



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Southwest Institute for Research on Women

Summer Community News

A Letter From SIROW Directors

Dear SIROW Colleague,

The 2017-2018 year was exciting for SIROW. We transitioned to a new leadership team. The new Director, Jo Korchmaros, and Associate Director, Claudia Powell, learned so much and continue to work diligently to guide and support SIROW's efforts to develop, conduct, and disseminate collaborative outreach, education, intervention, and research projects to diverse groups. This annual newsletter highlights some of the important efforts of SIROW researchers and collaborators.

One of SIROW's newest projects, the CREATE Project is focused on building Confidence, Readiness, Empowerment, Action, Transformation and Employment for women. This project was collaboratively developed and led by SIROW and Sister José Women's Center in response to findings from their previous work examining challenges faced by local homeless women. Read more about the CREATE Project in Rosi Andrade's article.

Spectrum is another new SIROW project. As Courtney Waters explains in her article, Spectrum is a collaboration of SIROW, the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF), and Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health. These organizations are working together to offer inclusive sexuality education, linkages to mental and behavioral health services, HIV testing, and prevention navigation for LGBTQ+ youth ages 13-24.

Some of SIROW's existing projects also aim to address challenges experienced by youth. For example, SIROW's Bridges to Wellness, or B-Well, Project has continued its impactful work providing sexually transmitted infection testing, including HIV and viral hepatitis testing, to youth as part of health-related prevention efforts. In the article entitled "Bridges to Wellness Project Provides Education and Testing Services," Tamara Sargus discusses B-Well Project activities and the collaborative efforts of SIROW, the Pima County Health Department, and Intermountain Centers for Human Development.

SIROW has also continued its work addressing challenges that youth and families experience in the juvenile justice system. Partnering with Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services (ALWAYS) and Children's Action Alliance, SIROW works to improve the outcomes for justice involved youth. You can read more about this Juvenile Justice Initiative Project in the article, by Sally Stevens and Tamara Sargus.

During the 2017-2018 year, SIROW continued to focus on disseminating project findings and lessons learned through local, national and international presentations and publications. Please check out the list of SIROW scholarly articles. This list includes published articles, as well as articles under review, which showcase the most recent findings of SIROW projects. Be sure to also read about Jill Williams' recent work published in the online forum of Environment and Planning C: Society and Space.

Finally, the article by Candace Black announces an exciting event coordinated by SIROW and the Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Task Force. This one-day drop-in center for victims of human trafficking provided needed outreach and support to survivors.

Thank you to all of our community partners and program participants who have supported and worked with SIROW! Your contributions are invaluable.

If you are interested in learning more about SIROW projects and opportunities to get involved, please visit our webpage at www.sirow.arizona.edu.

Jo Korchmaros, Ph.D. & Claudia Powell, M.Ed.

Director, SIROW

Associate Director, SIROW



SIROW Director
Jo (Josephine) Korchmaros



SIROW Associate Director
Claudia Powell

The Juvenile Justice Initiative Project: Identifying Barriers and Innovating from Obstacles

By Tamara Sargus

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system face numerous challenges. Arizona is only one of seven states that has open juvenile records. Open juvenile records mean potential employers and educational institutions can view juvenile court records, which may keep youth from securing employment or being accepted into an education program. Additionally, fines and fees assessed on justice involved youth and their families may present an additional barrier to record expungement (the destruction of records). If fines and fees are not paid, it may result in the inability to have record expunged.

The Juvenile Justice Initiative Project, funded by the Vitalyst Health Foundation, seeks to put a face to youth and families by highlighting the obstacles they face - including burdens placed on youth and families by juvenile courts that negatively impact youths' future opportunities. Our team consists of Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services (ALWAYS), Children's Action Alliance (CAA), and SIROW.

SIROW's work on this project strives to identify system-imposed barriers, as well as new and innovative practices designed to assist youth and families. SIROW research staff has collected this information by gathering and analyzing juvenile court data and by conducting qualitative interviews of juvenile justice professionals including judges, probation officers, defense attorneys, court clerks, and court administrators.

Through this work, SIROW has learned that several counties throughout the state are implementing exciting programs aimed at improving outcomes for youth. One such program is the Destruction of Records Clinic spearheaded by Susan Kelly, Assistant Public Defender at the Pima County Public Defender's Office - Juvenile Division. This walk-in clinic meets monthly and provides information on the destruction of juvenile records, set-asides of juvenile adjudications, and restoration of rights lost due to a felony adjudication. Lawyers are on hand to answer questions and get things in order so that individuals may apply for the destruction of juvenile records. Additionally, the clinic provides resources on voting registration, educational opportunities, and confidential immigration assistance.

The Destruction of Records clinic, launched in January 2018, has assisted in filing approximately 40 applications on behalf of formally justice-involved individuals. In a system that can be difficult to navigate, the clinic provides "one stop shopping" for young adults allowing them to easily access services to diminish challenges as they enter adulthood. The clinic has recently enhanced its services by adding an online link to the Public Defender's website for requesting an appointment to meet about the destruction of records.

While there is still much work to be done to improve the outcomes for justice involved youth, the Destruction of Records clinic is a valuable resource for youth in Pima County.

For more information on the Juvenile Justice Initiative Project, please contact Dr. Sally Stevens at sstevens@email.arizona.edu or Tamara Sargus at tsargus@email.arizona.edu.



SIROW Joins Anti-Trafficking Task Force to Implement Community Drop-In Center

By Candace Black

As part of SIROW's partnership with the Southern Arizona Anti-Trafficking Unified Response Network (SAATURN), Drs. Black and Stevens coordinated with CODAC Health, Recovery & Wellness and the Tucson Police Department to hold a one-day drop-in center for victims of human trafficking. The event was held September 8, 2018, and coordinated with local community agencies (including faith-based organizations and LGBTQ+ inclusive organizations) to provide services including medical and STI screenings; mental health and substance treatment referrals; housing assistance and referral; connecting victims with medical insurance, legal support services, education and employment assistance; and assistance for undocumented victims. The drop-in center was open to all victims of human trafficking.

For more information about SAATURN, please contact Sally Stevens at sstevens@email.arizona.edu.



Spectrum Program Brings Much-Needed HIV Prevention and Sexuality Education Program to Southern Arizona Youth

By Courtney Waters

SIROW is celebrating a momentous start to our new Spectrum program! Awarded in October 2017, Spectrum is a five-year HIV prevention grant funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. For this project, SIROW is excited to be partnering with long-time collaborator, the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF), as well as a new collaborator, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health. These three agencies have come together to offer inclusive sexuality education, linkages to mental and behavioral health services, HIV testing, and prevention navigation for LGBTQ+ youth ages 13-24.

Spectrum uses two age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education curricula delivered by a team of three health educators. SIROW Health Education for Youth (HEY) is offered to 13- to 17-year-old participants. Iterations of HEY have been used by SIROW programs for over a decade in various community settings. For Spectrum, the curriculum was adapted to be LGBTQ-affirming.

SIROW Sexual Health Education – Queer (SHE-Q) was developed for SIROW's previous ANCHOR Project (a supportive service project for homeless and unstably housed LGBTQ+ identified young adults) and continues to be used for Spectrum. Adapted from HEY, SHE-Q is designed to serve an 18+ LGBTQ+ audience. Both curriculums encompass sexuality education essentials like anatomy and physiology, STIs and HIV, and safer sex protection. They also include expanded lessons on communication and relationships, and four supplemental sessions addressing media literacy, body image, sexual and reproductive health services, and hookup culture.



Spectrum's mental and behavioral health services include brief intervention (a three-to-six session short-term therapy program) as well as a LGBTQ-affirming dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) support group led by a Devereux therapist. HIV testing is offered by SAAF with options for mobile and on-site testing at the Eon Youth Lounge. SAAF's Prevention Navigator links participants to community resources and other supportive services.

After an intense month of training, Spectrum service delivery kicked off in February 2018. Hitting the ground running, Spectrum has already served over 140 youth and young adults with their sexual health curriculum. Of the participants who have formally enrolled in Spectrum's program evaluation, 76% are 13-17 years old; 13% identify as transgender or gender non-conforming; 61% identify as LGBTQ or another sexual orientation other than straight; and 44% are Hispanic/Latino.

This fall, Spectrum looks forward to offering services in high school, middle school, behavioral health, and juvenile detention settings. For more information about Spectrum, please contact Project Director, Claudia Powell, claudiap@email.arizona.edu, or Program Coordinator Courtney Waters at cwaters2@email.arizona.edu.

Dr. Jill Williams Co-Authors Article on Education and Teacher Resistance

By Jill Williams

Dr. Jill Williams, Associate Research Social Scientist with SIROW, recently co-authored an article published in the online forum of Environment and Planning C: Society and Space. Based on a collaborative research project with public school teachers and Dr. Sara Tolbert from the UA's College of Education, the article examines the big and small ways teachers resist educational policies that are harmful to their students. From everyday acts of resistance to large scale walk-outs, the piece encourages the audience to pay attention to the range of ways teachers work to create positive educational environments for their students.

You can read the full piece [HERE](#).

Dr. Williams is a 2017-19 Faculty Fellow with the Agnese Nelms Haury Program in Environment and Social Justice, whose support made this research possible.



Gender and the Construction Classroom: Project CHANGE Pilot Promotes Empowerment

By Allison Dumka

Project CHANGE (Career, Harassment, and Nontraditional Gender Education) educates students about gender stereotypes in Career and Technical Education class enrollment. To achieve this mission, Project CHANGE provides free workshops to K-12 schools and community organizations on topics including preventing sexual harassment and online bullying, and how to consider Career and Technical Education classes, as well as career paths, outside the box of gender stereotypes.

In the 2017-2018 school year, Project CHANGE partnered with Bisbee High School to pilot a new way of supporting Career and Technical Education programs' female enrollment. Staff implemented Career Catalyst, a peer mentorship program for young women, which covered a variety of topics surrounding gender and career choices. Senior Instructional Specialist Allison Dumka designed the yearlong curriculum, which included explaining the gender wage gap, how Career and Technical Education classes are often segregated by gender (i.e., more girls in Cosmetology and Nursing, more boys in Automotive and Welding), why gender stereotypes may prevent exploring certain careers, the importance of mentorship, and how to feel more confident when negotiating challenging situations. Peer mentors learned the subjects first semester, and helped teach three sessions in the second semester.

In the 2017-2018 school year, 12 girls enrolled in construction. After Career Catalyst, enrollment interest increased. 18 girls selected construction as their primary CTE request, and ten have requested it as their alternate request. This demonstrates a significant growth in interest after Career Catalyst instruction. Additionally, girls took on formal leadership roles as managers in the classroom, and several girls began summer internships in the construction industry. Upon evaluation, 96% of girls understood how mentorship was important in gender nontraditional classes or career paths. 92% agreed they understood the benefits of a nontraditional career and 80% of students indicated more interest in a nontraditional career than they were prior to entering the program. Students indicated they understood the importance of mentoring and that the peer mentorship component improved the classroom environment. 96% responded they understood how a mentor might be helpful in a nontraditional class or career path. Several students mentioned that taking on a mentoring role helped them retain the important content they had learned first semester. Another student indicated that mentorship directed her on a path she hadn't considered before as a leader. Additional students mentioned being a mentor helped to improve their confidence and they enjoyed helping others learn.

Project CHANGE looks forward to continuing to implement Career Catalyst in the 2018-2019 school year as part of a conscious effort to disrupt gender stereotypes, provide mentorship, encourage confidence, and ultimately, to prepare students to succeed in any career they choose.

For more information about Career Catalyst or Project CHANGE, email Allison Dumka at ajdumka@email.arizona.edu.



The CREATE Project: Collaboration and Research for Change

By Rosi Andrade

Chronic homelessness impacts women's lives in quite different ways than it often impacts men. For example, a 23-city report by the U.S. Conference on Mayors found that "domestic violence is the primary cause of homelessness for women" and the "impact of violence is cumulative: women who have experienced or witnessed greater numbers of abusive events report higher rates of eating-related problems, greater incidence of STDs and hepatitis, overall poorer self-rated health status, earlier involvement in crime, and more arrests" (2007). The CREATE (Confidence, Readiness, Empowerment, Action, Transformation, Engagement) program is a local collaboration between Sister José Women's Center and SIROW and was borne from an acute awareness of the debilitating effects of poverty, trauma and homelessness for women, as well as collective willingness to challenge those effects through research and programming.

After Jean Fedigan, Penny Buckley (Sr. Jose Women's Center) and Rosi Andrade (SIROW) conducted a community needs assessment (a survey to determine what actions and resources were most needed), the team developed programming specific to women experiencing homelessness. In September 2017, Sister José began to pilot the CREATE program which is a 26-week residential program for homeless women who earn a modest stipend while participating in a unique curriculum of life skills, job readiness, creative and expressive arts, wellness, and literacy. Through CREATE, women are given tools and space to find their voices and renew their confidence and personal identity while completing tasks vital to moving towards self-sufficiency with the support of a coach. The impact of the CREATE Program has been very exciting and inspirational!

Research informs practice in the CREATE project by utilizing a participatory action research model that includes daily reflection on the day-to-day program activities. By making a note of daily activities and outcomes, the team is able to make immediate improvements to the program. For example, in June 2017, upon evaluating the health impact of 110°+ outdoor temperatures and pending monsoon rains, Sister José Women's Center initiated the Monday to Sunday overnight program to provide women a safe place to be during the impending harsh weather conditions.

The center's response to ameliorating the living conditions of homeless women has its roots in its namesake, Sister José Hobday, a Franciscan nun who dedicated her life to helping people living in poverty. The care and respect that guide the center, and its collaborative curriculum with SIROW, are reflected in practice and often iterated in women's feedback that Sr. Jose is a safe place that separates the women from the stressors of being homeless. The findings of the pilot CREATE curriculum are guiding the development of gender-specific services that meet the goal of helping the women move beyond basic survival to personal growth and skills development.



For more information about the CREATE Project, please contact Dr. Rosi Andrade at rosia@email.arizona.edu.

Bridges to Wellness Project Provides Education and Testing Services

By Tamara Sargus

Sexually active adolescents are one of the highest risk groups to contract sexually transmitted infections (STIs) as they are more likely to have unprotected sex and more than one sex partner. Research indicates that while adolescents are disproportionately affected by STI's, gaps exist in accessing testing services. SIROW's Bridges to Wellness (B-Well) project is an HIV, viral hepatitis, and substance use prevention initiative which bridges these gaps by providing community outreach, education, and STI testing to youth ages 14 to 17.

The B-Well project is a partnership between SIROW, Intermountain Centers for Human Development, and the Pima County Health Department. Launched in 2017, B-Well has been working to increase the capacity of prevention focused educational programming for adolescents. In conjunction with prevention education, B-Well has made great strides in providing free and confidential STI testing to youth in Pima County. Thus far, the Pima County Health Department has provided on-site testing and counseling for youth at various charter schools, behavioral health organizations, volunteer groups, and residential treatment facilities. In addition, the Pima County Health Department has been instrumental in linking youth to accessible health treatment including providing on-site treatment to youth who could not access services on their own.

One goal of the project is to assist in reducing the stigma around STIs, and empower youth to take control of their healthcare needs through education and access to health services. Youth have been extremely receptive to receiving the testing services, as well as being interested in information on prevention, treatment, and ways to access testing in the future. Katherine Welchlin, Health Educator at the Pima County Health Department explains, "Being able to provide testing is a useful component for teens to break down the stigma around STIs as well as helping them know their status."

The community organizations welcome the opportunity to provide STI testing to the youth they serve. The B-Well project has already arranged to return and offer testing to youth at several organizations on an ongoing basis. As we continue with outreach efforts, we hope to expand testing services to additional organizations throughout Pima County.

If you know of an organization that might benefit from free and confidential STI education and testing services for youth, please contact Tamara Sargus at tsargus@email.arizona.edu





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