



WOMEN'S STUDIES BULLETIN

April/May 2005

ASSOCIATE OF THE MONTH

Our associate in the spotlight for this bulletin is Mayra Carrillo-Daniel, a new associate and assistant professor of Literacy Education. Daniel received her Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Illinois State University, her M.S. Ed. in Interdisciplinary Studies from Western Illinois University, and her M.A. and B.A. in Spanish from the State University of Iowa. As a Cuban immigrant, Carrillo-Daniel experienced the impact of being a second language learner in an education system that did not offer English as a second language instruction. Now, as a professor who specializes in multicultural education and in educating teachers how to work with English language learners, Carrillo-Daniel has the opportunity to increase the participation of second-language learners in the public school system.

Carrillo-Daniel's current research focuses on the link between reading and writing for second-language learners. One basic assumption in language learning is that until language learners are proficient in their second language, they are not able to think critically in that language. Thus, one of the goals of her research is to teach language learners how to think critically earlier in their language acquisition. Specifically, in one project Carrillo-Daniel and a colleague are studying language learners' reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and ability to write in English. One of the goals of the project is to have students start to offer their own interpretations of the text, which is more difficult to do with a second language.

For another project, Carrillo-Daniel and a colleague alternate as teachers for workshops with Rockford teachers every two weeks, offering various topics, such as assessment of second language learners and multicultural education. The goal of the project is to measure change in attitudes and learning of the students, based on survey information attained at the beginning of each academic year and focus group information gathered at the end of the year.

Recently, Carrillo-Daniel attended the 5th International Literacy Conference in Guatemala City, and is planning to return to Guatemala to gather survey information about how teachers are using her co-authored manual on the teaching of reading. At the conference, she was inspired by the women in Guatemala, describing a visit to a cooperative run by widowed and single women who are trying to improve their lives. Indeed, Carrillo-Daniel stresses the importance of women's roles in multicultural education and is excited to join us as a new associate. As a participant in the Multicultural Transformation Institute, her goal is to help her graduate students become better teachers to their diverse students. For more information about Carrillo-Daniel, visit her webpage at www.cedu.niu.edu/lscy/faculty/Danielbio2.htm or her office in Gabel Hall 147E.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Rachael Schneider, sociology major, Women's Studies minor, and LGBT certificate student, is our student in the spotlight. Currently, Schneider serves as Events Coordinator for Prism, NIU's LGBT student group, which is absorbing most of her time during April's LGBT Awareness Month. Schneider has served for the last two semesters in a leadership position in Prism and is proud of the positive transformations that she believes Prism has recently demonstrated. She explains that her goal for Prism is to make it as "inclusive as possible and a safe space for anybody." Indeed, when Schneider first transferred to NIU her sophomore year, she had not planned to join the group, but instead founded a more anonymous student group, "NIUQueers," an online blog that she still moderates today.

After talking with Schneider for only a few minutes, it is easy to understand her connection to Prism and to Women's Studies. She talks readily about the importance of identity politics in her life and how she is interested in how different types of identities intersect. She also describes how Women's Studies allows women to locate their oppression and find agency. She stresses

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING STUDENTS!

the need for students to take an activist role and make changes in their lives when they are not happy with the current status.

Although only a junior, Schneider already hopes to continue her academic pursuits after college in graduate school. She thinks that she will continue with sociology and would ideally like to attend the University of California, Santa Cruz. In the meantime, she will continue her work with Prism and with her on-campus job as a Northern Ambassador, which she loves because of the opportunity to meet many diverse people.

WS CORDS FOR GRADUATING SENIORS

Attention, Women's Studies minors, show off your achievement by wearing special purple cords with your graduation gowns! These cords are available from Women's Studies in Reavis 103. Stop by and get one for your big day!

WOMEN'S STUDIES AWARD WINNERS

WS teaching assistant **Caroline Conley** won the first place graduate prize for her essay, "(Re)Constructing Ourselves Through Little Women: Four Young Readers' Story of Identity Reformation, Female Solidarity, and Future Possibilities," in the Women's History Month essay contest.

Diana Swanson won the 2005 NIU Eychaner Award for positive contributions to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. Swanson received two nominations for this prestigious award.

Jolene Skinner won the NIU Dissertation Completion Fellowship Award for the 2005-06 academic year.

Our first Mothers Memorial Scholarship Fund award winners include: **Nadine Thornton**, undergraduate award, Nursing; **Melissa Jackson**, undergraduate honorable mention, History; **Janet Goeking-Stoddard**, graduate award, History; and **Michelle Stocker**, graduate honorable mention, Applied Family and Child Studies.

Women's Studies students **Sandi Caldron** and **Katie Krusey** are Outstanding Women Student Award Recipients.

NWSA SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Applications for scholarships for students in Women's Studies or related areas are now available. All entries must be postmarked by February 15, 2006. Scholarships include graduate scholarships for theses and dissertations, Lesbian Studies, Jewish Women's Studies, and Women of Color Essay Awards. Visit www.nwsa.org/ssnwsa.html. You may also call 301-403-0524 or email nwsaoffice@nwsa.org.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH HIGHLIGHTS

March's Women's History Month was a great success. Highlights and award winners can be viewed on our website at www.clas.niu.edu/wstudies/whm2005.htm. One of our most popular events was "What Does a Feminist Look Like" sticker day. The WS program distributed 800 stickers before running out. Students, faculty, and administrators and leaders on campus all sported our stickers that day. We plan to bring the event back in years to come.

With 26 events, our attendance reached record numbers. We also had some of our best publicity in the *Chicago Tribune*, a full page spread in the *DeKalb Chronicle*, and of course several articles in the *Northern Star*. Thank you to all of our sponsors, students and faculty/staff who participated and advertised our events. We would love to make WHM even more popular next year.

WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSE LISTINGS SUMMER 2005

Undergraduate Offerings

WOMS 332, Growing Up Female, 2:00-4:45 TTH

COMS 410F, Communication and Gender, 2:00--4:40
MTWTH

SOCI 354, Families and Social Change, 9:30 – 12:15 TTH

SOCI 357F, The Sociology of Gender, 12:30-3:15 MTWTH

WOMS 390, Internship

WOMS 439, Independent Study in Women's Studies

Graduate Offerings

SOCI 572 (Rockford), Sociology of Gender, 6:30-9:15 MW

WOMS 502, Internship in Women's Studies

WOMS 539, Independent Study

Fall 2005 course listings are also available on-line at www.clas.niu.edu/wstudies/coursesfall2005.htm.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATING STUDENTS!