On one of CEW’s important but lesser known services to the University community is the Critical Difference Grants Program. For much of its 45 years, CEW has maintained a fund through which our counselors award money to students facing immediate crises that threaten to interrupt their studies and cause turmoil in their personal lives. The grant funds have helped hundreds of students pay their rent, repair cars, keep their electricity from being cut off, or buy winter coats for their children.

“The grant will help pay for childcare so that I can focus on studying for my preliminary doctoral exam. It comes at a key juncture in my career. . . Before this summer, I had given up hope that I would earn my Ph.D. and do my research in a reasonable time.”

A critical difference grant recipient

The critical difference money comes in part from the University but, since 1997, another source has been the Margin of Difference Fund, established by CEW friends Kathy and Phil Power through the Power Foundation. The fund makes outright gifts of money to student-parents who face some kind of financial exigency.

“What a shame it is,” says Kathy, “for women and men, especially those who are parents, to fall short of their educational goals. It’s tragic when they make it so far, only to run into conflicts between their education and their personal lives.”

“We started the Fund because it is especially important for Phil and me to help parents and, in the process, to help their children. When mom is stressed and struggling, then life for everyone in the family suffers. We wanted to help ensure that children are able to benefit from the great role model of their parents going to and completing college.”

According to CEW Senior Counselor Val Eaglin, the Margin of Difference Fund enables CEW to come to the rescue of student parents, especially international students, who are often not eligible for sufficient funding and thus are unable to maintain momentum for their studies.

The Powers are moved by the many thank-you letters CEW receives from their fund’s recipients. One woman recently wrote to say, “This grant will help pay for childcare so that I can focus on studying for my preliminary doctoral exam. It comes at a key juncture in my career. . . . Before this summer, I had given up hope that I would earn my Ph.D. and do my research in a reasonable time. Indeed I had even thought of giving it up completely. But now I have received a second chance. . . . Please accept my heartfelt gratitude.”

“It’s especially gratifying,” adds Kathy, “to hear that the people who have received these funds intend to reach back and help others, just like CEW was able to help them.” She points proudly to the many thank-you letters CEW receives from their fund’s recipients.

On Wednesday, September 30, noted foreign correspondent and University of Michigan graduate Robin Wright will present CEW’s annual Elizabeth Mullin Welch Lecture. The title of her talk will be The New Faces of Female Activism. The lecture is from 4:00 to 5:30 pm at the Biomedical Science Research Building Auditorium, 109 Zina Pitcher Place. Valet parking will be available for this event. Registration is requested at www.cew.umich.edu

Noted Correspondent, Robin Wright, to Speak September 30

You may have seen Robin Wright on television, commenting on foreign crises for all the major networks, including programs such as Meet the Press, Face the Nation, Today, the PBS NewsHour, The Charlie Rose Show, or Larry King Live. You may also have read her penetrating analyses in The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, The New Yorker, Time, The New York Times Magazine and other publications. We are delighted to welcome Wright to our campus to speak on the topic of world-wide trends in women’s empowerment and political engagement.

We recently interviewed Wright, who spoke about her career path, insights on the Middle East, and perspectives on the role of women here and in the Middle East.

The Middle East

Robin Wright has reported from more than 140 countries, but her area of primary passion and expertise is the Middle East. Four of her five books, including the recent Dreams and Shadows: The Future of the Middle East, are about the region’s political crises and conflicts during the rise of militant Islam.

“The Middle East is addictive,” she explained, noting that even while living on assignment in Africa and Rome she spent considerable time in the Middle East. Having been there once, “I made it a priority to return. It’s simply the best ongoing story in the world.”

Wright hopeful about the Middle East? “Well, in the long term, yes,” she said, although she predicts more turmoil in key countries short-term. Many in the U.S., Wright says, operate on stereotypes about the Middle East in general and about the roles women play. In Iran, for example, “Women now make up over 20% of students in higher education. They are really closing the gender gap,” she said. Women are agents of change across the Middle East, and the innovative and energetic female activists she describes in Dreams and Shadows are not unusual. Their goals in terms of personal and political freedoms are similar to what women activists want in the U.S.
E

ployment has been a major topic in the media over the past several months. While layoffs have hit many U.S. workers, indications are that men’s unemployment rates are exceeding those of women. In fact, women are now a larger proportion of the workforce than are men.

Obviously, we’re concerned that any of our fellow citizens—men or women—are suffering from the current economic downturn. As we consider the status of women in the workforce, however, CEW looks broadly and deeply at the issues. Women do indeed make up more of the workforce than ever before.

Yet, while they are well represented in leadership roles in the nonprofit sector, women still hold only 3% of the Fortune 500 companies’ executive suites. Women’s representation in science and technology fields, measured by college degrees, has declined over the past few years, especially in computer science. Compare the annual median earnings for full-time, year round workers in Michigan: Men earn $49,108 while women earn $34,782. Also, women comprise 60% of low-wage workers.

How CEW Responds

How do we at CEW respond to these societal trends? As I’ve learned since arriving in January, CEW’s work often anticipates broader social concerns, enabling us to respond quickly and effectively. This issue illustrates the variety of CEW responses to the concerns of Michigan citizens, as well as the support we offer.

Women continue to seek access to higher education, knowing that it offers positive benefits to themselves and their families. Read about CEW partners Kathy and

CEW’s work often anticipates broader social concerns, enabling us to respond quickly and effectively.

Phil Power and how their generosity allows CEW to assist student parents in need. (Page 1)

Research shows that increasing the educational attainment of mothers has a positive effect both on their incomes and on their children’s educational attainment. Building on our long history of supporting nontraditional students in order for them to complete their degrees, CEW’s Community College Student Transfer Program works to increase the success of students who have transferred from community colleges into U-M. (Page 6)

Work is but one part of women’s lives. Their career success is affected by many other aspects.

CEW counselors offer a whole life approach that is particularly useful for those in transition. As the University recognizes the direct impact that domestic violence has on workers, CEW is at the forefront of creating a collaborative awareness campaign on domestic violence for community members. (Page 4)

Whether working individually with women to help them succeed, offering programs that address specific needs, or providing the University community with information and support about the important issues in women’s lives, CEW continues to make a difference.

I invite you to read in more depth about our ongoing work and new initiatives.

Gloria D. Thomas

Race and Reconciliation in Our Community: A Community-Based Contribution to the National Conversation on Race, November 13-15

President Barack Obama has called for a national conversation on race, and the University of Michigan, in partnership with several community-based organizations, has responded to this call. Reflecting the multifaceted nature of our community, the first steps in this critical discussion will bridge town and gown, secular and religious, and geographic and school boundaries. Nontombi Naomi Tutu, the third child of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, has been invited to the University of Michigan to lead these discussions on race and social justice. Tutu will speak at three special events during her visit, and all events are free and open to the public.

Nontombi Naomi Tutu, Remarks, Friday, November 13, 7:30 p.m., Rackham Auditorium, 915 E. Washington Street, Ann Arbor, MI

Film Screening and Panel Discussion (includes Tutu): Long Day’s Journey Into Night, Saturday, November 14, 7:30 p.m., Washtenaw Community College, Towsley Auditorium, Morris Lawrence Building, 4800 E. Huron River Drive, Ypsilanti, Michigan

Nontombi Naomi Tutu, Remarks, Sunday, November 15, 10:00 a.m. Service First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor; 608 E. William Street, Ann Arbor, MI

These events are co-sponsored by the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation; First Congregational Church of Ann Arbor; Second Baptist Church of Ann Arbor; the U-M Center for Afroamerican and African Studies (CAAS), the U-M African Studies Center; and the University of Michigan Office of the President.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Willis Patterson, Professor Emeritus, U-M School of Music, at wcp@umich.edu.
Robin Wright, Story continued from page 1

A Unique Career Path
Wright is well aware of gender stereotypes. A University of Michigan alumna, Wright got her reporting start working at The Ann Arbor News and The Michigan Daily, where she was the first female associate sports editor. (The Ann Arbor News would let her report only for the “women’s page.”) To cover sports, Wright worked out a “deal” with the male athletes, she remembers. “If they would give me quotes and information, I wouldn’t attempt to go into the locker room.”

She faced similar obstacles covering the world. “In 1974,” she said, “when I was first posted in Africa, there were 106 members of the foreign press corps…and 105 of them were men.” Now, she considers journalism to be a good profession for women.

However, Robin Wright doesn’t define herself primarily as a journalist, but as a historian writing about contemporary history as it happens. “I’ve always found a part of the world I wanted to go to, and then I’ve found a way to get there.” Wright has been a fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the Brookings Institution, Yale, Stanford, Duke and most recently the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. She joins the U.S. Institute of Peace in October.

The author of five books, Wright is now working on the first of three more. Does that indicate a career change? “Not really. I’ve always had an unconventional career that combined journalism with writing books and with working in academia and think tanks.”

Women of Achievement
Growing up in Ann Arbor, Wright remembers reading a series of biographies on “women of achievement” in the Burns Park School library, taking away the message “women can do anything.” That message was reinforced by her parents—especially her mother, Phyllis Wright, who learned to fly an airplane at age 14 and who was an actress from her teens until just a few months before her death at age 91. Wright also credits the time she spent in Europe as a teen, while her father was on sabbatical from UM’s Law School, as sparking her interests in other countries and in foreign affairs.

In recognition for her work, Wright has won a number of prestigious honors, including the U.N. Correspondents Association Gold Medal, “Journalist of the Year” from the American Academy of Diplomacy, a National Press Club Award, and a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Grant. Clearly, Robin Wright took in the lessons of women of achievement, and her Mullin Welch lecture on “The New Face of Female Activism” is one you won’t want to miss. “The Center for the Education of Women Mullin Welch Lecture Series was established in 1989 by Frances Daseler and Marjorie Jackson in memory of their sister Elizabeth Charlotte Mullin Welch, to bring to the UM campus lectures who exemplify Elizabeth’s characteristics: creativity, strength of character and expansive vision.

Read our review of Wright’s new book in the column to the left.
In the fall of 2009, a long-term CEW investment will pay off as we help to launch Abuse Hurts, a new University of Michigan campaign to combat domestic and sexual violence affecting members of the University community. The campaign will include a new website, print media, policy guidelines, training and a continuing mechanism for monitoring and coordination. CEW Associate Director for Advocacy Susan Kaufmann has led this campaign, joined two years ago by Kathleen Donohoe, Associate Director of Human Resources for Strategy, Planning and Policy. For the last year, CEW social work intern Sarah Crockett has provided invaluable assistance.

Having spent many years doing community-based work to combat gender violence, Kaufmann was familiar with the relevant issues and actors and could see the need for a coordinated response within the University community. She understood that both the University and the local community had many assets in place to address domestic and sexual violence; however, the University lacked a mechanism to ensure cross-unit collaboration, planning, and community education.

University-Wide Initiative

Three years ago, Kaufmann invited U-M staff, students and faculty with a stake in addressing gender violence to form a working committee and sought the support of Laurita Thomas, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources. Thomas has been a strong sponsor of the initiative and has been instrumental in securing additional sponsors Dr. Lori Pierce, Associate Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs and Dr. Timothy Johnson, Chair, Obstetrics and Gynecology. In addition, Abuse Hurts is supported and advised by an executive committee that includes CEW Director Gloria Thomas. Because the University’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center already devotes significant resources to addressing sexual assault and dating violence, particularly among students, the working committee decided to focus initially on domestic violence and its impact on employees in the workplace.

“U-M is joining a growing list of public and private employers tackling partner violence,” Kaufmann says. A number of universities have instituted comprehensive campaigns to reduce and address both dating and domestic violence within their campus communities. They include Ohio State University, Michigan State University and Pennsylvania State University. In addition, many large employers, including Blue Cross/Blue Shield, State Farm, Verizon Wireless, Allstate, Polaroid, and Liz Claiborne have taken significant leadership in combating domestic violence among their workforce and in society.

Domestic Violence and the Workplace

Domestic violence spills over into the workplace, affecting productivity, benefits and health care costs, workplace safety and the employer’s legal liability. According to the Family Violence Prevention Fund, “The lethality of domestic violence often increases at times when the batterer believes that the victim has left the relationship.” Once a survivor attempts to leave an abusive partner, the workplace can become the only place the assailant can locate and harm her or him.

A 2005 national telephone survey by the Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence found that 21% of full-time employed adults were victims of domestic violence, and 64% of them indicated their work performance was significantly impacted.

In 2003, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated annual employment productivity losses due to domestic violence at $727.8 million with over 7.9 million paid workdays lost.

“Domestic violence is virtually impossible to measure with absolute precision due to numerous complications, including the social stigma that inhibits victims from disclosing their abuse,” according to the Family Violence Prevention Fund. Nonetheless, locally available information indicates substantial prevalence.

Domestic Violence in Southeast Michigan

According to the Michigan State Police Crime Report, in 2007 there were 101,388 domestic violence victims and 98,436 domestic violence offenders. Washtenaw County accounted for 2,260 of those victims and 2,199 offenders. Wayne County had 29,793 victims of domestic violence and 29,169 offenders.

In Washtenaw County in 2007, SafeHouse Center responded to 2,259 crisis calls related to domestic violence and sexual assault. They provided 6,269 nights of shelter to 160 adults and 126 children affected by domestic violence. 25% of women who seek medical care for any reason have been battered, reports the University of Michigan Abuse Prevention Initiative. Referrals from the University Hospital Emergency Department to social workers designated to respond to patients reporting intimate partner violence have increased every year since the creation of that initiative.

In 2008, UM Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center responded to 16 incidents of dating/domestic violence. Knowing that domestic violence is very under-reported and that the preceding statistics represent only a fraction of the violence that affects our community, CEW is proud to be playing a crucial role in launching Abuse Hurts.

For more information and referral resources, see the Center’s website at www.cew.umich.edu/cwaeaction/womenvio.html.

From August through October 2009, human resource employees across the UM campus are receiving training on how to respond to domestic violence in the workplace. The program is part of the new Abuse Hurts initiative led by CEW and University Human Resources with the sponsorship, support and guidance of an executive committee of senior University leaders. Representatives of University Human Resources, the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board, and SafeHouse Center are delivering the training, which is designed to increase human resource staff members’ ability to recognize and understand domestic violence; respond appropriately to survivors, supervisors and perpetrators; and provide resources and referrals. The training will be complemented by a new Abuse Hurts website expected to be launched in October 2009, Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

“Abuse Hurts” Campaign

CEW leads an initiative to combat domestic and sexual violence in the University community.
In February 2009, CEW welcomed Radhika Coomaraswamy, the United Nations Under-Secretary General and Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. (See a report of her visit in the Spring 2009 newsletter.) You may have been in the audience that Wednesday afternoon to hear Ms. Coomaraswamy’s informative and terrifying account of the lives of child soldiers. According to the United Nations, grave violations against children are currently taking place in at least 18 countries, including Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Sudan, Uganda, and Sri Lanka. A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier, paints a graphic picture of the world Radhika Coomaraswamy described for us last winter.

**A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier** by Ishmael Beah (2007)

When he was 12, Ishmael Beah was driven from his Sierra Leone village by attacking rebels; he never returned to live with his mother, father or siblings again. In a straightforward, non-sensational and non-self-pitying tone, Beah describes the horrendous massacres he witnessed as he hid in the jungles evading marauding armies. Even more distressing, Beah tells how he himself soon became a soldier, forced to maim and murder other soldiers and innocent villagers. A Long Way Gone describes one incident this way: “They were all lined up, six of them, with their hands tied. I shot them on their feet and watched them suffer for an entire day before finally shooting them in the head so that they would stop crying. Before I shot each man, I looked at him and saw how his eyes gave up hope and steadied before I pulled the trigger.”

This is also a story of redemption of UN representatives negotiating Beah’s release from the army and beginning his reintegration into civilized society. Every day the nurses and teachers reminded Beah, “None of what happened was your fault. You were just a little boy.” “I hated that line,” says Beah, but at some point he understood that they were right. Beah’s repatriation was a long, difficult process. Inspired by his success, personality and compelling story, UN officials encouraged him to travel to New York as a spokesperson for his fellow child soldiers. The book ends with details of Beah’s life in America and the positive events that have taken place since then.

**A Jury of Her Peers: American Women Writers from Anne Bradstreet to Annie Proulx** by Elaine Showalter (2009)

Elaine Showalter states that her new book A Jury of Her Peers—600 pages of it—is the first literary history of American women writers. So whether you took American Literature courses before or after the birth of Women's Studies programs, you are likely to learn something new.

Showalter discusses American women writers only, though she refers occasionally to influential women in other countries and to male writers who represent genres or movements at particular points in time. From Margaret Fuller to Louisa May Alcott, Willa Cather to Alice Walker, much of the book explores links between writers generations apart. Her text interweaves the narratives of women from multiple decades, demonstrating a web of interconnectedness and interplay between women writers across time.

Showalter identifies common themes employed by women writers, such as the bee and flower or the trapped/agoraphobic housewife.

The primary message of Showalter’s book is the forced choices for women writers from Puritans through the end of the 20th century: domesticity vs. creativity; professional writer vs. wife/mother; self-definition as a writer vs. writing in “free time.” As Showalter points out, these choices were also the actual subject matter of much of women’s writing.

I found it odd that, despite her primary thesis that women writers were oppressed because their writing was seldom considered the main aspect of their lives, Showalter goes into more detail about the family background, sexuality, and marital status of each writer than she does the content of that writer’s work. Similarly, I was disappointed to find that selections were fewer and shorter than I had anticipated.

Nevertheless, if you are interested in the history of women writers in America, or even want to explore your favorite author’s place in the history of American women’s writing, I highly recommend Showalter’s A Jury of Her Peers. Her discussions are not limited to the well-known writers. She includes, for example, Mary Rowlandson, who described her captivity with Narragansett Indians; the Southern antebellum writer Augusta Jane Evans; and Nella Larsen, “the mystery woman of the Harlem Renaissance.” Just keep pen and paper handy to note the authors or works that you now feel compelled to read! —Jeanne Miller

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**Books of Interest**

As a new feature in each newsletter issue, we will review books that CEW staff members have found interesting, thought-provoking or useful.

Our next newsletter will include reviews of

*Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout and

*Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women* by Geraldine Brooks.

Pick up copies and read along with us. We have more reading suggestions on our Facebook page in the discussion section.

Join the conversation.

www.cew.umich.edu
CEW Helps Community College Transfer Students Succeed at U-M

In 2008, over 80% of the CEW Scholarships awarded to undergraduates were to students who started their education at a community college.

Like President Obama, the University of Michigan believes community colleges are essential partners in higher education. The University is currently working hard to encourage greater numbers of our state's community college students to transfer to U-M. And CEW is playing a key role in those efforts.

Of course, transfer and other “non-traditional” students have always been some of CEW’s key constituents, including student parents, returning women students and older students. In 2008, over 80% of the CEW Scholarships awarded to undergraduates were to students who started their education at a community college. Two years ago, the Center received funding from the U-M Alumnae Council to develop a program of support specifically for current community college transfer students, many of whom are women. A second aspect of the program is to encourage transfers by building relationships with women's advocates, women's centers and student affairs centers at Michigan's two year colleges.

Jacquie Bowman, Ph.D., a CEW Senior Counselor, directs our program, which dovetails with a broader U-M initiative funded by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation to educate community college students and staff who may mistakenly believe that the University of Michigan is “out of reach.”

Members of the University-wide endeavor, including Jacquie, have travelled to over 20 community and tribal colleges across the state, sharing the message that “the University of Michigan is a choice” and providing information about application procedures, financial aid and support systems.

CEW's program goes several extra steps, both for students who are considering transferring to U-M and for those who have already made the move. Understanding the concept of “support champions” to help students bridge the differences between community colleges and a large research university like Michigan, Jacquie develops workshops, open houses, and panels for recent transfers. Jacquie and the other CEW counselors are also available to work one-on-one with these students as they navigate the large and complex University system. That personal touch extends to community college advisors or students who want to speak directly with Jacquie about the possibilities at U-M.

Since the start of these two initiatives, applications from community college students have increased by nearly 25%, and attendance at our CEW programs has been strong.

For more information on community college transfers to Michigan, go to www.commcoll.umich.edu For more information on CEW's efforts, go to www.cew.umich.edu/students/comcollege.htm or contact Jacquie Bowman at jacquieb@umich.edu

Crossing Boundaries Project Collaboration

“You cannot place two jockeys on one horse and expect it to run twice as fast.”

“The most valuable and least used word in the project manager’s vocabulary is ‘No.”

These are only a few of the “Project Management Rules to Manage By” Sandra Coleman, an executive management consultant, offered to 80 non-profit leaders and employees gathered at the University of Michigan Detroit Center on June 12 for Project Management for Nonprofit Organizations. The three-hour participatory workshop provided tools, training and practice for defining a project, setting realistic goals, breaking the project into component tasks and assigning responsibility for each, and setting a budget and schedule.

The project management workshop was part of the Crossing Boundaries Project created last year by CEW and the UM National Center for Institutional Diversity, Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning, and Arts of Citizenship. The workshop was the first joint effort in a new collaboration between CEW, our Crossing Boundaries collaborators and the Michigan Nonprofit Association.

New CEW Leadership Development Workshops for Fall 2009 Semester

In a competitive workplace, effective leadership skills have been identified as a key factor for career advancement and success. In the past, CEW has provided leadership development opportunities for University of Michigan staff, faculty and students through its professional networks and training programs like the Advanced Leadership Seminar, the New Millennium Leadership Series, and the Graduate Women’s Leadership Program. This year, CEW will expand its program offerings and unveil a three-part workshop series designed to introduce leadership concepts to a broader audience.

Beginning in October, CEW will present a different topic each month in a seminar conducted by CEW senior staff and University of Michigan senior administrators. Sessions to be offered this year include:

- **Recognize Your Leadership Potential**
  - Monday, October 26
  - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

- **Leading from the Middle**
  - Tuesday, November 17
  - 5:30-7:30 p.m.; and

- **Communicating Like a Leader**
  - Monday, December 7
  - 5:30-7:30 p.m.

The workshops will take place at CEW and the cost is $25 for each session. (Save $10! - A discounted price of $65 is available for the series when you register and pay for all three sessions at once.)

For more information about these and other upcoming fall programs, please contact CEW by phone at 734-764-6005 or visit our website at www.cew.umich.edu
Since 1979, the Women of Color Task Force (WCTF) has provided networking and career development training for staff at the University of Michigan, with a special focus on supporting the professional and educational aspirations of women of color. Housed at CEW since 2002, the Task Force sponsors an annual career conference, a staff mentoring program and other career development workshops throughout the year.

In May 2009, the group was recognized for its 30 years of exceptional university service with two awards—the inaugural U-M Distinguished Diversity Leaders team award and the VOICES of the Staff Champion Award. The U-M Distinguished Diversity Leaders Award was established to shine a light on those staff members who work toward achieving a welcoming, supportive and inclusive working environment. It is intended to celebrate those who embrace the value of diversity and recognize how it helps set the University apart. The Task Force was one of five winning teams.

Recently, Janice Reuben, the WCTF program coordinator, sat down with several members and asked them to reflect on the impact that the task force has had on their professional and personal lives at the university. Several common themes emerged: how the organization is a resource for numerous professional development opportunities, provides support and encouragement to those striving for career and educational advancement, and is a safe space to network and share experiences. Here are a few of their comments.

Joyce French, a lead research assistant at ICPSR, has been a member of the task force for more than 20 years. “It’s meant a network of supportive colleagues and friends that I would not have had in my life otherwise. It has meant connections personally and professionally that have enriched my life. It has lifted me up and opened my mind to so many possibilities and opportunities.”

Grace Wu, research administrator in Engineering, has served on the WCTF for five years. “WCTF has helped me develop interpersonal, communication and organizational skills…. My experience on the Executive Team also helped me develop my leadership and project management skills. It’s been an invaluable experience…. I love learning about the different women around me. We come from all walks of life, and it’s amazing to see the friendships and relationships forming among us.”

Dr. Elizabeth Mimms, project manager in the School of Education, has been with the Task Force for more than 15 years. “There are people I meet at the WCTF meeting that I can talk to about issues at work…. and I am inspired by the lives of the women I meet there. It is gratifying to know there are so many who are striving to make a positive impact on the University community.”

Stacy Peterson, lecturer in the School of Social Work, has served as an executive member of the Task Force for the past 2 years. “You would not know it, but I used to be shy. Working with the wonderful women on the Task Force has helped me find my voice and overcome my reticence to speak up in meetings. Now, I am more confident about my skills, have taken a leadership role on departmental projects, and know that I can contribute to the success of my unit.”

Janis Williamson, Senior Customer Service Rep at UHS, “WCTF has been a positive and resourceful network of women…. It has given me the opportunity to utilize my leadership skills as well as heighten my project management skills by helping to plan the annual conference. …My best experience with WCTF has been working on the annual conference. It has been amazing to see so many talented women working together as a cohesive team…”

Bruce Donald, supervisor in Building Services, joined WCTF as a volunteer in 1992 and is an honorary member of the Task Force. “I participated in a fashion show that was held during the networking lunch at one of the conferences. I was so impressed by the camaraderie among the women planning the event that I wanted to be a part of it. So year after year, I came back to work with the group. And through the connections that I made being part of WCTF, I have received the opportunity to serve on departmental committees that address diversity issues in the workplace.”

For more information, or to join the Women of Color Task Force, please go to http://www.cew.umich.edu/faculty-staff/wctf.htm or contact Janice Reuben at wctfadmin@umich.edu.

Save the date for the 28th WCTF Annual Career Conference
March 5, 2010, 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Michigan League, 911 N. University
Information about the conference will be available on the web in December at www.cew.umich.edu
Leadership Boot Camp: Lessons from the Trenches

If you don’t believe that CEW will go to any length in the interest of the people we serve, we have a story for you.

Walking out of a meeting one afternoon, Jacqueline Bowman, one of our senior counselors, was stopped by a U-M colleague. “May I nominate you for a leadership program being sponsored by the Army ROTC?” “Hmnn,” Jacquie thought. “Leadership. We’re always looking to improve our leadership repertoire.” She answered, “Sure,” without giving the matter more thought.

The next morning, Jacquie found an email message: “Greetings! Please see attached letter and travel order regarding your trip to Ft. Lewis, Washington. You should arrive by 1600 hours on July 12.” “My only thought,” said Jacquie, “was ‘What have I gotten myself into?!’”

Flash forward to these scenes:

Jacquie lying on her stomach in the dirt, wearing knee pads and a 22 lb vest and shooting an M249 machine gun.

Jacquie throwing a hand grenade. “I scoffed at my team members, watching them throw their grenades just a few feet. ‘What’s wrong with those wimps?! How hard can it be?’ Then it was my turn, and I threw my grenade about three inches. Those things are a lot heavier than people imagine!”

The program in which Jacquie participated is the Warrior Forge Educators Visit. Two hundred forty seven college and university presidents, deans, administrators and faculty members from institutions all across the country had been invited to Ft. Lewis so they could see and experience some of the training the ROTC students receive. The third evening was a dinner for the educators and cadets, with guest speaker Major General Arthur Bartell, a University of Michigan ROTC graduate who is now Commanding General of US Army Cadet Command.

“I went into this experience not knowing what to expect and more than a little nervous. I came home with a real appreciation for what these young men and women are doing for our country. I made friends with lots of people—you’d be surprised how quickly you bond with someone when you’re working together to tie up an enemy combatant!” Jacquie says.

In Jacquie’s own words, here are perceptions on leadership she brought back to us:

- To be a leader clearly takes knowledge and skills.
- It also takes commitment. Leaders really need to value what they’re doing.
- Leaders are people who understand about stepping up when the conditions demand it and doing what the team needs.
- Leaders must be problem solvers, able to think quickly on their feet.
- Character building is part of leadership building.
- Diversity matters. At the Camp, cadets are taught the importance of understanding cultural diversity as part of leadership. They hold diversity training sessions, role playing real life scenarios and learning to react in culturally sensitive ways.
- Leaders truly are made, not born.

We salute Jacquie Bowman, our own Army of One, for taking CEW leadership training to the trenches.

*This opportunity was made possible and funded by the United States Army.

After a long, hot morning working in the field, lunch was served: Dried food in a box complete with its own heating system activated with water.

Join the Conversation

CEW is now on Facebook and Twitter. Go to our website at www.cew.umich.edu and click on the icons. You can also go directly to Twitter and search CEWatUM or go directly to Facebook and search University of Michigan Center for the Education of Women. Add your comments to our Reading Discussion on Facebook or look for our program updates on Twitter.