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Illinois State University

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From the Director:

Women and Work in an Era of Globalization

At the end of the twentieth century, the worldwide growth in the numbers of working women is a *fait accompli*. Women's labor-force participation rates, and female shares of the labor force, have increased almost everywhere. In developed countries, women have made inroads into all kinds of occupations and professions – including many that were previously the exclusive province of men. In developing countries, women are still attached to the agricultural sector, to homework, and to the urban informal sector, but a growing proportion of the female economically active population is engaged in work in modern services and manufacturing. This is partly the result of higher educational attainment of women, partly the result of changing household needs, and partly the result of growing demand for more “flexible” (and cheaper) labor.

Many studies have documented how working women have contributed to household well-being and economic growth, but access to paid work is also crucial to achieving self-reliance. Women's employment is associated with growing social and gender consciousness, and has led to various forms of collective action, from unionization to feminist activism. While these trends are all positive, there is much that remains problematical with respect to women's economic participation. Problems include: the adverse effects of globalization on women's jobs and wages; exploitative work conditions in the global economy; the continuing gender-based wage gap; hostile work environments; the

absence of national legislation or firm-level policies that facilitate employment and family life (e.g., paid maternity leave, quality childcare facilities, flexible work schedules); and the dearth of women in decision-making positions.

The conference on “Women and Employment: Linking Local and Global” (ISU, 17-18 September 1999) will address these issues by reporting on research and on policy initiatives in Bloomington-Normal, the United States, and around the world. The conference revolves around four themes: the contradictory effects of globalization and working women; supporting maternal employment; creating a healthy workplace environment; and the relationship between women and labor unions. Papers examine the topics from a number of disciplinary perspectives (sociology, economics, history, psychology, law, political science), and two roundtable discussions will take place involving representatives of local businesses, unions, and women's organizations.

The conference will contribute to enhanced understanding of patterns and trends related to women's employment in the United States and globally, business practices and workplace policies in the Bloomington-Normal area, and the ways that unions are integrating women's issues into their own practices and policies.

See the full program inside this newsletter. We invite you to join us at the conference. ✉

| Inside This Issue | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | From the Director |
| 1 | Women's Studies Staff |
| 2 | |
| 2 | Speaker's Corner |
| 3 | |
| 3 | |
| 3 | |
| 4 | |
| 4 | |

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ANNOUNCEMENTS/FEATURES

Speaker's Corner

A new column of the Women's Voice is Speaker's Corner, in which students may submit a personal essay on their experiences.

~K

Women's Studies Students: News and Profiles

By Sandra Harmon

Chandra Harris will graduate in May with a B.S. in mass communication with a concentration in journalism. Chandra is a member of the University Honors Program, Communications Honor Society, and Golden Key National Honor Society. Additional memberships include Women in Communication and National Association of Black Journalists. A reporter for the *Vidette* since her freshman year, she currently serves as assignment editor and columnist for the paper. She has also anchored TV 10's *First at Five*. She presented a paper, "Family Life through the Eyes of Women in Slavery," at the 1998 Women's Studies Symposium. She has been accepted for graduate studies at the University of Florida and has also received news reporting job offers in the Midwest and south.

WOMEN ON THE MOVE!

In future issues of Women's Voice, a new section will focus on Women on the Move to bring attention to the efforts of women taking action that will make a difference locally and/or globally for all women. If you would like to be included in this section, please contact Women's Studies at 309/438-2947 or e-mail rwhite@ilstu.edu.

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Faculty News

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Congratulations to all Graduating Seniors!

Rebecca Auth
Tina Canon
Laura Carroll
Sandra Gilbert
Chandra Harris
Laurie Beth Hartzell
Jody Herman



Tracy Kremer
Dawn Minor
Libby Molnar
Michael Reno
Lisa Spaude
Tracy Vernor

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Fourth Annual Women's Studies Symposium Presenters

On March 27, 1999, the following undergraduate and graduate students presented papers at the 4th Annual Women's Studies Symposium.

Social Movements Panel: Cherlyn Belsha, Michelle Anderson, Ryan Hieronymous, Dana Schrage, and Meridith Kruse.

Women and Socio-Economic and Military Issues Panel: Laurie Beth Hartzell, Regina Petry, and Carol Garrison.

Literature, Language, and Identity Panel: Sarah Stewart, Rebecca Auth, Nino Selvaggio, Tay D. Triggs, Liz Sawyer, and Alison Thomas.

Thank you to all who participated!

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival is going to be held this August 10-15 in Walhalla, Michigan. The six day event consists of various female musicians, artists and workshops. The cost of the festival starts at \$310, but is based on a sliding scale for low-income and older women. The festival is open to women of all ages, including children and the elderly. To register, for information or to apply for a discounted ticket, write to WWTMC, Box 22, Walhalla, MI 49458 or visit their website: <http://www.michfest.com>. ✉

Keep in touch!



As the spring semester comes to a close, we would like your help so that we may stay in touch with you and to continue to send you *Women's Voice*. Please send us updates of your address, career activities, and/or education. Do your plans for the summer include special plans that you would like to see included in upcoming issues? We want to hear from you and about you.

Name _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: Home (____) _____ Business (____) _____

Employer/Business _____

Information _____

Yes! I would like to continue to receive *Women's Voice*.
Minor ___ Faculty ___ Alumnae ___ Community ___
Please mail this form to Women's Studies, Illinois State University, Campus Box 4260, Normal, IL 61790-4260; or E-mail the information to rwhite@ilstu.edu.