

Women's Center at UMBC



Annual Report
2012-2013

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Women's Center exists to assist all women in achieving their full potential in education, career and personal life through academic and intellectual growth, professional development and personal empowerment.



The Women's Center exists to assist all women in achieving their full potential in education, career and personal life through academic and intellectual growth, professional development and personal empowerment. The Women's Center serves as a key resource for women seeking support and advocacy and for all individuals wishing to learn about and engage with women's and gender issues. The Women's Center seeks to provide a space and community for all UMBC members to be fully valued in the spirit of wholeness, respect, and social justice. *All are welcomed so long as they respect women, their experiences, their stories, and their potential.*



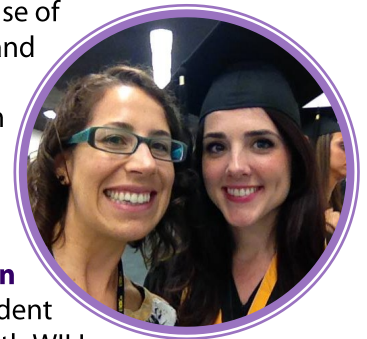
The Women's Center had a strong year in terms of space utilization, with approximately 9, 511 visits between July 2012 and June 2013.

The Women's Center staff continues to analyze ways in which it can better track its visitors and services provided as we do not feel the final number captures the full use of our space and staffing resources. The great majority of visitors were undergraduate women, though we continue to see more undergraduate men using our space, specifically due to the presence of the Rebuilding Manhood program. The space also continues to be used by faculty and staff – many of whom benefit through the partnerships the Center has built with other departments on campus who use our space for programming such as Human Resource's Mediation Boot Camp.

Consistently, visitors identified the Women's Center as a safe, welcoming environment that helped them feel supported and valued.

As a unit of the Office of Undergraduate Education, the Women's Center continues to provide a distinctive undergraduate education and contribute to the academic goals of the University.

Through the use of the Women's Center film series and other discussion groups, students gain greater awareness and education around women and gender issues that compliment their learning inside the classroom. Students frequently used the Center's space for its computer and for studying alone or in groups. Additionally, the Women's Center supported academic learning in the form of student interns in partnership with the Shriver Center, Honors College and Gender + Women's Studies. A total of 15 academic credits were earned by student interns over the academic year.



Community members also used the Women's Center for relaxing and socializing and often served as a home away from home for many commuter students.

A total of 16 different student organizations and departments used the Women's Center for meetings throughout the year with WILL and QUMBC using the lounge space for their weekly meetings and Human Resource's 10-week Mediation Bootcamp using the Center each semester. Groups using the Women's Center space often serves as a gateway for group members to learn about the Women's Center services and to come back again on their own.

The Women's Center continued to offer services to support the various identities that intersect gender.

Services and programming for non-traditional (returning) students, mothers, and the LGBTQ community continue to draw community members into our space. Between Women, a social and support group for women-identified students in the LGBTQ community, met weekly and developed a strong cohort of regular student members. End of the year evaluations cited friendship and a supportive environment as important gains they experienced as a result of attending Between Women. In particular, one student mentioned the space was the only place on campus she could really be herself. Specific attention to daycare resources has been directed toward the mother and parents community and the Center staff continued to advocate for parents and families throughout the course of the year. Furthermore, it was our inaugural year for our men's engagement program, Rebuilding Manhood, which provided safe space for men to talk about gender, male identity, and ally development in a 10-week curriculum driven cohort experience. A total of 20 men were participants over the course of the year. The Women's Center continued to be a resource for survivors of interpersonal violence, with the director serving on both the Sexual Assault Relationship Violence and Response Team, a team member to the Relationship Violence Awareness Prevention





program, and creating and facilitating events and programs for Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Relationship Violence Awareness Month. Through this commitment to serve various underrepresented or marginalized identities the Women's Center plays a role in supporting student retention and graduation.



Collaborative partnerships in 2012-13 resulted in significant community events and services.

While Center staff feel fortunate to call many campus departments partners and allies, key partners for the 2012-13 academic year included: The Division of Student Affairs, University Health Services, Gender + Women's Studies, the Honors College, the Mosaic Center, Greek Life, Office of Institutional Advancement, Alumni House, WILL, and the Yoga Club. We also acknowledge we have significant relationships with many more campus departments, including individuals in the Office of Undergraduate Education, and student groups who enrich our community and strengthen our networks.

A strong group of seven student staff and student interns assisted the professional staff in providing service to Women's Center community members.

They provided invaluable leadership and dedication, especially without having a Coordinator in the spring semester. With the guidance of the director (and coordinator during the fall), the student staff and interns created and/or facilitated meaningful programs and events throughout the year. Examples of student-driven programming and events include: the book club discussions, the women's issue discussion group, the second annual V-Day coffee house, and a zine dedicated to sexual assault awareness. Moreover, they provided the Center with critical staffing power, allowing the Center to stay open until seven in the evening Monday through Thursday during the spring and fall semesters, providing essential connections to community members when professional staff members were not in the Center, and outreaching to their peers at community fairs and tabling events.

As the Women's Center moved beyond its 20th anniversary celebrations, it has become more critical for staff and Board members to reflect about the future of the Women's Center and its vision.

Greater emphasis on assessment and evaluation has begun to be integrated into our daily practice. This year, the Women's Center was able to collect data through Residential Life's EBI Survey and conducted a program evaluation for the first semester of our men's engagement program. Evaluations and feedback were also collected from the Advisory Board retreat, Between Women, Returning Women, and Mother's Group participants as well as for our spring film series.



We believe the value of the Women's Center cannot easily be measured through numbers and summaries alone. This annual report serves as a snapshot of our daily interactions, relationships, commitment to gender equity an women's issues, and delivering a distinctive academic experience to the UMBC community.

The Women's Center By the Numbers

A total of **9,511** people accessed the Women's Center between **July 2012 and June 2013** through some of the following ways:

- ◆ Students receiving 1-1 support related to sexual assault and relationship violence: **14***
- ◆ Community members receiving 1-1 support related to various other needs to include mental health issues, transgender/transitioning support, pregnancy, daycare, eating disorders, student billing, and access to community resources): **12**
- ◆ Use of the Lactation Room: **161 visits**
- ◆ Use of the Mediation Room: **110 visits**
- ◆ Community members dropping in for our "free" supplies (feminine products, contraceptives): **827**
- ◆ Community members visiting the Women's Center for group meetings: **1,646**
- ◆ Community members using our space for community building (meeting friends, study groups, using the lounge space): **4,673**
- ◆ Approximately **956** community members were outreached to by the Women's Center through programs, events, or class visits outside of the Women's Center space.

The Women's Center sponsored **6** reoccurring group meetings throughout the year (i.e. Between Women, Mother's Group, etc.) which totaled over **100** meetings for the year. Over **47** events and **5** films series/discussions were created and /or facilitated by Women's Center staff.

Approximately **150** events or meetings hosted by other campus groups (i.e. yoga, Meditation Bootcamp, QUMBC, etc) were held in the Women's Center throughout the year.

The Women's Center partnered with approximately **34** campus departments and organizations to provide quality programs and services to the UMBC community. Additional support for Women's Center programming and services came through the **7** Women's Center student staff and interns, the Women's Center Advisory Board with a total of **25** members and the Rebuilding Manhood Committee with a total of **7** male UMBC staff members and students.



The Women's Center provided programming and services to **20** non-traditional students who received scholarships through the Women's Center. A total of **\$41,550** was awarded during the 2012-2013 academic year through the Newcombe Scholarship and the Bryson-Neville Scholarship.

In addition, the Women's Center continued to engage a large number of constituents through the following online methods:

- ◆ myUMBC Women's Center group members: **380**
- ◆ Women's Center Facebook followers via "likes": **432**
- ◆ Women's Center Twitter followers: **249**
- ◆ The Women's Center also hosts various other Facebook pages related to our programs and services. Through the use of pages for our book club, Rebuilding Manhood, and Returning Women communities, the number of additional Facebook followers: **226**
- ◆ Women's Center list-serv membership: **1,317**
- ◆ Programs and services also drew much media attention resulting in **4** Retriever news articles, **1** Baltimore Sun article, **4** BreakingGround posts, and **1** radio appearance on the Marc Steiner Show



The Women's Center had **1** full-time director, **2** part-time staff members in the role of administrative assistant and coordinator, **4** student staff members, and **3** Honors College interns during the 2012-2013 academic year.

The Women's Center total state budget for the 2012-2013 was **\$91,717** with **\$4,619** designated for operating expenses. The Women's Center ended the fiscal year with **\$5,271** in our USM Foundation account. An estimated total of **\$9,000** in co-sponsorships, work study awards, grants, and in-kind donations supported programming, events, and Women's Center services.

**Please note that this number exceeds the number of official reports of sexual violence as many of the victims are reporting incidents that may have occurred in the past and/or that are not required to be reported under the Cleary Act.*

The Women's Center Programs, Events & Partnerships

Women's Center Group and Programs

The majority of the Women's Center efforts related to programming is dedicated to our reoccurring group meetings. These groups exist to provide special attention and support to various identities that intersect with gender, such as motherhood, age, and sexual orientation. Other groups seek to compliment academic learning, create conscious-raising opportunities, and safe spaces to explore social justice issues. The Women's Center was proud to offer the following groups and programs over the course of 2012-2013:

Between Women: A group for women who love women, think they might, and support those. Met weekly in the summer and throughout the academic year.

Mother's Group: A group for UMBC mothers. This group also connects with each other online and has been integral in helping building the Women's Center daycare information resources.

Rebuilding Manhood: In an effort to create safe spaces for men to explore masculinity and define multiple versions of health masculinity, the Women's Center launched a 10-week program just for male-identified students. The program met both semesters with 20 male-identified students participating over the year. Male staff members facilitated the dialogues to ensure authentic male-only space. A program review of the first semester was conducted and is available by request. Read more about Rebuilding Manhood on page 8.

Returning Women's Community and Forum: This community is for women students over the age of 25 returning to college to complete their undergraduate degree. Weekly meetings allowed for women to connect with each other and share their struggles and successes. Scholarships are also provided for this group and the application process is run by Women's Center staff.

Women's Issues Discussion Group

Through staff reflection, we began to offer the Women's Issues Discussion group, in collaboration with WILL, in the spring, to allow students who may not be able to take advantage of our other affinity groups an intentional space to come together and talk about women's issues. Topics exemplified included exploring what feminism is, women's history, and pay equity.



Student Organizations and Departments

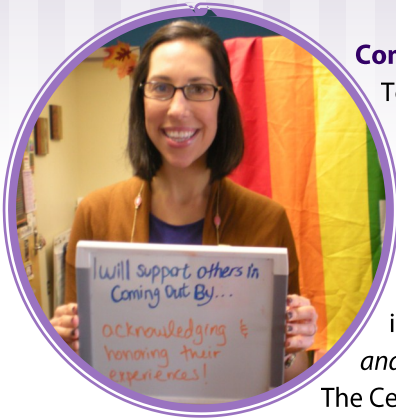
The Women's Center community and space is enriched by other campus partners and groups that use our space, calling it home, even if it's just for an evening. The following campus partners and student organizations have used our space over the course of the year for meetings, events, retreats, and more.



- ✧ Gender + Women's Studies ✧ Women Involved in Learning and Leadership (WILL)
- ✧ QUMBC ✧ Human Resources ✧ Center for Women in Technology (CWIT) ✧
- Mosaic Center ✧ Phi Mu ✧ Delta Phi Epsilon ✧ Alpha Sigma Kappa ✧
- The Green Dot Program ✧ Human Relations ✧ Sherman Scholars ✧
- Summer Bridge ✧ McNair Scholars ✧ The Personal Leadership Retreat ✧ Yoga Club ✧

The Women's Center Programs, Events & Partnerships

Highlighted Events From the Year



Come Out Speak Out

To celebrate National Coming Out Day and to bring visibility to the LGBTQ community and its allies, the Women's Center spent day taking photos of UMBC community members sharing their experiences about coming out and why they support those who do. The photo campaign was posted on our social media pages and received positive feedback and reception.

The Women's Center Film Series

The Women's Center sponsored 5 separate film series over the course of the year. Featured films included: *Papers: Stories of Undocumented Youth* (September), *Miss Representation* (October), *Body and Soul: Diana and Kathy* (November), *Tough Guise* (December), and *A Healthy Baby Girl* (February).

The Center collaborated with MLLI for the September film as part of Hispanic Cultural Awareness Month and to promote the Maryland Dream Act. The Center partnered with Gender + Women's Studies for the February film to help promote the Korenman Lecture.

Homecoming Reception for the Newcombe Scholars and Returning Women Community

In the spirit of Retriever Fever, the Women's Center hosted an open house during Homecoming to welcome back alum who were Newcombe Scholars. The event was a great opportunity for current returning student scholars and staff members to connect with UMBC alum who identified as non-traditional students during their time at UMBC. It was a wonderful reminder to current students that despite barriers and challenges, they can make it to graduation as well!

The Clothesline Project

For [Relationship Violence Awareness Month](#) (in October) and [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#) (in April) the Women's Center displayed the Clothesline Project. Prior to the display, UMBC community members are invited to decorate shirts over the course of several days to be displayed in the project. For Relationship Violence Awareness Month a vigil was also held during the Clothesline Project that spoke to the importance of bystander intervention. A reading of names of individuals in Maryland who died over the past year due to domestic violence were also read at the vigil.



V-Day Coffee House

For Valentine's Day, the Center hosted its second annual coffee house and reading of the Vagina Monologues. This event serves as an important time for community members to share in conscious raising by deconstructing gender and "femaleness."

Women's History Month

In honor of Women's History Month, the Center hosted and/or co-sponsored 10 different events throughout the month of March. Key events included: 30 Women, 30 Stories, UMBC Celebrates Diversity Resource Fair, International Women's Day Potluck, and WILL's Women's Health Expo. The Center also used social media to create online space dedicated to Women's History. To recognize the national theme of Women in STEM, weekly spotlights of CWIT students were featured on myUMBC. Video testimonials dedicated to student leadership were also posted on myUMBC weekly in partnership with the Office of Student Life's Leadership Development.



Professional Clothing Drive

Through the solid partnership with the Career Week committee, the Women's Center hosted UMBC's first annual Professional Clothing Drive. Over the course of 2 days, more than 400 students found themselves in the Women's Center trying on professional clothing to take home for free to help them prepare for Career Week, upcoming interviews, and URCAD presentations. This was a wonderful opportunity for the Women's Center to showcase our space and services to the many students and staff who came in during the event. The event was also complemented by a Suited to Succeed Workshop that was organized by the Women's Center and presented by the Career Center.

Take Back the Night

See our special insert at the end of the annual report to learn more about this event.

The Women's Center Representation & Service to UMBC and the Community

Committee Representation From Women's Center Staff Members:

- ◆ Sexual Assault & Relationship Violence Response Team
Director helped update Safety Plan document (Fall 2013)
- ◆ Relationship Violence Awareness and Prevention Grant Team
- ◆ Relationship Violence Awareness and Prevention Grant Advocate Advisors
- ◆ Presidents Commission for Women
Director chaired Daycare/Women's resources subcommittee
- ◆ Gender + Women's Studies Coordinating Committee
- ◆ UMBC Celebrates Diversity Planning Committee
- ◆ LGBTQ Climate Task Force
- ◆ Wellness Initiative
- ◆ OUE Internal Review Meetings
- ◆ Mental Health Promotion & Suicide Prevention Work Group
- ◆ Diversity Resource Guide Committee (Summer 2012)
- ◆ New Student Book Experience
Director was book discussion leader



Specific Trainings/Workshop Presentations:

- ◆ Relationship Violence and Bystander Intervention Workshop for Honors Orientation (June 2012)
- ◆ Diversity Presentation for CWIT Scholars (August 2012)
- ◆ Director taught IHU course (Fall 2013)
- ◆ The Jersey Lure (A presentation on Interpersonal Violence and the Media) for 2 PHED201 class and IHU class (October 2013)
- ◆ Presentation on Women's Center services to Human Relations Committee (November 2012)
- ◆ Microaggressions, Gender, and Why It Matters for UMBC RA Training (January 2013)
- ◆ Relationship Violence and the Media for the RVAP Advocates (April 2013)
- ◆ Microaggressions, Gender, and Why It Matters at NCCWSL (May 2013)

General Outreach:

- ◆ CSI/Meyerhoff Campus Resource Fair
- ◆ Transfer Student Orientations
- ◆ Graduate Student Orientation (Fall and Spring)
- ◆ New Faculty Orientation
- ◆ Retriever Fest
- ◆ Involvement Fest (Fall and Spring)
- ◆ International Education Services
- ◆ Various other campus fairs: Retriever Wellness Expo, Commuter Fair, UMBC Celebrates Diversity Fairs
- ◆ Professional Staff Senate (related to issues of daycare)

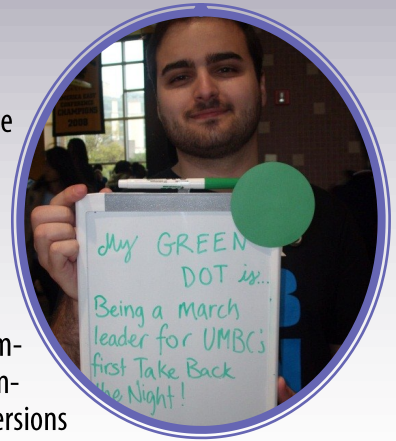


Trainings and Conferences Attended by Director for Professional Development:

- Facing Race, November 2012
- Social Justice Training Institute, December 2012
- National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), May 2013

REBUILDING MANHOOD

Just as often as women find themselves to restrictive gender boxes, men, too, find themselves in the “man box.” The man box has strict and rigid rules about how men should perform in their gender which limits the scope of healthy and multiple variations of masculinity. Studies find college men are more likely than women to complete suicide, use drugs and alcohol, participate in unsafe and violent sexual behavior, and be referred to the student conduct office. And, at the same time, organized opportunities rarely exist for men to dialogue about their gender and who they are as men. Moreover, gender equity is often seen as a “women’s only” issue. Rarely does responsibility fall to men to be key players in reducing sexism and promoting gender equity. Consequently, having programming for men to talk about these issues, to deconstruct masculinity, and mobilize as allies in gender equity, make perfect sense for the Women’s Center. Rebuilding Manhood aims to provide a toolkit in cultivating a culture shift in which men are included as necessary players in eliminating patriarchy, promoting feminist values, and constructing new versions of manhood.



Rebuilding Manhood launched as a pilot in the fall of 2012 and continued in the spring of 2013 with a cohort of 15 men. It was designed to create a safe space for consciousness-raising and critical thinking related to gender, masculinity, and social issues over the course of 10 weeks. With the support of Women’s Center staff, male staff members from various campus departments helped form a committee to brainstorm curriculum, recruitment, marketing, and participant accountability. These men led each week’s discussion with Off Campus Student Services Assistant Director, Ben Goldberg, taking on the role of lead facilitator. The second semester, allowed for Women’s Center student staff member, Max Barnhart, to be a peer facilitator.

Rebuilding Manhood is different from most other college programming for men in that it does not only focus on violence prevention work. It is unique in that it specifically focuses on male identity development and issues. Key positive effects for participants included personal benefits such as deepened knowledge, the opportunity to meet other



students with shared values, and the ability to contribute to other men’s learning about masculinity and privilege.

Rebuilding Manhood (under its pilot name, M2M) was featured on UMBC’s BreakingGround website. To read more about the start-up of this program, visit: <http://umbcbreakingground.wordpress.com/2012/08/30/m2m-the-mens-initiative-video/>

A program evaluation of the first semester of the program was also conducted and can be viewed by request.

MISSION STATEMENT

Rebuilding Manhood aims to explore gender norms and variations and promote healthy and multifaceted masculinity throughout UMBC’s campus community. The initiative will create a safe space for consciousness-raising and critical thinking related to gender, masculinity, and social issues. Masculinity will be explored parallel to conversations of race and ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, religion, privilege, gender identity, oppression, and other aspects of individual and cultural identity.

Alongside the exploration of masculinity, Rebuilding Manhood will mobilize men as allies in gender equity and the prevention of violence against women in order to support positive campus climate around gender.

Women’s Center
at UMBC 



BreakingGround to Bring Back Take Back the Night



It was almost 10 years that UMBC had gone without hosting a Take Back the Night (TBTN) on our campus. TBTN an internationally recognized protest and rally to address sexual assault and abuse. Most often held during Sexual Assault Awareness Month, TBTN creates an atmosphere of empowerment while raising awareness about sexual violence and advocating for its end.

With the support of a BreakingGround grant that our Honors College Intern, Lexx Mills, helped write, and the partnership with UHS Health Education and Greek Life, the Women's Center was able to bring TBTN back to UMBC's campus. The event, which was attended by over 200 community members and a highlighted event for UMBC's Greek Week, was a powerful reminder that our community is impacted by sexual violence. With over 10 students sharing their stories at the Speak Out, attendees realized that survivors of sexual assault are not simply numbers but our friends, our classmates, our sisters. The Speak Out was followed by a lively march, in which student organizations and Greek chapters represented their commitment to ending sexual violence through colorful rally signs. The evening closed with a stellar performance from the band, Maitre'D.



Leaving campus to participate in TBTN elsewhere, like we have done for the past several years, just doesn't make sense anymore. It sends a message that sexual violence does not happen on our campus or that we do not care about our own survivors of sexual assault, which is absolutely not true. This event provided UMBC community members the chance to take back our own campus, give love to our community members impacted by sexual violence, and commit to being better bystanders and activists. Take Back the Night is here to stay and we look forward to the future of this event.

Take Back the Night event was featured twice on UMBC's BreakingGround website. To read more about this successful event, visit:

<http://umbcbreakingground.wordpress.com/2013/03/27/our-own-take-back-the-night/>
<http://umbcbreakingground.wordpress.com/2013/04/23/we-have-the-power/>



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