Vision
A society in which the wellbeing of women and families is paramount, resulting in their equity, empowerment, and prosperity.

Mission
Develop, conduct, and disseminate collaborative outreach, education, intervention, and research projects of importance to diverse groups.

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SIROW HIGHLIGHTS

SIROW Researchers Participate in the InWomen Conference’s 10th Anniversary Meeting
Dr. Sally Stevens, Dr. Josephine Korchmaros, and Ms. Claudia Powell furthered SIROW’s work addressing gender-based disparities in substance use and sexual risk by participating in the 10th anniversary meeting of the International Woman’s and Children’s Health and Gender Group Conference (InWomen Conference) held in Montreal, Canada on June 16. They presented their collaborative work on (1) What does Law Enforcement and Victim Services Data Tell us about Sex Trafficking in the U.S./Mexico Borderland? The Role of Substance Use (Stevens & Black), (2) Structural Interventions in Myanmar to Advance Women’s Economic Independence to Reduce Substance Use and Other Health Risk Behavior (Korchmaros, Stevens, & Fitzsimmons); (3) Trans-Women and Trauma: Addressing Substance Use Disparities and Risks Facing Young Transgender Women (Powell, Waters & Brinley), and (4) Female Sex Workers in Belize: Substance Use, HIV Risk, and Prevention Activities (Pope, Castellanos, Stevens, & Korchmaros).

Stevens, Korchmaros and Powell also chaired a discussion table at the InWomen’s Conference on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) substance use and related health issues from a global perspective. Laws pertaining to LGBT rights for counties and regions across the globe were identified and discussed, highlighting how laws, policies, and practices contribute to stigma and discrimination among LGBT individuals - elevating risks for substance use, mental health disorders, and other health issues. A priority resulting from this discussion is conducting a systematic review of the literature and a publication on the findings from this review.

Representatives from 42 counties attended the InWomen’s conference this year. Above, all international junior investigator travel awardees.
Goals

- Engage in collaborative feminist research on topics pertinent to the lives of girls, women, and families;
- Develop and conduct outreach, education, service, research, and trainings with regard to mental and physical health, sexuality, legal matters, education, workforce, equity, diversity, and other issues;
- Address social inequalities and group-based disparities;
- Examine and support women’s contribution to literature, the arts, and Southwest heritage;
- Advocate for women and families by linking researchers with community organizations and policy makers;
- Identify, illuminate, and disseminate research on girls, women, families, and gender differences.

Findings from the Medication Adherence, Health Literacy, and Cultural Beliefs (RxHL) Study

Dr. Josephine Korchmaros and colleagues working on the RxHL Study have recently examined the association between food insecurity and medication adherence among diverse, low-income patients with chronic disease at a community health center. The RxHL Study is lead by Dr. Susan Shaw of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA. Study partners include Cristina Huebner Torres of the Caring Health Center located in Springfield, MA and Jeannie Lee of the University of Arizona's College of Pharmacy.

Prevalence of chronic disease is high among low-income, diverse patients in community health centers. Food insecurity has been shown to impede medication adherence among this population, which is a key component of chronic disease management. Participants of the RxHL Study (N=409; 58.5% female, mean age 56.5) were recruited from a federally-qualified health center. Eligible participants reported at least one chronic disease and were identified as one of five racial/ethnic groups—white (12.2%), African American (23.8%), Vietnamese (24.6%), Russian-speaking (14.4%), or Latino (25.1%). Participants had a mean monthly household income of $1,118 and nearly half (40.1%) had less than a high school education.

Overall, 40% of participants were food insecure. However, food insecurity differed significantly by group with the highest proportion of food insecure individuals among Latinos (42.7%) and the lowest among Russian speakers (4.3%). Overall, a third of participants (33.7%) had inadequate medication adherence. Adherence also varied by group, with Latinos having the largest percentage of individuals with inadequate adherence (40.6%) and Russian speakers having the smallest percentage (6.5%).

Results indicated an overall association between food insecurity and medication adherence. Regardless of race/ethnicity, educational level and income, food insecure participants are less likely to adequately adhere to their medication regimen compared to those who are food secure. The strength of this association varies by racial/ethnic group. Thus, medication adherence interventions and treatment plans should consider food insecurity status and should be culturally tailored.

The RxHL Study research team will continue to examine and disseminate the findings of the RxHL Study. They aim to use these findings to address structural and individual challenges to adherence to medication regimens and, thus, to controlling chronic disease and improving health outcomes for diverse populations.

ANCHOR Celebrates LGBTQ Pride Month

June is LGBTQ Pride month! LGBTQ Pride is celebrated each year in the month of June to honor the 1969 Stonewall riots in Manhattan. The Stonewall riots were a tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States. In honor of the trans women of color who led the Stonewall movement, the ANCHOR Project hosted a number of events throughout June including Pride flag-making, the screening of an LGBTQ movie cult classic, and discussions with participants about their meanings of and experiences with Pride. Pride month also include an extraordinary Queer Thursday Threads (our monthly clothing swap) in thanks to a great number of clothing donations we received from folks on campus. What is Pride without a little dress-up fun? The month culminated with an ANCHOR Pride party. Participants and staff adorned the ANCHOR House with handmade decorations, streamers, and balloons, which were accompanied by a robust potluck lunch, art and music. It was a festive day filled with great company, lots of color, laughter and positive energy!