



# *A Report on the* **Presidential Commissions** **2019-2020**

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**CLARION**  
**UNIVERSITY**

# PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Co-Chair: Lynne Fleisher, ext. 2778  
Co-Chair: Erin Lewis, ext. 2323

Secretary: Mel Lahr, ext. 2349  
Treasurer: John Massa, ext. 2009

## **Members:**

Amy Love, Christina Hearst, John Massa, Stephen Gendler, MaryPat McCarthy, Young-Gyoung Kim, Juanice Vega, Jennifer May, Kristina Dworek, G. Chad Thomas, Lori Taylor, Trobe Barnitz, Melanie Lahr and James Maccaferri.  
Student Representative- Sonya Eckert.

## *Activities*

### **CROSSWALK AWARENESS DAY**

The Presidential Commission on Disabilities co-sponsored Crosswalk Safety Awareness Day Sept. 9 with PennDOT. Still Hall crosswalks were the area of concentration.

### **HIDDEN DISABILITIES**

The Commission, Disabilities Services and Student Affairs sponsored “Communicating about Hidden Disabilities” Oct. 22. Guest speaker Christina Irene presented to faculty and staff at 3 p.m. and to a capacity crowd at a 5 p.m. student session in Suites on Main North Theatre.



*“Communicating about Hidden Disabilities”*



### **NEW MEMBERS**

The commission welcomed two new community members to its team, Dr. Lynn Smith, retired College of Business faculty, and Ms. Jeanne Drayer.

During the spring 2020 semester, the Commission had planned an event to feature a documentary about autism by CU alum Chase Wise. This event was also to include a panel discussion. Due to COVID-19, this event is postponed until 2020-2021 academic year.

Additionally, the fall/spring 2020 plans include the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Persons with Disabilities Act.



# PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Co-Chair: Rachel Newbury, ext. 1982  
Co-Chair: Paul Klenowski, ext. 1239

Treasurer: Ronald Radaker, ext. 1877  
Secretary: Meredith Karg, ext. 1904

## **Members:**

Sheila Kazar, Andrew C. Keth, Jason Hendershot, Jennifer Graham, Cristin Ketley, Corey Negley, Jim McGee, Ronald E. Radaker, Elsa Wise, Tina Horner and Kelly M. Ryan

## *Activities*

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AWARENESS DAY**

The Commission on Sexual Harassment Prevention & Education hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Domestic Violence and Abuse Awareness Day Oct. 16. A panel of representatives from Jefferson, Clarion and Venango county agencies discussed issues of domestic and interpersonal relationship violence, followed by a gallery of artwork, poetry and photography created by university students and employees. Resources to aid in abuse recovery were also available from organizations working in the tri-county area.



Plans to bring former Pittsburgh Steeler Mike Adams to campus are postponed due to campus shutdown in March. A Pennsylvania native and survivor of domestic violence, Adams planned to lead an afternoon yoga class open to members of the campus community, with an evening talk open to university and community members. The commission hopes to reschedule his appearance.



### **DENIM DAY**

Due to campus shutdown in response to COVID-19, the April 29 Peace Over Violence Denim Day campaign was held entirely online. Over the past 20 years, Denim Day has become a symbol of protest against destructive attitudes about sexual harassment, abuse, assault and rape. University faculty, staff and students were encouraged to post photos of

themselves wearing denim in support of sexual harassment and assault victims. Photos were posted to social media using the hashtags #DenimDay #NoExcuse #SAAM #CUDenimDay, and shared with the Office of Social Equity.



### **VIGIL FOR UNITY AND PEACE**

Members of this commission attended the Vigil for Unity and Peace June 11, beginning at the University Bell Tower and concluding at Veteran's Memorial Park, downtown Clarion.

# PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON STATUS OF WOMEN

Co-Chair: Carol Brennan Caplan  
Co-Chair: Kaersten Colvin-Woodruff

Secretary: Jamie Phillips  
Treasurer: Cate Stiller

## Members:

Naomi O'Neil, YooJin Ha, Sandra Trejos, Jamie Phillips, Kaersten Colving-Woodruff, Cate Stiller, Laurie Bladen, Laurie Pierce, Jeffery Diamond, Briana Steele, Maria Crespo, Amy Love, Janet Knepper, Carol Brennan Caplan, Jin Qu, Cahndice Matthews, Renae Shawgo, Stephanie Pergantis

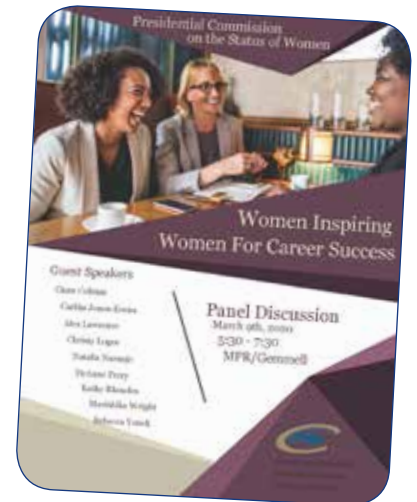
## Activities

### WOMEN INSPIRING WOMEN

The Presidential Commission on the Status of Women hosted “Women Inspiring Women for Career Success” March 9. This was the second year that the commission invited a diverse group of women alumni back to Clarion University to serve on an interactive panel. The panelists shared their professional and personal insight, experience and advice. Topics discussed included work/life balance, transition from college to career, leadership lessons, workplace equality, barriers (and how to overcome them), and more. The PCSW is grateful to all the panelists who took time to attend this event. The panel participants were:



Ciara Coleman '19  
Carlita Jones-Evens '95  
Alex Lawrence '14  
Christy Logue '14  
Natalia Naranjo '17  
Dr. DeAnne Perry '07  
Kathy Rhoades '95  
Marishika Wright '15  
Rebecca Yonek '19

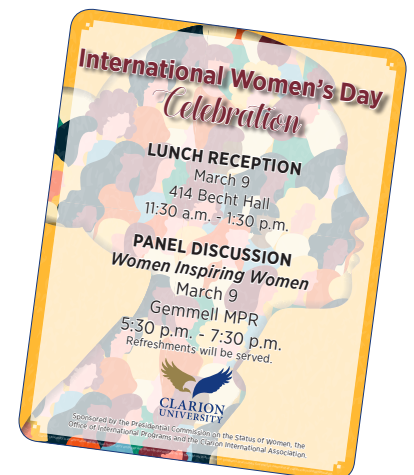


### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The PCSW collaborated with Clarion International Association and the Office of International Programs to host their annual International Women's Day Luncheon March 9. This event is in support of International Women's Day, which is celebrated globally March 8. The theme for 2020 was #Each for Equal. More information on International Women's Day can be found [here](#). All members of the Clarion community were invited to this exciting event.

In addition to organizing the International Women's Day celebration events, PCSW assisted in sponsoring the following events, and projects:

- PCSW helped in distributing information regarding the purpose and mission of the Resource Room, gathered supplies for the Presidential Commissions' Giving Basket, and assisted in the development of the Resource Room's upcoming public relations poster.
- The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment Anniversary event marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the amendment giving women the right to vote. PCSW donated \$200 to help bring to campus Dr. Lisa Tetrault, a leading scholar on women's voting rights and the author of *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement*.



- In support of students from Dr. Leah Chambers' INQ 100 course, Clarion University Student Senate, and the Center for Wellness, PCSW supported student pioneer Kaitlyn Krupa's project, "Period Poverty: It's an Equity Issue, Period." Krupa's project brought attention to women's access to sanitary products and menstrual hygiene education. Women's sanitary products were collected and distributed in Clarion campus lavatories.

## SECOND ANNUAL WOMEN IN HISTORY DOOR DECORATING CONTEST

In tribute to the many women whose lives helped to change and shape the world, PCSW once again sponsored the Women in History Door Contest. University faculty and staff were invited to decorate their office doors to highlight the accomplishments of one remarkable woman in history. PCSW representatives, along with Amy Salsgiver from Social Equity, judged the entries and selected three winners. Profiles along with images of the decorated doors were shared via campus email and were also on digital display during the Women Inspiring Women for Career Success event.

The winners of the contest are:

First Place: Karen Sheesman, Seth Kominski, Julia Aaron and Lindsey Chatterton

Second Place: Cindy King

Third Place: Jessica Wolbert



## PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON LGBT+ CONCERNS

Co-Chair: Robert Levy, ext. 2285

Secretary: Jessica Thomas, ext. 1905

Co-Chair: Corey Negley, ext. 2355

Treasurer: TBA

### **Members:**

Scott Courtney, Melissa Brydon, Ellen Foster, Shawn Hoke, Jana Ashley, Mark Lepore, William Naugle, Elizabeth Pelesko, Ronald Radaker, Kurt Regester, Todd Spaulding, Jessica Thomas and Peggy Apple

### *Activities*



### SAVE ZONE TRAINING

Over the course of the 2019-2020 academic year, the Presidential Commission on LGBT+ Concerns offered two Safe Zone trainings to faculty, staff and members of the President's Executive Council, resulting in the university having a total of 66 Safe Zone spaces. Safe Zone trainings teach about LGBTQ+ identities, gender and sexuality, and examine prejudice, assumptions and privilege. "Safe Zone" or "Safe Zone Trained" placards indicate that the person displaying the sticker has gone through training and are open to talking about and being supportive of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning) individuals and identities. More Safe Zone trainings are planned for the 2020-2021 academic year.

## STUDENT RESOURCE ROOM

During the spring semester of 2020, the Presidential Commission on LGBT+ concerns teamed up with the other presidential commissions to collect donations for the student Resource Room. The commission was tasked with collecting the following items:

Toilet paper

Kleenex/tissues

Cotton swabs/Q-tips

Paper towels

Napkins

Paper plates

Garbage bags (all sizes)

Laundry soap (small bottles)

Fabric softener

Utensils

Dish soap (small bottles)

Hand sanitizer

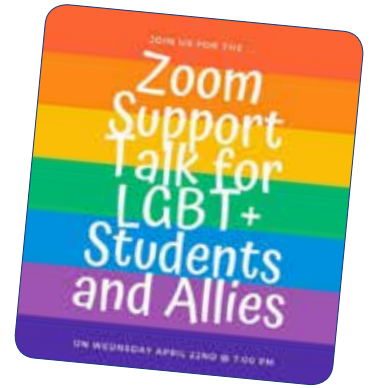
Lysol wipes



In addition, the PCLGBT+ Concerns collected hats, coats, gloves, mittens and monetary donations. In total, the PCLGBT+ Concerns donated 30 items and \$30 to the student Resource Room.

## COVID-19 AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS/ALLIES

When word of the university ending all face-to-face instruction hit campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the commission moved forward with providing virtual outlets for LGBT+ students. The commission held a Zoom support talk in mid-April for all students, with members of the commission, health services and Allies present to assist students with the current climate of COVID-19. The commission also moved forward with creating a D2L page that provides resources and information for members of the LGBT+ community. Anyone who is interested in joining the D2L page should contact Ron Radaker at [rradaker@clarion.edu](mailto:rradaker@clarion.edu).



## PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON RACIAL EQUITY

Co-Chair: Vasudeva Aravind  
Co-Chair: Rich Lane

Treasurer: Leah Chambers  
Secretary: Rachel Newbury

### **Members:**

Rachel Newbury, Leah Chambers, Amy K. Shannonhouse, Phillip Frese, Jeffery Allen, Jane Walsh, Sharon L. Montgomery, Hope E. Lineman, Isaac Leonard, Ronald E. Radaker, Joseph Croskey, Chunfei Li, Stephen I. Gendler, Helen Baker, Shintrika Hudson, Kaersten H. Colvin-Woodruff, Cahndice S. Matthews, Ewing Moussa, Jim McGee, Richard D. Lane, Urainia N. Pack, Marcy Trombetta, Nripendra Singh, VasudevaRao Aravind

### *Activities*

Presidential Commission on Racial Equity has been meeting about once in a month during the 2019-2020 academic year to discuss racial equity concerns and develop policies and strategies at the university level to promote an inclusive environment at Clarion University.

## EVENTS

At the beginning of the academic year, Dr. Rich Lane, on behalf of the Presidential Commission on Racial Equity, won a university-wide grant to develop a week of student, faculty and staff professional development events on the topic of discussing race and racial issues in the university and society. The commission began this academic year by planning for these events. It screened a movie for university students, staff and community at large, and planned for several more. Due to COVID-19, only one movie was shown: *White Like Me*. The other movies will be shown in the future: *Race: The Power of Illusion*, parts I, II and III. Another planned event, *Community Conversations: Considering Race*, was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## BUILDING BRIDGES

The commission continued the Building Bridges program this year. Its purpose is to facilitate communication and understanding among Clarion students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and to create a partnership between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, linking the classroom with the campus community. The commission is committed to improving relations among students, helping them grow personally, and preparing them for living and working in diverse communities. Trained student associates, both minority and majority, visit classes to share their personal experiences with prejudice and lead discussions with their peers about intergroup relations. Prior to this visit, professors poll their students on topics such as interracial dating, minority scholarships, segregation, affirmative action, Black History Month, racial terminology, and the effect of media on racism. The result is a lively, open discussion which presents a different perspective for many students.

## BLACK STUDIES MINOR

The commission attended and participated in the inauguration of the new Black studies minor at Clarion University. The event was well attended with participation from three student organizations, faculty and staff. Since this event coincided with Homecoming week, there were considerable alumni attendees as well. This minor invites students to investigate the variety of Black experiences in Africa and the African diaspora including North America, South America, the Caribbean, Europe and Australia.



### WEB PAGE RESOURCES

The commission updated its web page to provide several resources for faculty and staff at the university to talk about race. Resources include books and articles, films, links to TED talks addressing issues of race and racial inequality, websites providing information about local and regional government alliances on race and equity, links to tools designed to support individuals and groups working to achieve racial equity, and podcasts focusing on issues relating to race. You can see the Racial Equity Resource page [here](#).

### VIGIL FOR UNITY AND PEACE

The commission supported and participated in the June 11 Vigil for Unity and Peace. The peaceful candlelight vigil began at the campus Bell Tower on Wood Street and concluded at Veteran's Memorial Park, across from Clarion County Courthouse. Its purpose was to bring attention to George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and countless others who have suffered from systemic racism.

## PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

Co-Chair: Suzie Boyden  
Co-Chair: Jess Thomas

Treasurer: Cristin Ketley  
Secretary: Andrew Keth

### **Members:**

Alawya Alawami, Abigail Barrett, Diana Brush, Zackary Condron, Frank Connelly, Duane Farnsworth, Debra Flaherty, James Geiger, Clint Hartle, Brian Hoover, Sheila Kazar, Katelyn Kister, Paul Klenowski, Jacqueline Manno, Jeff MacTaggart, Ewing Moussa, Joyce Overly, Brandon Packard, Brianna Shepherd, Nripendra Singh, Cate Stiller, Philip Terman, Chad Thomas, Anthony Vega, Jessica Zacherl

### *Activities*

**Mission:** The mission of the Presidential Commission on Sustainability is to advocate issues of sustainability both on and off campus by coordinating and promoting educational opportunities and programming through collaboration with the various stakeholders toward the goal of reducing the university and larger community's consumption of natural resources to a sustainable level.

- Announced undertaking of self-study process using the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. This process will help us to set and meet sustainability goals, foster collaboration and information sharing across campus, and to benchmark with peers. To begin this process, we formed



subcommittees/working groups that align with the major assessment criteria within the STARS system.

- » Subcommittee on Campus & Public Engagement (interim chair, Jess Zacherl)
- » Subcommittee on Operations, Planning, & Administration (interim chair, Tony Vega)
- » Subcommittee on Academic Innovation, & Leadership (interim chair Nripendra Singh)
- The commission hosted an Open Forum on Sustainability Oct. 29 for students to gather and discuss their thoughts, concerns, suggestions, etc. This event, attended by 16 students from across major disciplines and programs, spurred a lively discussion and generated a long list of ideas, some of which are summarized below.
  - » Facilitate activism through organizations such as 350.org, Sunrisemovement.org, Green Peace, and Tree Campus USA.
  - » Reduce plastic use/waste in all areas of student life and university operations.
  - » Clarify current policies on recycling, assess current contracts, and make meaningful decisions regarding both in the future.
  - » Make move-in/out more eco-friendly with programs designed around repurposing/recycling, providing free storage in unused campus buildings, having a clothing swap/drive, and connecting with community recycling days.
  - » Engage/collaborate with local groups/businesses in community to host events on important sustainability topics.
  - » Have a letter-writing campaign.
  - » Beautify/clean campus and surrounding areas, including removal of invasive plants and replanting of native species along Clarion Loop Trail.
- At the end of the fall 2019 semester, the commission created a flyer to share Sustainable Holiday Suggestions with the university community as they prepared to enjoy the holiday season. This included ideas for sustainable shopping and gifts, decorating, celebrations and traditions.
- Student Senate held a logo design competition in which students submitted their ideas for a Sustainability Commission logo. Several submissions were received, and the commission voted on the logo created by Jordan Zuck. The commission plans to incorporate the logo into future communications, advertisements and possibly merchandise such as reusable water bottles.
- Prior to COVID-19, the commission was working with numerous student organizations to plan a campus-wide Earth Day event April 22, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Earth Day. Groups had planned tabling at various locations across campus where they would offer educational materials and information and/or activities related to Earth Day,





climate change, biodiversity, conservation and much more. The commission hopes to be able to hold a similar event during the 2020-2021 academic year.

- Following the transition to remote learning this spring, the commission organized an Earth Day photo/video submission event from which a compilation video was made and shared to show how the Clarion University community was commemorating the day. Over 50 submissions were received from students, faculty, and staff. The video available [here](#).



It is the policy of Clarion University of Pennsylvania that there shall be equal opportunity in all of its educational programs, services, and benefits, and there shall be no discrimination with regard to a student's or prospective student's gender, gender identity, race or color, ethnicity, national origin or ancestry, age, mental or physical disability, religion or creed, genetic information, affectional or sexual orientation, veteran status, or other classifications that are protected under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other pertinent state and federal laws and regulations. Direct inquiries to the Title IX Coordinator/Director of Social Equity, 210 Carrier Administration Building 16214-1232; Email [asalsgiver@clarion.edu](mailto:asalsgiver@clarion.edu) or phone 814-393-2109. Inquiries may also be directed to the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, 330 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201.