I feel blessed to be counted among those friendships. I always marveled at the relationship you and I developed over the years. We are, as you know, very different in many ways. And yet, you have taught me so much. I admire your passion, your forthrightness, your genuineness, your courage, and your unwavering commitment to what you believe in. Although we haven't had much of an opportunity to interact in the past couple of years, I want you to know I treasure our time together and the bond we forged. I don't know if or when our paths will cross again, but I wish you nothing but the best in retirement. I pray that it is rich, full, prosperous, and filled with joy and peace. May God bless you, Jane, my good friend. Sincerely,

Dr. Dennis George, Education & Behavioral Science

I have three favorite memories of Jane—both involved beer. One was having a beer with her and other members of the English Department on the rooftop garden of the Hideout. Two was having a beer at the kitchen bar at Sandra Ardrey's annual Halloween Party. Three was having a beer at Mellow Mushroom. Like a lot of people Jane needs beer to spend time with me. But seriously, I don't remember the topics, but I remember genuine, open, honest conversations with a sincere, listening presence. Thanks for all the great work you've done for English, GWS, and WKU.

Dr. Rob Hale, Vice Provost/ENG

It was Jane Olmsted encouraged me to introduce the course RELS 333 Women and Religion during my campus visit and second interview at WKU during Spring 2004. It was all I needed - someone ready act as my mentor and friend without asking for any favors back. Before I knew it, I was given the moral support I needed to organize six public events on religious dialogue on the environment for university faculty, students, and local communities. Jane is a highly professional woman leaving behind a great legacy for GWS.

Dr. Bella Mukonyora, Religion & Philosophy

Dr Olmsted, Thank you for helping me learn how to attain my goals and overcome difficulties that came my way and for going above and beyond and bringing out the best in me when it was difficult to learn during a world pandemic far from my home country and family. Words cannot describe how blessed I am for being among your students. It is indeed a great pleasure to share this special time with you as my professor and academic advisor. You are a tower of strength and knowledge and I will truly miss your teaching skills that is conscientize of diversity and inclusion. Thank you for the knowledge that you have shared with me and for being there for me. I will miss your kind words. I wish you good health and lots of fun in retirement!

Mpho Motseki, Fulbright Scholar & SRSC/GWS

I met Jane when I started the MA is SRSC in 2011. From that first meeting I became her graduate assistant and then student, mentee, employee but most of all friend. I traveled with her to Peru and Memphis and she chaired my thesis committee. Through the time I spent with Jane at WKU she taught me to appreciate who I am and believe in my abilities. I remember once I came to her crying, which happened a lot in my masters program, to tell her another professor had told me that what I was doing for my thesis was not real research. I knew I was going to have to start all over. Jane laughed out loud and said something to the effect of "oh my God Brandi that person is an idiot, don't pay attention to anything they say, I now exactly what you are doing, they just aren't creative enough to see that it is research." Jane just always had a way to calm me down and have confidence. She was a huge part of my academic career and I feel sorry for future students who are not going to get to experience her classes and mentorship.

Brandi Button, GWS Alum/Former Instructor