



**Annual Report to the Chancellor
Women's Center
University of Missouri-Kansas City
June 13, 2007**

Chancellor Bailey, on behalf of Janet Justus, Chair of the Chancellor's Advisory Board to the Women's Center, it is my pleasure to summarize the activities of the Women's Center and the role of the Chancellor's Advisory Board to the Women's Center. Completing its 35th year in serving students, staff, faculty, and the Kansas City community, the Women's Center and your Advisory Board have witnessed a year of exciting change. Additionally, the Women's Center and the Advisory Board have spent the spring semester charting a course for the future of the Women's Center and the Board. I will briefly summarize the accomplishments of the Women's Center in 2006-07 and will then discuss our future plans and goals.

Staffing

This has been a year of change for the Women's Center staff as well. Following a national search, I was hired in October 2006 and began work in January 2007. Subsequent staff departures and graduations have resulted in a turnover of staff and I am happy to introduce to you today our new staff members:

- Kristen Abell, currently Program Coordinator for Sexual Violence Education and Support Services at the University of Kansas Women's Center, will join us in July as our new Assistant Director. Kristen has a B.A. in psychology and women's studies and a Master's of Social Welfare from the University of Kansas. Before taking her position at the University of Kansas Women's Center, Kristen served as an Assistant Complex Director for the Dept. of Student Housing and Support Services Coordinator for Supportive Educational Services at the University of Kansas, and also worked for student housing at the University of Georgia as the Coordinator for Undergraduate Staff Development. In addition, Kristen has had a great deal of experience working with Lawrence community organizations, including Women's Transitional Care Services, Douglas County AIDS Project and the Haskell University Healthy Relationships Project, in which she helped to found and develop their women's resource center.
- Aaron Shore is our Violence Prevention Coordinator, and is funded by our violence against women grant, awarded in the Fall of 2005. Aaron began working at the Women's Center in May 2007. Prior to his arrival, he taught General Psychology in UMKC's Psychology Department and assisted on a research team addressing medication adherence and perceived barriers. He recently completed his clinical internship at Rose Brooks Center, a local domestic violence agency, in the Outreach Therapy Department. He is currently pursuing his M.A. in Counseling Psychology Counseling Education with an emphasis of Mental Health at UMKC. Aaron completed his B.A. in Psychology from UMKC in 2005.
- Lisa Diehl, temporary Administrative Assistant, has been instrumental in helping to keep the Center running as we searched for new staff and wrapped up spring programming. Lisa will graduate with a B.S. in Business Management from the University of Phoenix in July. We will soon be posting the permanent Administrative Assistant position.

I am also pleased to introduce our new student staff members:

- Royce “Mocha” Jackson is our new graduate intern. She will be a Master’s student in Public Administration at the Bloch School in the fall, and has her undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas in sociology.
- Brittany Craddock, a senior majoring in Communications; Catherine Granberry, a junior majoring in Theater, and Lorie Templeton, a senior majoring in English, are our new student assistants.

VAWA Grant

In September of 2005 the Women’s Center learned that it had been awarded a \$200,000 federal grant from the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women to work on violence prevention issues on campus. Now in its second and final year, the VAWA grant has focused not only on creating significant institutional change, but also on providing campus-wide training and education elements that drive the implementation of those changes. Our Violence Prevention Coordinator, Aaron Shore, will be facilitating training on violence prevention and response with our community consultants from MOCSA and Rose Brooks with the focus directed toward faculty and staff who frequently interact with students. A curriculum for student education has been created and will be incorporated into classrooms, extra-curricular activities, and new student orientation events.

The Violence Prevention and Response Task Force is working to revise the current UMKC Sexual Assault Policy and to expand the policy so that it encompasses domestic/relationship violence and stalking. The revised policy will be submitted to Mel Tyler for approval later this summer. In addition to policy revisions, the Violence Prevention and Response Task Force created and implemented the UMKC Campus Violence Survey, which is the first of its kind conducted among all of the University of Missouri System schools. Data from the survey will be used to construct a clearer picture of incident rates of sexual assault, domestic/relationship violence and stalking among students, faculty, and staff at UMKC. The final survey report will be completed over the summer; results from the survey will be used to determine future programming, policy, and education needs.

Programs and Events

The Women’s Center hosted nineteen events in the Fall 2006 and eighteen in Spring 2007.

Programming highlights included:

- The *Kansas City Women Writers Series*, held in September and October, showcased Kansas City’s many fine women writers;
- *Full of Ourselves: The Body Politic Part II*, held in October, was a continuation of the 2005 Body Politic. The session conducted by Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair introduced youth professionals to her curriculum on “girl power” for middle-school girls.
- Our benefit performances of *The Vagina Monologues* not only delighted audiences for three nights in February, but also raised \$8,500 for organizations that fight violence against women and girls. This year’s local beneficiaries were the Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault and the UMKC Violence Prevention and Response Project.

- And in March, we welcomed Byron Hurt, who screened his new documentary, *Beyond Beats and Rhymes: A Hip-Hop Head Weighs in on Manhood in Rap Music*, followed by discussion.

More important than our “one-time” events, however, are the Women’s Center long-term programs and collaborations. Three of those long-term programs and collaborations are the WILL and FUEL programs, and the ReVisioning Women Project.

WILL

The Women In Learning and Leadership (WILL) Program is a Living Learning Community, housed in the Oak Street residence hall. WILL offers its residents an exciting living learning community where students explore the complexity of women’s lives on campus, in the community, and in the world. In its second year, the WILL program is small, with 10 members this past academic year. Members report high satisfaction with the community, however, and two will be returning for next year. We currently have eight members signed up for the 2007-08 year and are working hard to recruit more members at summer orientations.

FUEL Program

Modeled on the Young Women Leaders Program at the University of Virginia, FUEL is a year-long mentoring program that focuses on promoting middle school girls’ leadership abilities by combining the benefits of one-on-one mentoring with targeted group activities for a year. During the year, each middle-school girl is paired with a college woman—her “Big Sister”—with whom she meets twice weekly to address issues related to girls’ sense of self, scholastic achievement, body image, social aggression, and healthy decision-making. Each Big and Little Sister pair also meets individually for an additional hour each week to develop their personal relationship. The spring semester was our pilot program and we had 10 pairs of Big/Little Sisters based at the Kansas City Middle School for the Arts. The school is very excited that we will be returning for a full-year program in 2007-08 and we are aiming to sign up 20 pairs. We currently have 12 Big Sisters signed up as mentors and expect to meet our goal of 20.

ReVisioning Women Project

In 2006, the UMKC Board of Trustees purchased the ReVisioning Women art and curriculum for UMKC, to be housed and operated from the Women’s Center. Due to the search for a new director and the transition process, we have not held any RWP sessions this year. I am planning to begin the process of marketing and branding ReVisioning Women over the summer and hope to begin offering sessions in 2007-08.

Planning for the Future

The most important task that I and the Board engaged in this year has been planning for the future. With the help of a Board subcommittee and our strategic planning consultant, Jeanne Rooney, the Board and I completed a revised mission statement, updated guidelines for the Advisory Board, and a one-year strategic plan. All of these documents have been approved by Mel Tyler and are included as attachments to this report. The one-year strategic plan will serve as a basis for a longer-range strategic plan that I and my staff will write this coming year. The revised mission statement and strategic plan lay the groundwork for exciting growth and development at the Women’s Center.