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Equity Matters

at Queen's University

Issue: 3; Vol: 1
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Message from the Editor

Dear Queen's University Member:

Welcome to the third issue of Equity Matters at Queen's, our new bi-monthly electronic newsletter from The Equity Office at Queen's University.

This issue's focus is on women at Queen's. Female faculty, staff, and students constitute a sizable and dynamic portion of our community here at Queen's. This issue expands beyond employment equity and looks at the contribution of women to the Queen's community.

The articles included here help us see the impact women have had on Queen's and where gaps exist and can be addressed. In the "Equity Bits and Bites: History of Women at Queen's" section, we look at the historical milestones of women here at Queen's and how they have served to redefine the landscape of this institution for future generations. In the section titled, "Equity in Focus: Supporting Women in Post-Secondary Education", we examine the discrepancy between women's access to education and students and their subsequent access to high ranking positions within post-secondary education. A gap exists between education attainment and access to employment. We also explore some resources available on the Queen's campus for women in fields where they have been and continue to be the minority and for mature female students who continue to experience unique challenges. Finally in the section titled, "Equity in the Community", we chose to highlight an upcoming event being hosted by students for the Queen's and Kingston communities.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter, we invite you to share your comments and suggestions for future feature articles on the accomplishments and activities of faculty, staff, students, and alumni of Queen's University relating to employment equity. Please contact us at equity@queensu.ca

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Exciting Events and Resources on Campus:



Feminist Legal Studies Queen's Speakers Series

Check out the exciting speakers coming to Queen's!

<http://femlaw.queensu.ca/speakersFLSQ.html>

- The Equity Office at Queen's University

Employment Equity "Bits and Bites"

History of Women at Queen's

Queen's was the first university west of the maritimes to admit women, when in 1869 they opened their doors and admitted women to special English classes. In 1878 women were officially able to register in all Arts and Science courses and have degrees conferred to them. Since 1878, women have made significant contributions to Queen's University and there have been many trailblazers that have opened the doors to women here at Queen's. In this section we would like to showcase some of the women who have made significant strides that have served to change the landscape for women here at Queen's.



In 1909 Queen's hired its first female faculty member when Wilhelmina Gordon took up the post of tutorial assistant in English. Ms. Gordon was educated at Dalhousie University, University of Chicago, and Oxford. During her tenure here, she became an assistant professor and retired from Queen's in 1950 at the rank of associate professor. Ms. Gordon opened the door to female faculty members at Queen's. Since 1909, female faculty members at Queen's has continued to increase and currently woman comprise 39.2% of all faculty members here at Queen's.

In the 1880's women began to be admitted to the Faculty of Medicine, then the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, at Queen's University. However, because of public discourse of the day, their presence within the medical school was met with hostility. In order to continue their studies, female students, with the aid of men and women from the medical school and the Kingston community founded the Women's Medical College in 1883.

Some other notable firsts for women at Queen's have been, the election of Charlotte Whitton as the first female editor of the Journal in 1917; the selection of the first woman registrar, Alice King, in 1930; the election of the first female President of the Alma Mater Society, Dorothy Wardle, in 1941; the appointment of Hilda Laird as the first woman Department Head (in a discipline other than nursing) in 1950, in the Department of German; the graduation of the first Aboriginal woman to attend Queen's, Marlene Brant-Castellano (who is pictured above), in 1955; and the appointment of Karen Hitchcock in 2004 as Principal of Queen's University, the first and only woman to hold that position.

Four Directions Aboriginal Student Centre

Full Moon Ceremonies
All women are welcome,
please see website for
details!

<http://www.queensu.ca/fdasc/Programs/culturalprograms/fullmoon.html>

Guest Speaker: Sandra Ramos, Womens' Issues in Nicaragua

<http://queensevents.ca/2012/10/25/guest-speaker-sandra-ramos-womens-issues-in-nicaragua/>

Ban Righ Centre Speaker's Series

Held over the noon hour at
Ban Righ Centre
Upcoming Speakers:

Wednesday, November 7th
Shout Sister!
Georgette Fry

Monday, November 12th
Barn Life
Meghan Marshall

Thursday, November 22nd
Change Your Mind
Mood-Management Strategies
to Beat
the Blues
Dr. Jenn Rae.

For an exciting read on
the disparity between
gender and academic
advancement check out

Over the years the landscape of Queen's has changed for women, student, faculty, and staff alike. Female staff members now comprise 66.1% of all staff, with several in high profile positions within the university. Admission of female students into all programs across the university ranges from 20-80%, including graduate and professional programs. That is not to say that there are not still strides to go in achieving equity within specific faculties and positions here at Queen's, but that it is important to remember the trailblazers that have come before us as we move forward.

the following article by
Dr. Johnathon Thon
<http://www.universityaffairs.ca/the-black-hole/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-of-gender-bias-in-academic-science/>

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Equity In Focus:

Supporting Women in Post-Secondary Education



In Canada, access to education for women has changed dramatically over the past 138 years since the first female student was admitted to a post-secondary institution. With that said however, access to certain programs and positions for women have not changed too much over this time period. Certain disciplines, namely engineering, maths, and sciences, continue to be difficult for women to break into. Female enrollment in universities across Canada has been on par and at times higher than that of their male counterparts in all degree levels and in disciplines across university except in the fields of mathematics, engineering, and the sciences.

Over the past thirty years women have increased their participation in post-secondary education, but it appears that the higher up the ladder the fewer women there are. Although women graduating from university in Canada represents 58.2% of all graduates, women who are full professors only represents 18.8% of all full professors, and women in the position of presidents for universities and colleges is only 13%; whereas their male counterparts make up only 41.8% of all graduates but represent 81.2% of all full professors and 87% of presidents for universities and colleges. There still exists a large discrepancy as you look in higher profile positions within the university. Many researchers have coined this, "the second glass ceiling", because we are seeing more women participating within post-secondary education and at higher rates than their male counterparts, but this is not reflected in high ranking position within post-secondary institutions. Although women are participating and there no longer appears to be barriers in their access to education, there are barriers to the upward mobility within post-secondary institutions. It is also important to note that many of these barriers

have not been removed for all women, experiences for women of colour, Aboriginal women, and women with disabilities, to name a few, have not been the same and these groups continue to be under-represented at all stages of participation within post-secondary education.

Several studies that have been conducted over the past several decades have focused on institutional attitudes towards women as indicators as to why women do not progress up the ranks at the same rate as their male counterparts. In an article titled, "Pyramids of Power", the authors Wendy Robbins and Vicky Simpson, dispute the claim that women do not exist in upper positions within post-secondary institutions because of their time within the academy. In other words, many people suggest that women are not in higher ranking positions because it was not that long ago women started participating in large numbers within post-secondary institutions. However, women now have a thirty year history of participating in large numbers within post-secondary education, including at the graduate level and yet they still remain under-represented within higher ranking positions. Robbins and Simpson also discuss the ways in which women's work is devalued within the academy, citing a study from 2004 that had senior search committees evaluate the same CV, the first time it displayed a man's name, the second a woman's name. Consistently the CV with a man's name scored higher and in some cases were invited for interviews over the same CV with a woman's name.

It is clear then that there still needs to be a shift in access to education for women and specifically in access to high ranking positions within post-secondary institutions and specific disciplines, specifically mathematics, engineering, and the sciences. Given issues and concerns relating to access to education, Queen's has programs and services geared towards assisting and supporting female students, faculty, and staff. Many of these services are specifically geared towards women that have and continue to be marginalized within the community. Of particular note here are: The Ban Righ Centre, Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE), and the Queen's Women's Association.

The Ban Righ Centre

The Ban Righ Centre, located at 32 Bader Lane, is a safe, welcoming meeting place and drop-in resource centre. The centre assists women of all ages, especially those who are returning to university after a time away, to continue formal or informal education in an atmosphere where you will meet others with similar experiences. The centre provides services and outreach not otherwise available to mature women students. The Centre provides a warm environment for women from diverse backgrounds to find community, practical, personal and financial support in an informal setting prepared to meet their particular needs. This environment supports academic endeavour, encourages mutuality and equality, and nurtures and respects women.

Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE)

Queen's Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) seeks to promote women's participation in the sciences and engineering. WiSE forms a community of students who wish to further the aspirations of women in these fields, as well as encourage youth to enter these fields. Through outreach programs in the community, they provide a means for Queen's students to share their knowledge and enthusiasm while gaining leadership skills and mentoring youth. Through social events, social media and networking, they aspire to enhance the opportunities available to students in the sciences and engineering, as well as provide an additional avenue of support for women students, who have been traditionally under-represented in these fields.

Queen's Women's Association

The Queen's Women's Association, originally established as the Faculty Women's Club in 1939, is located in a comfortably furnished brick house on Albert Street. It is a meeting and networking place for women who hold, or whose spouse/partner holds a position at Queen's, as well as for those who have held, or whose spouse/partner has held a position at Queen's. The QWA provides a means of social interaction for its members, works cooperatively with Queen's University to foster a collegial atmosphere on the campus, and supports women students at Queen's University by funding bursaries and awards.

Equity In the Community:



Women's Worth Week

Kate McCord
Founder, Women's Worth Week
Arts and Science '13

From November 19th to 23rd, 2012 a series of events will be held on the Queen's University campus to raise awareness about violence against women and issues of self-esteem women face. The goal of this project is to create a positive space where students can be in dialogue with each other about these issues. It is a way to encourage students to talk to each other, to support each other and reach out to existing groups and services. Talking through our problems is a way we heal but we can only do this when there is no fear of judgment. A goal of this project is not only to validate the prevalence of these issues but also to emphasize that they can be overcome in a positive space.

People gain confidence by being involved. Being part of a team allows a person to accomplish a common goal, make new friends and learn. It also empowers people by allowing them to recognize their ability to generate change. The facilitators/volunteers of this

project hope that by bringing women together voice their opinions on issues relevant to them, women at Queen's feel empowered and their concerns on this topic are validated.

Objectives:

- Raise awareness about violence against women and self-esteem issues women face.
- Encourage men to think more critically about how they treat women.
- Encourage women to celebrate who they are as unique individuals.
- Encourage women to stand up for themselves.
- Listen to suggestions from all students about what groups/clubs/services could be implemented to educate people on and mediate issues of violence against women and self-esteem. Hear about positive experiences people had with groups on campus or in the Kingston community when coping with abuse or self-esteem issues.
- Draw attention to the fact these problems happen worldwide and talk about women's experiences on a global scale.
- Celebrate men who speak out against gender inequality.

The events for the upcoming event will include: keynote speakers; a panel of faculty members; a photo campaign called, "I am distinctly beautiful because", which encourages women to celebrate who they are as unique individuals and encourages men to celebrate women; and, a group discussion about gender based violence, feminism and the role of feminism.

To learn more about the event and initiative check out the facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Womens-Worth-Week-WWW/313825725325998>



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