Acclaimed “Girl Rising” Film Features Girls and Education

In cooperation with the UAH Office of Diversity and the Global Studies Program, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program is marking the United Nations’ International Day of the Girl Child (October 11) by showing the acclaimed documentary “Girl Rising” on Thursday, October 15, at 7 p.m. in Shelby Center 107.

The motto of the film is “One Girl with Courage is a Revolution.” “Girl Rising” focuses on the stories of nine courageous girls from Cambodia, Nepal, Haiti, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Peru, Sierra Leone, and Afghanistan, and their heroic efforts to obtain education. The film, directed by Academy Award nominee Richard Robbins, emphasizes that educating girls not only benefits those girls individually, but can also transform their entire communities and reverse cycles of poverty. Even so, 62 million girls around the world are not in school. The film, by focusing on individual and community stories, powerfully demonstrates both the impediments girls face, and also the transformations that come when society empowers girls through education.

The film features extensive footage of each profiled girl and tells the girls’ stories in the words crafted by famous female writers from their home countries, narrated by well-known actresses.

For information about the film, see girlrising.com. The event is free and open to the public and will be followed by a reception. For event information contact (256) 824-6190 or molly.johnson@uah.edu.

Women’s and Gender Studies Holds First Week of Welcome Mixer

For the first time, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program featured a Week of Welcome (WOW) event as part of UAH’s extensive orientation and activity program for new students. Students learned about the program and enjoyed fresh pizza and rainbow-colored sweet treats.

Representatives from several campus and community organizations also presented information, including AAUW-Huntsville, Free2Be (GLBT Advocacy and Youth Services), Ladies in Action (women’s self-defense), POWER (UAH Women’s and Gender Studies student club), PRISM at UAH (gay-straight alliance), and URGE (United for Reproductive and Gender Equity).

The event’s goal was to foster a sense of community among new and returning students who are interested in supporting gender equality and diversity. We were delighted by the many students, faculty, and staff who attended and by the positive energy on display, and we now plan to hold a regular WOW event every year!

WGS minor Josh Baker (left) with WGS faculty member Leslie Kaiura.
Greetings from the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at UAH!

In this fall’s newsletter, you can read all about our coming events, including a showing of the education documentary “Girl Rising” and several arts-related events co-sponsored with the Department of Art, Art History, and Design and with the UAH Theatre Program.

You can also enjoy photos from our spring 2015 events, including Charged Up For Change! EXPO and the spring performance of the Huntsville Feminist Chorus, as well as see a photo of our display at the “Soaring for Social Justice” kite festival. Additionally, poets Allen Berry and Marianne Gatlin performed at the March Coffeehouse Writers Series event.

Special thanks to those of you who made contributions to Women’s and Gender Studies and to the Rose Norman Women’s Studies Award for Scholarship in Action this past year. Your contributions help us support diverse and creative events that bring greater understanding of women’s and gender issues to our community.

Please remember to check out our website at uah.edu/womensstudies and to “like” “Women’s and Gender Studies at UAH” on Facebook to keep up to date with us before the next newsletter goes out in the spring! You can also sign up for our Online Newsletter at http://www.uah.edu/la/departments/womens-studies/news/subscribe. The Online Newsletter is often the best way to stay up to date on relevant events occurring before our newsletter goes out, or coming to our attention only after we have already distributed the semester’s newsletter.

All the best,

Molly Wilkinson Johnson
Associate Professor of History
Director of Women’s and Gender Studies

From top: Poets Allen Berry and Marianne Gatlin at the March 17 Coffeehouse Writers program; Women’s and Gender Studies Minor Rebecca Warner representing the WGS Program at the “Soaring for Social Change” community kite festival at John Hunt Park on March 7; members of the Huntsville Feminist Chorus at the annual UAH spring concert on April 11 (HFC photos by Roy Starkey)

YOU ARE INVITED!

Showing of Roxane Gay’s TED Talk “Confessions of a Bad Feminist”

Discussion Facilitated by Women’s and Gender Studies Director Dr. Molly W. Johnson

Tuesday, September 22
12-1 p.m.

Huntsville-Madison County Public Library
Main Library
Second Floor Meeting Room

http://www.ted.com/talks/roxane_gay_confessions_of_a_bad_feminist
ARTS COLLABORATIONS!
Art Exhibit and Archaeology Lectures

The UAH Women’s and Gender Studies Program has been the proud co-sponsor of “Precarious: The Dangerous Practices of Uncertainty,” co-sponsored by the UAH Department of Art, Art History, and Design and the Alabama Women’s Art Caucus, from August 27 to September 19, at the UAH Union Grove Gallery and Meeting Hall.

WGS is also co-sponsoring, with the Department of Art, Art History, and Design and the North Alabama Chapter of the Archaeological Institute of America, three scholars who will address the female experience and/or concepts of the feminine divine in the ancient world.

On Thursday, October 1, at 7:30 p.m., Dr. Mireille Lee of Vanderbilt University will give a talk, “Mirror, Mirror: Reflections of Femininity in Ancient Greece in the Wilson Hall Theater. On Wednesday, October 28, at 2:20 p.m., Dr. Karen Sonik of Auburn University will give a talk, “Medusa and Lamassu: Feminine Alterity in Greece and the Ancient Near East,” in Wilson Hall room 168, followed by a second talk, “Monsters and Demons at the Dawn of Civilization,” at 7:30 p.m. in Shelby Center room 107, looking primarily at the concept of the female monster.

On Wednesday, November 11, at 12:45 p.m. Dr. Lorenzo Nigro of Sapienza University in Rome, Italy, will speak on “The Phoenician Goddess Astarte on Sicily” in Wilson Hall room 168.

All of these lectures are free and open to the public. For more information contact the Department of Art, Art History, and Design at (256) 824-

“The Laramie Project” Performed at UAH in November

In another arts collaboration, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program is co-sponsoring the UAH Theatre Department’s fall production of “The Laramie Project.”

“The Laramie Project” tells the true story of how a town reacted to an unthinkable event—the murder of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year-old college student who was robbed, tortured, and tied to a fence post to die because he was gay. Based on hundreds of interviews conducted by members of the Tectonic Theater Project, this play charts a community’s attempt to answer the question, “How could this happen in our town?”

Performances are in the Wilson Hall Theater at UAH on Saturday, November 7, at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, November 8, at 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 11, to Saturday, November 14, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, November 15, at 2:30 p.m.

For more information and a schedule of events, contact (256) 824-6871 or www.uah.edu/theatre.

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Dr. Molly Johnson
Director

Dr. Rose Norman
Events Coordinator
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Erin Reid
Newsletter Editor

The UAH College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences presents
Peace on Earth: A Gala Celebration of the Arts
featuring Act of Congress and special guests, The Huntsville Symphony Orchestra and The Huntsville Community Chorus

Friday, December 4, 7:30 p.m, Von Braun Center Concert Hall
$10 General Admission
More information and tickets at www.uah.edu/PEACE
The Women’s and Gender Studies Program is delighted to report on another inspiring Charged Up For Change! EXPO.

Following on our successful events in 2010 and 2012, we brought back EXPO in 2015, featuring more than eighty exhibitors working to bring positive social change to our community and world.

More than 500 visitors from the campus and community gathered in UAH’s Conference Training Center (formerly the University Center) on Wednesday, April 1, to learn about all the creative ways they can use their interests and talents to make the world better.

Returning from the earlier EXPOs were groups such as the North Alabama Spay-Neuter Clinic, Therapy Partners, Free2Be (GLBT Advocacy and Youth Services), CASA of Madison County, and AAUW-Huntsville. Many new groups came on board, such as the Alabama Bicycle Coalition, Huntsville Community Drumline, the International Caesarean Awareness Network (ICAN), and the Huntsville Fiber Guild. The Huntsville-Madison County Public Library also participated and even brought the Bookmobile.

Students also had the opportunity to make their own prints with UAH’s Rocket Press. UAH student groups such as the Writer’s Block, Ladies in Action, Delta Zeta, Meals on Wheels, Campus Cursive, the Student Sociological Association, URGE, and the Public History Club also participated.

EXPO featured a carnival-like atmosphere, with indoor and outdoor entertainers coordinated by Anna Sue Courtney of the Flying Monkey Arts Center.

We also had a fun selfie booth as an outlet for people’s creative and silly spirits. EXPO offered ample food to sustain people’s energy, including popcorn, water, and assorted snacks, distributed by volunteers pushing a food cart, and also tea from Piper and Leaf Artisan Tea Company and sweets from Black Forest Cookies and Pizzelle’s Confections featured outside the building.

Visitors also enjoyed cupcakes from the Sugar Belle food truck, with our “cupcake fairy” giving out cupcake vouchers to EXPO visitors.

We were especially pleased that, in the spirit of EXPO, we were able to send some left-over packaged food with members of the student club Meals on Wheels at UAH, who immediately distributed it to people in need in our community.

WGS offers special thanks to the many vendors who contributed door prizes and added to the festive atmosphere, ranging from jewelry to food gift certificates to drumming lessons to a wine tasting.
One of the hallmarks of EXPO is the fabulous collaboration that goes into planning the event. The steering committee included close to twenty faculty, staff, and students from UAH. Funding from the Women’s and Gender Studies Program (not possible without our community supporters!), the Office of Diversity, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Office of Student Affairs, the College of Liberal Arts (now known as the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences), and the Global Studies Program at UAH made EXPO possible.

We were thrilled with our third EXPO and we look forward to planning yet another EXPO in coming years! Go ahead and check us out on social media if you wish! Facebook: Charged Up for Change! EXPO. Instagram: @UAHchargedup4change. Twitter: #UAHexpo

For information on future EXPOs contact molly.johnson@uah.edu.
Women’s and Gender Studies will sponsor the 16th annual Kathryn L. Harris Women’s and Gender Studies Writing Competition, which awards cash prizes for undergraduate or graduate written work that deals substantially with women, women’s issues, or the study of gender. The contest accepts academic and creative submissions from students at UAH. The winners are honored at the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Honors Day.

Last year’s winner in the undergraduate academic category was Erin Looney, “Slave Motherhood: Blessing or Curse? A Study of Enslaved Mothers in Nineteenth Century American South and Brazil” for the course Comparative Slavery and Abolition. The winner in the graduate academic category was Kristen Tunison, “Historiographical Review: The Age of Homespun by Laurel Thatcher Ulrich” for the course Recent Interpretations in Modern History.

Entries for this year’s contest are due by February 1, 2016, to Erin Reid, Women’s and Gender Studies Program, 344 Morton Hall, reide@uah.edu. Contest coordinators are Nicole Pacino, Department of History, Anna Foy, Department of English, and Richard Simon, Department of Sociology. Winning entries must follow competition guidelines in content and format. For more information, visit www.uah.edu/womensstudies.

Women’s and Gender Studies Students Receive Honors and Awards

The Women’s and Gender Studies Program awarded the 2015 Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement Award to Rebecca Warner, a Sociology major and Women’s and Gender Studies minor. Rebecca distinguished herself academically and served on the planning team of EXPO 2015.

The 2015 Women’s and Gender Studies Outstanding Emerging Woman Artist Award, presented at the UAH Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition, went to Art major Christina Polosky for “Gus,” acrylic and impasto medium on canvas paper within a hand-made box frame of reclaimed wood. The award of $100 recognizes and supports emerging women artists who show exceptional work.

Christina says, “I started at UAH in Studio Art originally as therapy to try to regain some purpose and self worth after being injured in Afghanistan in 2008 and subsequently retired from active duty as an Army officer.” Having suffered disabling injuries as well as PTSD and depression, “art gave me an avenue that was unlimited to me in a world that is now full of limitations due to the seriousness of my health issues.”

For more award information, contact molly.johnson@uah.edu.

Scholarships for Women and Women’s and Gender Studies Students

The Kathryn L. Harris Scholarship in Women’s and Gender Studies is awarded annually to a Women’s and Gender Studies minor with demonstrated academic performance. Other considerations include participation in Women’s and Gender Studies activities and clubs or in community activities that benefit women and girls.

The 2015 Harris Scholarship went to Danielle Hill, a Sociology major and Women’s and Gender Studies minor. The award is approximately $700 each year. Application deadline for the upcoming year is December 1, 2015.

The annual NCCWSL Leadership Scholarship aids student travel to the national leadership conference (see page 7).

For more information, contact molly.johnson@uah.edu or www.uah.edu/womensstudies.
Women’s and Gender Studies Featured Faculty: Richard Simon

Richard M. Simon, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Sociology in the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at UAH. Simon teaches Marriage and Family (SOC 206) and Gender and Society (SOC 306) as part of the Women’s and Gender Studies Minor offered by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program.

Simon enjoys engaging students in intellectual and socially relevant conversations during class, and also delights in coaxing students out of their comfort zones as a way of teaching the sociological imagination.

Simon’s research explores how people who identify as men and women experience, evaluate, and participate in science in different ways. He is currently involved in a study of UAH students that explores how masculinity and femininity interact with gender identification to influence college major choice. He has also published several studies of gender differences in attitudes toward biotechnology, and also nuclear power.

Simon enjoys working on research projects with his undergraduate students. In his two years as an Assistant Professor at UAH, he has supervised two independent studies that have brought students into his research and is in the process of supervising a third. Last spring two of his independent study students, Brooke Killion and Ashley Wagner, co-presented a paper at the Southern Sociological Society’s annual meeting.

In addition to his involvement with research and teaching on gender, Simon is also on the Honor’s Council, and teaches an Honor’s section of Introduction to Sociology (H-SOC 100), and co-teaches an interdisciplinary Honor’s course on poverty (HON 399), for which his contribution is to explore how poverty affects family structures, experiences, and childrearing styles.

In his free time, Simon enjoys reading individualist anarchist philosophy and thinking about the nature of the relationships between culture, civilization, and the individual. He is also an amateur singer/songwriter, and once in a while will forcibly subject his students to one of his sociologically themed songs. Beware!

UAH Women Students attend National Conference


All six students received national scholarships from AAUW and travel support from either AAUW -Huntsville or the Women’s and Gender Studies Program. Cassie Michael was the WGS student assistant for 2014-2015, and Brea Roper served on the EXPO planning team.

Cassie enjoyed the time she spent in the nation’s capitol. “My pre-conference activity took me to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.,” she says. “While there I discovered the major influence women have contributed to the growth of politics in this country.”

At the conference, Cassie says, “I was able to build my confidence in what I am able to accomplish not only as a student, but as a woman as well. I concluded the conference with new ways of managing my stress, which will in turn help create a stronger leader within.”

Brea agreed with Cassie in finding the conference empowering. She says, “I believe NCCWSL gave me confidence to challenge problems I face not only as a woman, but also as an African American student and employee.”
Become a Friend of Women’s and Gender Studies!

**Friends of Women's and Gender Studies (FWGS) is an organization of people who support the UAH Women’s and Gender Studies Program. The goals of FWGS include:**

- Supporting community involvement in Women’s and Gender Studies events
- Sponsoring cultural activities and events that honor and empower women
- Supporting women scholars, artists, and performers
- Fostering discussion of issues affecting women’s lives

**Annual Contribution (October 1 – September 30)**

- $10-24 Individual
- $25-49 Family
- $50-99 Matron
- $100-249 Sponsor
- $250-$499 Sustaining
- $500 Lifetime Contributor
- $1000 Benefactor

- I would like to contribute to the “Rose Norman Women’s Studies Award for Scholarship in Action.” $  
- I would like to contribute to scholarships and travel for Women’s and Gender Studies students. $  

**Your Name**  

**Phone**  

**Mailing Address**  

**Email**  

**Gifts are entirely tax-deductible. Make your check payable to UAH Women’s and Gender Studies.**  

Mail to: Women’s and Gender Studies, 344 Morton Hall, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, Huntsville, AL 35899