

WOMEN'S  
RESOURCES  
CENTER

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020



**Student Affairs**

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



# ABOUT THE WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTER

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**SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN 2009, THE WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTER HAS BEEN COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING WOMXN STUDENTS, WHILE CATALYZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL SELVES.**

The mission of the Women's Resources Center is to improve the campus climate for womxn students, which we do by developing and implementing programs that address social issues through an intersectional lens. As a unit of the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations (OIIR) within Student Affairs, we collaborate with individuals and groups to identify personal, social, economic and political issues that adversely affect womxn, and offers support through advocacy, education, financial awards, and social action.

The Women's Resources Center also serves as the designated provider of Confidential Advising services, offering advocacy and support to students, faculty, and staff who have experienced sexual misconduct (sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, stalking and/or dating/domestic violence).

# 2019 - 2020

## YEAR AT A GLANCE

Fiscal Year 2020 was a year of significant transition and growth for the Women's Resources Center (WRC). Rooted in our commitment to supporting and actualizing liberation in all aspects of our work, the WRC provided programs and services that contribute to greater equity, retention, advancement, and empowerment of womxn students at Illinois. Through collaboration and innovation, we are proud to have strengthened our ongoing commitment of engaging students in programs and services that create transformative learning experiences.

Due to the multiplicity of work conducted by the WRC, this report is separated by divisions to more clearly report on these distinct but interrelated teams: Gender Equity Division; Sexual Misconduct Prevention Division; Sexual Misconduct Advocacy and Support Division.



# BY THE NUMBERS

2019 - 2020 INCLUDED:

Celebrating 10 years of the Women's Resources Center

9,400+ people reached through programming

90+ partnerships across campus and community entities

75 Greek letter organizations reached through our GUARD program

Launching Illinois' first Campus Location Space Guide

442 students trained in bystander intervention skills

More than \$31,000 raised through grants, in-kind donations, and co-sponsorships

74,000+ people reached through online awareness and education campaigns

100 survivors of sexual misconduct served

\$18,000+ in scholarship funding distributed



# 2019 - 2020

## FOSTERING COLLABORATION, DISCOVERY & INNOVATION

Fiscal Year 2020 was a year of advocacy and collaboration, with innovation acting as a central component of each of our initiatives. In total, the WRC engaged **90+ partners** from campus and academic units, student organizations, fraternities, sororities, community organizations, and system-level stakeholders.

Select examples of collaborations across each of our three divisions include:

- ✓ Launching the first International Women's Day Photography Contest with International Education, and International Student and Scholar Services;
- ✓ Continued partnerships with the Colleges of Law and Engineering, training 100+ students on unconscious bias, in partnership with Diversity and Social Justice Education;
- ✓ Co-coordinating the interactive Organizing Change retreat where students learn social change concepts and skills, facilitated with University YMCA and OIIR; and
- ✓ Consulting at the University of Illinois Board of Trustees Retreat.



FIRST INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S DAY PHOTOGRAPHY  
CONTEST AWARD WINNERS  
AND HOST STAFF

# FEATURED COLLABORATION

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## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT ADVOCACY & SUPPORT DIVISION'S EMBEDDED CONFIDENTIAL ADVISOR PROGRAM A PARTNERSHIP WITH LA CASA CULTURAL LATINA

In FY 2020, the WRC activated a new initiative in partnership with La Casa Cultural Latina (La Casa), to strategically steward our resources in a manner that more collectively addresses sexual violence and other forms of oppression through the creation and implementation of an embedded Confidential Advisor model. The Confidential Advisor's main role as an employee of Illinois is to provide emergency and ongoing holistic support to survivors of sexual misconduct. Embedding this model within cultural centers on campus permits sexual violence prevention and response work to meet survivor needs in multiple locations, while engaging community strengths, and recognizing the barriers marginalized communities face when receiving support.

Illinois' first full-time Confidential Advisor (Advocacy and Wellness Coordinator) was hired in December of 2019 and currently provides advocacy and support services to students, faculty, and staff on the Illinois campus. This innovative model required a joint effort with the La Casa professional and student staff. Together, the WRC and La Casa were able to designate space for a Confidential Advisor to provide embedded advocacy services.

# 2019 - 2020

## PROVIDING TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Like most units at Illinois, perhaps the biggest challenge our programs and services faced this year was the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, this caused great disruption to confidential advising, the Womxn's History Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month programming, and the intern and volunteer programs. Sheltering in place certainly upended the way the WRC engages students, but staff have and will continue to rise to the challenge.

Despite these challenges, our staff worked diligently to ensure students had the programs and services they needed, which resulted in the following successes:

- ✔ 8,068 first-year and transfer students educated in FYCARE about consent and supportive resources;
- ✔ 19 ICARE workshops built bystander intervention skills in 442 students;
- ✔ 40 students developed social change leadership skills in the CARE Class (CHLH 199-B);
- ✔ 750+ people reached via gender equity programs; and
- ✔ More than 74,000 people were reached through our online awareness and education campaigns.



# 2019 - 2020

## PROVIDING TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Fiscal Year 2020 saw a continuation of our transformative programs and events. Evaluation results indicate our initiatives met, and in some cases, exceeded intended outcomes. Highlights include:

### GENDER EQUITY DIVISION

#### Womxn's Career Institute (WCI)

The WCI seeks to educate and empower womxn students around womxn-specific workplace issues and obstacles. Among our 2020 attendees:

- ✔ 85.7% report increased ability to advocate for themselves in the workplace;
- ✔ More than half report increased comfort engaging in difficult conversations;
- ✔ More than half report an increased understanding about the unique issues facing womxn of color in predominantly white workplaces.



# FEATURED PROGRAM



## WOMEN'S RESOURCES CENTER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the WRC worked with 15 interns who completed over 1,950 combined service hours. Students gained valuable professional experiences in the fields of program design and implementation, graphic design, and communications. Our commitment to student development was not deterred by COVID-19; we were successful in transitioning our program online in the Spring which provided additional opportunities for engagement. Of reporting Interns:

- ✓ 100% expanded their understanding of issues related to intersectional gender equity;
- ✓ 100% are better able to manage their time and responsibilities;
- ✓ 100% have expanded their problem-solving skill set; and
- ✓ More than half feel more equipped to participate in a professional workspace.

**“I’ve never experienced a space with so much compassion and encouragement from everyone around me. Thank you all for allowing me to be part of this community and providing so much space for growth.”**

**- WRC Intern**