

**President's Commission on the Status of Women
West Chester University
2021-2022 Annual Report to the President and Cabinet**

Who We Are

We unite students, staff, and faculty across a broad range of campus constituents to advise the president and his cabinet on emergent issues and best practices that will promote the recognition, leadership, and success of women on campus. Our membership includes equal numbers of faculty and staff representatives from 30 offices and organizations. Each member represents their constituency at general assembly meetings and serves on at least one project team. Our student membership includes representation from undergraduate and graduate education. This year's student representation included Erica Arnold, Auriane Nguiadem, Madison Hammer, and Kathleen Shannon.

2021-2022 Executive Committee

Juanita Wooten, Chair
Michelle Wade, Co-Chair
Lisa Huebner, Past Chair
Laura Pyott, Secretary

2022 -2023 Executive Committee

Michelle Wade, Chair
TBD, Co-Chair
Juanita Wooten, Past Chair
Laura Pyott, Secretary

2021-2022 Activities and Recommendations

Care in COVID-19 Team

In response to our ongoing goal to promote family friendly policies and practices and in response to emergent needs due to COVID-19, we formed a team specific to advocating for those who balance work and family responsibilities. A campus-wide survey was implemented and the results are highlighted in the [WCU Parent Caregiving Report](#).

Student and Community Engagement Team

This team ensures that we collaborate with and position ourselves as resources with other PASSHE universities and in surrounding communities.

Activities:

- Placed 2 WCU students at selected internship sites:
 - Chester County Women's Commission (Fall 2021)
 - The Fund (Spring 2022)
- Increased student membership on the Commission and on our subcommittee by partnering with the Community Engagement Committee.
- Hosted a Community/Alumni Panel in Spring 2022 for our current WCU students titled, *Women in the Workplace: Challenges, Opportunities and Addressing Burnout*.
- Collaborated with and shared information with Chester County Women's Commission and the PASSHE Women's Consortium throughout the year.

Current Recommendations:

- Host another Community/Alumni Panel based on feedback from previous panel to support students.
- Secure additional internship sites for our students
- Continue placing 2 student interns (as was done this past academic year).
- Continue to increase student awareness and engagement in the Women's Commission.
- Michelle Wade will continue to serve as appointed liaison to PASSHE Women's Commission.
- Identify Cheryl Neal-McFall to serve as our liaison to the Chester County Women's Commission.

Facilities Team

In response to our ongoing goal to commit to family friendly and inclusive workspaces, this team addresses the availability and communication around gender inclusive restrooms, lactation spaces and changing tables.

Activities:

- The ad-hoc committee on gender and facilities moved to a once a semester meeting structure and was able to meet twice during this academic year.
- Representatives from the Women's Commission as well as The Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy, The Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion and The Center for Women and Gender Equity were able to provide guidance to facilities regarding terminology for signage and other facility-related items (such as a menstrual disposal box instead of a women's hygiene box). These meetings were a place that facilities could update the Commission and various Centers regarding renovations and new construction of restrooms.

Current Recommendations:

- Assess the need for continuing this committee given the ad-hoc committee that has formed at the university-level.

Women's Visibility Team

To continue our commitment to women's leadership, we formed a team focused specifically on increasing the visibility of contributions made by women at the university. This year, its primary activity was to make recommendations to honor women as part of the university-wide 150th anniversary celebration.

Activities:

- The West Chester Community was asked to nominate women of West Chester University who they felt deserved the honor and received well over 350 nominations. After researching the accomplishments of the women, the list was vetted through several departments, offices, and stakeholders and narrowed to 150.
- A virtual presence was created on the WCU 150 website, which included a section honoring 150 of the Most Influential Women of West Chester University. Biographies and pictures of the women were requested and are on the website. It includes welcome letters in the introduction (landing) page and three sections: 150 Most Influential Women, History of the Department of Women and Gender Studies, and a recognition of all caregivers during COVID.
- A celebration was held to honor the women on April 22 during the 150 Celebration Weekend. As space was limited, this event was not open to the public.
- About 70 of the living honorees were able to attend, where they were presented with a certificate of honor, an embossed journal, a history book of WCU (donated by the WCU Foundation), and a rose by President Chris Fiorentino and Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer Tracey Robinson. A group photo was taken and is also on the website. In addition, a program from the event was placed in the time capsule by President Fiorentino.

Current Recommendations:

- When the 150 website becomes dormant, transfer the content of the page to the President's Commission on the Status of Women website.

Recruitment and Retention of Women of Color Staff and Faculty

The mission of the Recruitment and Retention of Women of Color Staff and Faculty Team's mission during the academic year was to build community among women of color both staff and faculty at WCU.

Activities:

- The team collaborated with The Society (formerly the Frederick Douglass Society) and the Multicultural Faculty Commission to sponsor the inaugural Staff and Faculty of Color Social.
- During the event, we celebrated community building by awarding Dr. Anita Foeman (faculty) and Andria Young (staff) with the inaugural Community Alliance Awards for WCU women of color staff and faculty. Dr. Christopher Fiorentino, Dr. Tracey Robinson, and Dr. Zebulun Davenport provided remarks at the event. An estimated thirty individuals attended.
- In collaboration with The Society at WCU during, Black History Month, an informal mindfulness session for women of color was piloted. The purpose of the mindfulness session was to guide participants in increasing self-compassion.
- Collaborated with The Society to facilitate an end of the semester staff and faculty of color social.

Current Recommendations

- Continue to host activities that will help to promote community building among staff and faculty of color at WCU.

*Note: In addition to the current recommendations the WC will seek to address recommendations from the 2022 Campus Climate Survey.

2022-2023 Goals

Care in COVID-19 Team

- Continue sharing data from WCU Faculty and Staff Parenting and Caregiving Report and advocating for identified priorities in the report.
- Explore increasing number of family friendly events and opportunities open to faculty, staff and student caregivers.

Student and Community Engagement Team

- Continue to collaborate with PASSHE Women's Consortium, Women's Commissions at other PASSHE universities, Chester County Women's Commission, and with other regional organizations that serve and empower women.
- Host another community panel/alumni presentation for students.
- Place 2 student interns.

Facilities Team

- To immediately determine the need to continue this team.

Women of Color Recruitment and Retention Team

- The team intends to continue initiatives promoting community building among employees of color at West Chester University during the 2022-2023 academic year.

2022-2023 Budget Request (To Date)

Team	Item	Cost
Community Engagement Team	Student Payroll	\$2000
	Community/Alumni Panel	\$2500
Women of Color Recruitment and Retention Team	Food and beverages for social events	\$1000
	Awards for annual social	\$300
	Guest Speaker/Performer Honorarium	\$1000
	Cultural Celebration Fees	\$400
	Workshop/Session Fees	\$400
	Printing & Graphics	\$300
	Event Prizes	\$300
	Miscellaneous	\$300
	Total Estimated Costs	\$8500