

You may like to know that...

- Applications for travel assistance to a national student leadership conference will be available Nov. I (page 5).
- The Coffeehouse Writers Series returns on Friday, Oct. 18 (page 2).

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WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS

Fall, 2013

Acclaimed Women's Historian Linda Gordon to Lecture on Reproductive Rights

Dr. Linda Gordon, University
Professor of the Humanities and
Florence Kelley Professor of History at New York University, will
visit UAH in October as a Humanities Center Short-Term Eminent
Scholar. Gordon is one of the
foremost experts on the history
of women and gender and of social policy in the United States.

She will give two public lectures. Her keynote lecture will be, "Birth Control and Abortion: Why Still So Controversial? An Historical View," on **Thursday, October 24, at 7:30 p.m.,** in Wilson Hall Theater (room 001). She will give a second public lecture, "Visual Democracy: How Dorothea Lange Used Photography to Promote

Equality," on Thursday, October 24, at 11:10 a.m., in Shelby Center 107 as part of the Honors Lecture Series. Gordon will also discuss her research with students in two history classes and one political science course.

Gordon's keynote lecture is drawn from her 1976 book, Woman's Body, Woman's Right: The History of Birth Control in America (revised and republished as The Moral Property of Women in 2002), which remains the definitive history of birth control politics in the United States. Her Honors lecture is based on her most recent and prize-winning book, Dorothea Lange: A Life Beyond Limits (2009). Gordon earned her Ph.D. from

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Yale University in Russian history in 1970, before moving into the field of U.S. women's history, an outgrowth in part of her active participation in the women's movement. Before moving to NYU, she taught at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, and the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where she was awarded the university's prestigious Vilas Research Chair. For further information, email molly.johnson@uah.edu or call (256) 824-2566.

Film Exposes Problem of Military Rape

Women's Studies will partner with POWER (the Women's Studies student club), the UAH Veteran's Network, and AAUW-Huntsville to sponsor a free showing of the 2012 documentary *The Invisible* War on **Tuesday, October I, at 7 p.m.,** in the University Center Exhibit Hall B-C.

A film by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering, *The Invisible War* exposes the problem of sexual assault in the U.S. military. Representatives from Army Community Service at Redstone Arsenal will give a preshow lecture at 7 p.m., followed by the film at 7:30 and then will answer questions after the film. Chanley Pickard is Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Program (SHARP) Manager, and Jennifer Blatter is SHARP Victim Advocate, Army Community Service.

This is AAUW's monthly program, which includes a dinner that requires advance reservations by September 25 to Lois Guendel at lois.guendel@knology.net or



(256)880-8643. AAUW members are happy to pick up the cost of meals for students.

Both the film and the pre-show lecture are free and open to the public. For information, email womensstudies@uah.edu or call (256) 824-6210. Visit the film website at invisiblewarmovie.com.

WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS

Message from the Women's Studies Director



Dr. Molly Johnson, Women's Studies Director

Friends of Women's Studies!

Greetings from the Women's Studies Program at UAH! In this newsletter, you can read all about our upcoming events for the fall semester, including a public showing of the Academy Award nominated documentary *The Invisible War* and two public lectures by renowned women's historian Dr. Linda Gordon. You can also read about the many excellent students who won Women's Studies awards and scholarships this past year.

We were excited to see so many of our campus and public supporters at our events last spring, including a showing of the documentary film Miss Representation, a performance of the Huntsville Feminist Chorus, and several sessions of the Coffeehouse Writers Series. We also co-sponsored the "Soaring for Social Justice" kite festival at John Hunt Park (spearheaded by Asha Kiran and the City of Huntsville) and supported the UAH Office of Multicultural Affairs in bringing the slam

poets Shadowboxers Anonymous for Women's History month.

This past spring, we saw the retirement of sociology professor Dr. Nancy Finley, one of the cocreators of the Women's Studies Program at UAH and a director for many years. Please see the tribute to Nancy featured in this newsletter, prepared by long-time colleague and collaborator Dr. Rose Norman. We will miss Nancy tremendously, but we are happy that she will remain involved in the Women's Studies Program Advisory Committee.

I would also like to congratulate our long-time Staff Assistant Erin Reid for completing her Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at Spalding University in May. You can learn more about Erin in the "Featured Staff" profile in this newsletter. As a new feature in the newsletter, we are also now showcasing some of the ways the members of our Program Advisory Committee support women's and gender studies through their teaching and research.

Special thanks to those of you who made contributions to Women's Studies and to the Rose Norman Scholarship in Action award this past year. Your financial support is critical to enabling us to continue to support and honor students for their leadership and academic endeavors and to bring to the UAH campus and to the North Alabama community exciting speakers and stimulating creative productions.

Check out our website at uah.edu/ womensstudies and "Like" "Women's Studies at UAHuntsville" on Facebook to keep up to date with us before the next newsletter goes out in the spring! You can also find current information about our events there, including upcoming events in the Coffeehouse Writers Series.

All the best,
Molly Wilkinson Johnson
Associate Professor of History
Director of Women's Studies



Coffeehouse Writers Series Returns This Fall

Women's Studies and the Salmon Library are continuing the popular Coffeehouse Writers Series with programs featuring local writers reading their work.

The fall series begins **Friday**, **October 18**, **at 6:30 p.m.**, with Word-Xpress.com: Alabama's Got Arts! The members of this progressive social hub for creative

people will inspire and entertain through poetry, spoken word, and stories. They encourage all to attend—community, faculty, and students—to experience "some of this area's hidden treasures" and to support your local arts. "This is an opportunity to be a part of something that's going to be big! Art is Life!"

On Monday, December 9, at 6 p.m., UAH Creative Writing

students of Dr. Anna Weber will present original poetry and fiction.

Readings last about an hour and are held at the Salmon Library Art Gallery on the ground floor. Admission is free, and Charger Brew will be open before the Tuesday night reading. For information or to suggest a program, contact marylyn.coffey@uah.edu or (256) 824-6114.

A Tribute to Dr. Nancy Finley, after 30 Years at UAH

By Dr. Rose Norman

In Ken Burns' film Not For Ourselves Alone, about Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony's role in the nineteenth-century women's suffrage movement, a historian says categorically that "there would be no women's history without them." That is what comes to my mind when I think of Nancy Finley at UAH—there would be no Women's Studies at UAH without Dr. Nancy Finley, Associate Professor of Sociology, who retired June 1, 2013, after 30 years that included over five years as chair of the Sociology Department, and six years as Director of Women's Studies.

Now Nancy herself would be quick to point out that she was one of three co-founders of the Women's Studies Program, the other two being Sandra Carpenter and myself. But the idea was Nancy's, and much of the implementation relied heavily on her. She started talking to people in different departments about a Women's Studies interest group, and pretty soon we had planned a panel discussion, and she was writing a newsletter and starting what is now a huge mailing list that reaches out to the community and to our students and alumni. That was roughly 1991, and Nancy had been chairing Sociology since 1988 (before she was age 40), so she had the kind of administrative experience needed to get it started and eventually move us from an "interest group" to an academic minor. She was already teaching an upper division class in gender roles and went on to develop and

teach not only the first Introduction to Women's Studies class, but also the first feminist theory class. She soon recruited others to teach that introductory class, and eventually the Philosophy Department developed a class in feminist theory, but for the first three years of the program, her courses were crucial to the new minor.

Nancy once told me that her gift in scholarly research was to find the gap in a research area and fill it. Once she was done with one gap, she went on to something else. She was one of the first scholars to study caregivers, and when I first got to know her in the 1990s, she was studying feminist men and had just finished some research on political activism and feminist spirituality. Nancy and I had many a mind-expanding conversation on feminist issues, which she saw from a sociological perspective that I had never before fully grasped (and probably still don't). We even co-authored an article about something we called "social parallax," a concept we had debated at many a Friday afternoon happy hour. More recently, she examined "gender maneuvering" in roller derby, titling the article "Skating Femininity."

Perhaps those snippets of her scholarly work give a sense of the playfulness and sense of joy in life that Nancy brought to her work, whether pursuing her academic interests (who would have thought of studying the Derby Girls?), designing a new class, or dreaming up Women's Studies events like Charged Up for Change! EXPO. In fact, EXPO is a

good example of how Nancy saw ways for Women's Studies to reach out to the campus and community and bring feminist ideals to practical activities. Not only did we have 80 booths of community activists (from Afghans for Afghans to Forgotten Felines), but we had jugglers, strolling singers, and Derby Girls skating around with free food.

Wide-ranging and eclectic as her scholarly interests are, they have always kept her involved and active in Women's Studies, playing an important role in teaching, recruiting and advising minors, and eventually agreeing to be Director of Women's Studies (2004-2010), a role she had studiously avoided, having gotten her fill of administration during her years as department chair. Her strong administrative skills were just what was needed at that time to routinize some aspects of the director's role, create a thorough manual for the next director, and then recruit and train that new director, Dr. Molly Johnson.

Molly Johnson speaks highly of Nancy's skills at mentoring: "Over the years, Nancy has reached out to me both professionally and personally on so many occasions to provide me with guidance and support. She has also done much to help me adjust to my role within Women's Studies. It is one of my biggest goals to be as professionally effective as Nancy, while also being the kind of person—compassionate, ethical, and balanced—that she is as well."

(continued on the next page)



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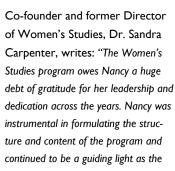
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WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS

A Tribute to Dr. Nancy Finley (continued)



program matured. I am thankful to have had her as a colleague and inspiration."

Dr. Mitch Berbrier, current chair of Sociology, speaks along those same lines: "Other than my parents, I have perhaps learned more from Nancy Finley than anyone else about being decent and compassionate to my fellow human beings. And she has also taught me more than a thing or two about how to be a thoughtful and compassionate university professor. What amazing luck to land in a department with this amazing human being."

Dr. Bhavani Sitaraman, past Sociology chair, recognizes Nancy's contributions: "As a founder and active member of the Women's Studies Program, Nancy Finley has played a key role in shaping its balanced commitment to academics, advocacy, and community outreach. She has also been instrumental in engaging and mentoring new faculty who share a commitment to the continued growth of the program. I am privileged to have known Nancy Finley as a colleague and friend, and have gained tremendously from her thoughtful, compassionate, and always principled advice on life, work, sociology, and gender studies."

Dr. Glenna Colclough, another past Sociology chair, now retired, came to UAH the year after Nancy. She writes: "Nancy and I worked together in the Sociology Department for 25 years. She was an outstanding colleague in every respect and a whole

lot of fun to be around. We all value her many contributions to her students, programs, and the faculty and staff of the department, college, and university. I just cannot imagine Sociology without her."

Staff Assistant Erin Reid writes, "Nancy saw every role in the university, and life, as sharing equality, creative collaboration, and mutual respect. She has profoundly empowered my sense of community, calling, and joy in work."

In 1997, Nancy's teaching was recognized with a prestigious award, and her students can't say enough about how important she was to their education. Her Facebook post saying that April 23 was her last day in the classroom drew 74 comments, many from former Women's Studies students:

"Here's to you and to a career spent doing what you love! Your classes helped to shift the lens with which I see the world, and I am grateful beyond measure." (Erika Lane)

"Congrats, I suppose, but I am sad for all those who missed you. You made such an impact in my life!" (Susannah Torres)

"Blessings on your head. I don't have words to thank you for all you gave me. You taught me so very much. You taught me to not be afraid to take an honest look at myself and the world around me. You are an amazing woman! Thanks for being!" (Molly Pettis Reid)

"UAH is suffering a huge loss at the end of the semester, with the retirement of a wonderful professor who impacted the lives of countless students. I am sure whatever her future holds she will continue to impact human lives in positive ways. Nancy you will be missed and you are loved by so many. Thank you for being the 'most

gooderest' prof out there!" (Quinn Ottaway)

It's not surprising that Nancy's students would be so enthusiastic. When she was interviewed for the Huntsville Times "On the Job" series, Nancy said that the best perk of her job was "being with students. I'm constantly learning from them." The Times also asked her for the best advice she had received, and she said it came from her mother, who told her at picnics, "Don't take two pieces of chicken until everyone has one piece." That advice taught her "that no success is meaningful if you don't have compassion for others." And her advice for others? "Listen to those who often are not listened to, like children. grandmothers, birds, and trees, because they have an important part of the story to tell."

To say that Nancy Finley will be missed at UAH is a colossal understatement. And Women's Studies is only a part of what she contributed to the university since she came here in 1982. She leaves a gap that cannot be filled. She is our Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony rolled into one, and like them she leaves a legacy in the students and colleagues who are better for knowing her. And here is the highest tribute of all, from former student Veronica Ferreira, now working on her Ph.D. in Sociology: "As I approached graduation, one of her colleagues asked me what I was planning to do after graduation, and I replied that I wanted to 'be Nancy' when I grew up. Her colleague replied, 'That's a tall order. Nancy's better than all of us.' I could not agree more." Me, too!



From the top: Nancy Finley with Veronica Ferreira; Nancy, Sociology faculty, and the graduating class of 2006; Charged Up For Change! EXPO; Nancy with Molly Johnson; Women's Studies staff and supporters with Dorothy Allison.



AAUW Students to Plan Leadership Day

UAH student members of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) will participate in planning a student leadership day as part of the state AAUW convention, to be held in Huntsville on April 4-5, 2014. Two UAH students were selected to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) that AAUW sponsors every year at the University of Maryland. Karelohn Williams is a Psychology major. Kenya Wallace is a graduate student in Chemistry and Materials Science and serves as co-membership VP for the local AAUW branch.

NCCWSL teaches leadership skills and strategies, while providing speakers who exemplify just how much women from many backgrounds can achieve. The plan is to "bring it home" through a "mini-NCCWSL" to be held on the first day of the state convention, April 4. UAH alumni Sarah Ragan and Heather Harwell, who attended NCCWSL five years ago, will collaborate with UAH students and AAUW student members from Alabama A&M University, Drake State Technical College, and others who attended the national leadership conference. They hope to involve students from across the state. Twelve other Alabama colleges and universities are AAUW University Partners.

Planning for the student leadership conference began at the September AAUW branch meeting, where local students who attended NCCWSL 2013 spoke. The location for "NCCWSL Lite" has yet to be determined, as has the venue for the state convention. NCCWSL 2014 is scheduled for lune 5-7, and applications for financial support through AAUW and Women's Studies will be available November 1.

Breaking through Barriers

AAUW is a national organization founded in 1882, originally intended to provide fellowship for women college graduates. Today, it is a nationwide network of more than 100,000 members and donors, 1,000 branches, and 500 college/ university partners (aauw.org). Membership is open to women and men college graduates (including two-year colleges), and to college students, who may join for free if their institution is an AAUW partner, as UAH is. AAUW's mission is to foster opportunities for women, which they pursue through research, education, advocacy, and philanthropy.

Students are encouraged to attend AAUW's monthly programs. All programs require advance reservations. Contact Lois Guendel herb.guendel@knology.net or (256) 880-8643. Members are glad to donate the cost of student dinners at these programs.







Student Kenya Wallace Describes Her Experience at NCCWSL

As a student studying Chemistry and Materials Science, I often find that I lack the confidence to speak up for myself and lead effectively when placed in a group setting. When I learned of the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders, I jumped at the chance to attend.

Appropriately termed "nickwhistle" (NCCWSL), this year's conference was centered on finding and sharing your voice. As soon as opening session began, I could feel the enthusiasm and vivaciousness of the other women in attendance. As the days of the conference wore on, I gained substantial knowledge on not only

how to be an effective leader, but also on how to take my best assets, share and pass them on to other female peers, and how to learn from them as well. Fortunately, I did not get to experience this outstanding conference alone. The state of Alabama had several students in attendance. I was able to connect with another UAH student as well as students from AAMU and UAB. We each share a passion for seeing change and a greater female presence in student leadership roles at our respective universities.

NCCWSL afforded the opportunity to network with women from all walks

of life. The pure joy and eagerness from my female peers showed that this generation of young women is ready to take action and break through all barriers that hinder the female population. I went to NCCWSL as an attendee expecting to enhance only leadership skills. However, I left NCCWSL with enthusiasm, readiness to work, a network of like-minded female peers, and a renewed sense of pride in being a woman.

Kenya Wallace (kmw0011@uah.edu)



From the top: (left to right) Karelohn Williams, **Rachel Simmons** (author: Odd Girl Out and educator), and Kenya Wallace; Kenya Wallace, Nina Godiwalla (author: Suits), and Karelohn Williams; Kenya Wallace.

WOMEN'S STUDIES NEWS

Harris Paper Contest Rewards Academic and Creative Writing

Once again Women's Studies will sponsor the 14th annual Kathryn

L. Harris Women's Studies Writing Competition, which awards cash prizes for undergraduate or graduate written work that deals substantially with women or women's issues.

The contest accepts submissions in three categories: upper-division academ-

ic, lower-division academic, and creative. Prizes in each category are first place \$100 and second place \$50. The winners are hon-

ored at the College of Liberal Arts Honors Day.

Last year's winners in the lower-division academic category were, first, Wendy Hazle, "Challenging Patriarchal Authority: Divorce in the Early American Republic" (Historical Methods, Dr. Christine Sears); second, Alyson Thompson, "The Emergence of Race into the Feminist Dialogue" (Intro. to Women's Studies, Dr. Molly Johnson); and third, Julia Paul, "The Causes of Child Exposure in Classical Greece" (Survey of Ancient Times, Dr.

Richard Gerberding). The winner in the upper-division academic category was **Regina Head**, "Queen Zenobia of Palmyra: Visualizing Zenobia Through Her Coinage" (Women in Antiquity, Dr. Lillian Joyce). The winner in the creative category was **Melissa Berry** for her poem, "The Women."

Entries for this year's contest are due by February 15, 2014, to Erin Reid, Women's Studies Program, 344 Morton Hall, reide@uah.edu. For contest information, visit www.uah.edu/womensstudies.



Harris Competition winners (left to right) Julia Paul, Regina Head, Wendy Hazle, and Alyson Thompson.

Women's Studies Students Receive Honors and Awards

The Women's Studies Program awarded the 2013 Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement Award to **Morgan Justice**, a Sociology major and Women's Studies minor. She also received the same award for her academic achievement in the Sociology Department.

Morgan has been instrumental in leading POWER, the Women's

Studies student club, and was the Women's Studies student assistant last year. She recently received a UAH research grant with Dr. Christina Steidl to pursue original research.

The 2013 Women's Studies Outstanding Emerging Woman Artist Award, presented at the UAHuntsville Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition, went to Art

major **Ryan Berry** for her assemblage sculpture, "The Manner," featuring mixed-media, soil, and petunias. The award of \$100 recognizes and supports emerging women artists who show exceptional work.

For more information, contact molly.johnson@uah.edu or (256) 824-2566.





From the top: Outstanding Undergraduate Morgan Justice; Harris Scholarship recipient Deanna Nicholas.

Scholarships Available to Women and Women's Studies Students

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

The 2013 Harris Scholarship went to **Deanna Nicholas**, a Psychology major and Women's Studies

and Communication Arts minor, The award is approximately \$700 each year. Application deadline for consideration for the upcoming year is December 1, 2013.

The Huntsville Woman's Club offers a \$1,000 scholarship to a UAH student from the College of Liberal Arts or the College of Nursing. Preference is given to a returning student in need of financial aid. The scholarship is renewa-

ble. The 2013 scholarship was renewed to **Laura Webster**, a nursing major. The application deadline for the upcoming year is March 1, 2014.

The annual **NCCWSL** Leadership Scholarship aids student conference travel (see page 5).

For more information, contact molly.johnson@uah.edu or www.uah.edu/womensstudies.

Women's Studies Featured Staff: Erin Reid

Erin Reid is the staff assistant for Women's Studies and Sociology. A west coast native, she moved to Huntsville in 1998 to work at Oakwood University in the research archives. She has a B.A. in English from Atlantic Union College and completed her M.A. in History at UAH with emphasis on nineteenth-century American social movements, particularly abolitionism. Her thesis traced the development of Seventh-day Adventist anti-slavery writings.

She joined the Women's Studies Program as staff in 2004. She has enjoyed collaborating with Nancy Finley, Rose Norman, and Molly Johnson on community events,

particularly hosting Dorothy Allison, Holly Near, Robin Lippincott, and Lesléa Newman, and also the EXPO community fair. At UAH, she has taught part-time in History, taken many studio art and writing courses, and served on the Staff Senate. In May she completed her M.F.A. in Fiction Writing at Spalding University in Louisville, Kentucky. Her creative thesis, "All the Glory I Can Stand," is a collection of short stories that are unconventional spiritual narratives. Her story, "The Resurrection and the Life," was published in The Louisville Review in 2011.

Erin serves as the Director of Religious Education at the Unitari-

an Universalist Church of Hunts-ville (UUCH), where she will lead a workshop in the spring on writing as spiritual practice. She sings with the Huntsville Feminist Chorus and UUCH choir, writes with the Coweeta Poets and BWFF writers, and has read her work at the Coffeehouse Writers Series.

She says, "Women's Studies has enriched my life, occupation, relationships, and social commitments in countless ways. Sitting at a Women's Studies performance of Dorothy Allison's memoir when I was 25 changed my life permanently. I saw that we *can* create the lives we want to live and the world we want to live in."



Erin Reid has been the Women's Studies and Sociology staff assistant since 2004.

Recent Activities of the Women's Studies Program Advisory Committee

Dr. Ellise Adams (Nursing) completed her Ph.D. in Nursing Science at Texas Women's University in 2012, with a dissertation that explored the impact of nurses' beliefs on childbirth practices, and, in 2013, she was honored as the sole recipient of UAH's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Dr. Angela Balla (English) is currently enjoying a sabbatical semester and the chance to focus exclusively on her research.

Dr. Sandra Carpenter

(Psychology) is supervising Women's Studies minor Deanna Nicholas for her honors thesis research on the relation between poverty levels and domestic violence in the U.S.; this collaboration grew out of an independent study they did on the "Psychology of Women."

Dr. Molly Johnson (History) is serving as the College and Univer-

sities Liaison on the board of AAUW-Huntsville, and she will also attend the "Program Administration and Development" workshops at the National Women's Studies Association conference in Cincinnati in November.

Dr. Leslie Kaiura (Foreign Languages/Spanish) introduced a new course last spring, "Performing Gender: Exploring Gender Roles and Sexuality in International Cinema," and also published an article in Hispanet Journal, titled "Narrow Skulls and Vile Flesh: The Failure of Female Anatomy and Feminist Critique in Rafael López de Haro's En el cuerpo de una mujer [In the Body of a Woman]."

Dr. Kate Leonard (Engineering) co-authored an article on "History and Status of Female Faculty in Civil Engineering," published in the *Journal of Professional Issues in Engi-*

neering Education and Practice (2013).

Dr. Christine Sears

(History) published her book American Slaves and African Masters: Algiers and the Western Sahara, 1776-1820 (Palgrave Macmillan) in 2012 and received tenure and promotion to associate professor in 2013; she is currently teaching the Women's Studies core course "Women in U.S. History."

Dr. Christina Steidl (Sociology) and Women's Studies minor Morgan Justice received a grant from the UAH Research and Creative Experiences for Undergraduates program to conduct research about perceptions of gender and gender performance among women who identify as lesbian or bisexual; they hope to co-author an article this fall.



Morgan Justice (center) and Christina Steidl (right) present their research at a university poster session.



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Become a Friend of Women's Studies!

Friends of Women's Studies (FWS) is an organization of people who support the UAHuntsville Women's Studies Program. The goals of FWS include:

- Supporting community involvement in Women's 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)

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I would like to contribute to the "Rose Norman Women's Studies Award for Scholarship in Action." \$ I would like to contribute to NCCWSL travel. \$				
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