Dear SIROW Colleagues,

Thank you to all of our colleagues and partners who have supported another year of SIROW’s growth and accomplishments. In April, SIROW celebrated its 40th Anniversary with our partners, friends, and family. The highlights of the event were 1) listening to the John E. White Elementary Mariachi band, 2) playing games to learn about SIROW projects and win SIROW swag, 3) sharing our own stories with the help of the award-winning storyteller Molly McClure, and 4) celebrating SIROW’s former directors. Great appreciation to all of you who attended and supported the event!

This year SIROW also participated in an extensive strategic planning process to help us think critically about the direction of SIROW and to develop strategies for furthering SIROW’s mission and goals. We were thrilled to receive so much positive feedback about the work we do. We were also excited to think about next steps for SIROW. Our strategic plan includes, for example, developing and strengthening our collaborative efforts to address group-based disparities. It also includes contributing SIROW expertise to the creation of a professional workforce able to develop, implement, and evaluate programs to address social issues with respect, collaboration, appreciation of diversity, investment in community, and passion for a more equitable world. The entire plan can be found here: SIROW Strategic Plan. SIROW team members are enthusiastic about the steps that are already in motion.

Lastly, SIROW was faced with tremendous growth during this year. SIROW researchers brought in $5 million in grant funds to support SIROW efforts and an additional $16.5 million to support our collaborators. Using this funding, SIROW welcomed 8 new people to the SIROW team and moved to a new location named SIROW Silverlake Park. We were lucky to grow our team by adding several talented, energetic and passionate colleagues.

The articles included in this newsletter highlight some of the important work SIROW has been involved in during the past year. Our projects address critical and timely issues such as our nation’s opioid crisis; homelessness; comprehensive sexuality education and HIV prevention; gender-based violence; and increasing access to STEM and other fields for those who are currently underrepresented.

If you are interested in learning more about SIROW’s 36 current projects as well as opportunities to get involved, please visit our webpage at www.sirow.arizona.edu.

Thank you for your ongoing support of SIROW!

Claudia & Jo
Spectrum Presents at the 8th Annual Let’s Get Better Together Conference

By: Amy Lucero

SIROW’s Spectrum Project continues to collaborate with local agencies—Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health and the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF)—to deliver services to LGBTQ+ youth and young adults ages 13-24 in Tucson. In its second year, with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the Spectrum team has been busy teaching inclusive sexual health education to over 100 youth in five classrooms and two LGBTQ+ drop-in spaces. In addition to health education, Spectrum also offers linkages to mental and behavioral health services, HIV testing, and prevention navigation.

In June 2019, the Spectrum team facilitated two interactive presentations at the annual statewide Let’s Get Better Together Conference, hosted in Tempe, Arizona. This conference aims to increase knowledge, resources, and understanding for healthcare providers serving the LGBTQ+ community. The theme of this year’s conference was Authentic Resilience.

Research Technician, Amy Lucero from SIROW and Spectrum Health Educator, Emilio Galindo from Devereux presented, Love, [insert name here]: Talking to Youth about Coming Out, which discussed LGBTQ+ coming out experiences and strategies for being a supportive ally. Data about coming out were shared from SIROW’s previous ANCHOR Project, which served LGBTQ+ adults experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Workshop participants constructed their own “Coming Out Stars” as a way to visualize how a young person might feel when they come out and potentially lose important people in their lives. Participants also wrote letters to themselves including messages of hope and congratulations for taking the step of coming out to someone they trust. The letters served as an inspiring reminder to be proud of who they are.

The second Spectrum presentation, Stand up/ Stand by: Addressing Youth Health Disparities Across the Spectrum, was facilitated by SIROW Evaluator, Corrie Brinley and SAAF Prevention Navigator, Ramón Lopez-Serrano. This workshop focused on how LGBTQ+ youth and young adults experience significant health disparities as compared to their cisgender, heterosexual counterparts. This interactive workshop reviewed baseline health and identity data of Spectrum participants, facilitated a discussion on intersectionality and its effects on health, and reviewed ideas for addressing inequalities and removing barriers for LGBTQ+ youth attempting to access health services.

For more information about Spectrum, please contact Project Director, Claudia Powell, claudiap@email.arizona.edu.
Sexual Violence Education Project Serves Diverse Youth in Southern Arizona

By: Courtney Waters

Sexual violence is a pervasive problem that affects nearly one in three women and one in six men nationwide (Smith et al., 2017). The current social climate around sexual violence offers an opportunity to initiate important conversations about prevention and response. In August 2018, SIROW accepted a one-time special project community grant under the Arizona Department of Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Program.

The purpose of the Sexual Violence Education Project (SVEP) was to develop and deliver sexual violence education to Native and Latinx youth ages 13-17 in Southern Arizona. Project goals included increasing knowledge about sexual violence, reducing victim-blaming attitudes, and enhancing personal empowerment related to sexual violence prevention and response. SIROW researchers adapted a previously existing sexual violence prevention curriculum into five 60-minute sessions that addressed definitions of sexual violence, power and gender, consent, myths and realities, bystander intervention, and strategies for supporting survivors.

During the funding period from August 2018 through January 2019, SVEP served 89 youth, nearly triple its initial goal. The average age of participants was 16. The curriculum was delivered at six unique locations in Tucson and surrounding areas. These locations included a high school program for pregnant and parenting girls, a boys’ group home, two charter high schools, a bicultural public high school for Tohono O’odham and Native students, and a drop-in space for opportunity youth (traditionally referred to as ‘at-risk’ youth).

The Continuum of Sexual Violence provided the overarching foundation for the curriculum. It posits that sexual violence includes a series of related behaviors that share common characteristics. With early intervention, problematic behaviors can be stopped before they escalate to more severe forms of violence.

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Continuum of Sexual Violence

- Bullying
- Sexual
- Sexual abuse
- Civil Offense
- Criminal Offense
- Relationship Abuse

Common characteristics for each of the behaviors
1. Violates boundaries
2. Imbalance of power
3. Pattern of behavior

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PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Gender Identity
- 60% male
- 39% female
- 1% unsure

Race/Ethnicity
- 35% Hispanic
- 10% Native American
- 28% More than 1 race
- 9% Black/African American
- 1% Arab
- 1% African
- 12% White
Sexual Violence Education Project Serves Diverse Youth in Southern Arizona
(Continued)

Results of a pre-posttest study indicate that the curriculum positively impacted knowledge, attitudes, and empowerment. Results show an increase in knowledge among 57% of the participants. Additionally, 55% of the youth exhibited a shift away from attitudes that blame victims. Finally, 45% of participants reported an increase in empowerment from before receiving the curriculum to after receiving it. Participants’ key takeaways were how to get help with sexual violence and strategies for supporting survivors. In response to the prompt, “list one thing you learned in the past five sessions,” participants said:

- “I now know how to voice myself.”
- “How to get help after so many years of keeping stuff in...”
- “...if a survivor did share with me, I believe I could be supportive and allow them to direct where the conversation would go.”

The SVEP was one small piece of the growing efforts nationwide to address sexual violence. In addition to its impact on the youth who received the curriculum, the SVEP has laid a foundation from which SIROW can expand and continue sexual violence programming and research. For more information, please contact Courtney Waters (cwaters2@email.arizona.edu)

LESSONS LEARNED

In response to the prompt, “List one thing you learned in the past five sessions,” participants said...

“I now know how to voice myself.”

“How to get help after so many years of keeping stuff in...”

“...if a survivor did share with me, I believe I could be supportive and allow them to direct where the conversation would go.”

Project Lifeline is Bolstering Suicide Awareness and Prevention Across Campus

By: Corrie Brinley

Mental illness and substance use disorders are growing concerns across college campuses. The 2015-2016 Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors Public Directors’ Survey reported that anxiety was the most predominant and increasing issue (50.6%), followed by depression (41.2%), and relationship concerns (34.4%). Over 20% of college students who sought counseling noted suicidal ideation as their primary concern, while 24.2% reported self-injury, and 9.5% reported alcohol abuse. The National Collegiate Health Assessment 2016 Executive Summary reported that 10.4% of students seriously considered suicide within the last twelve months and 1.9% attempted suicide within the same time period.

University of Arizona (UA) students are not immune to these challenges. In an attempt to address these concerns, SIROW is excited to partner with long-time collaborator, UA Campus Health’s Health Promotion and Prevention Services (HPPS) and Counseling and Psych Services (CAPS). With the feedback and support of students and student groups across campus, these campus entities have united in an effort to bring awareness to the adverse consequences of serious mental illness and substance use disorders on campus through Project Lifeline.
Project Lifeline is Bolstering Suicide Awareness and Prevention Across Campus (Continued)

Project Lifeline is a three-year Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Campus Suicide Prevention project funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. It is a comprehensive suicide prevention strategy to reduce the incidence of suicide, suicide attempts, and their related risk factors, such as drug misuse/abuse, among UA students. The project seeks to develop a sustainable, comprehensive approach that enhances and evaluates services and campus infrastructure.

Lifeline offers UA students, staff, faculty, administrators, and community members a number of workshops, activities, and trainings. One example was Send Silence Packing, an emotionally powerful traveling exhibit presented by the nonprofit organization Active Minds, with the support of Project Lifeline. The exhibit displayed hundreds of backpacks across the UA Mall including personal stories from individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. The event seeks to raise suicide awareness, increase connection to mental health resources, and inspire action for suicide prevention.

Another Project Lifeline activity is the Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Training. This training offers three simple steps to help someone who is suicidal. Through discussion, videos, and role plays, participants learn national, local, and campus mental health and suicide statistics, how to recognize the warning signs of suicide, how to offer hope, and how to get help and save a life. Almost one year into the project, Project Lifeline has provided QPR Training to 245 participants. The majority of QPR Training participants identified as white (68%), female (74%), and heterosexual (85%). Twenty-eight percent identified as Hispanic or Latino/a. Only 4% identified as a veteran. Almost 44% of the participants were college students; 34% campus staff; 10% campus administrators; 9% faculty/instructors/lecturers; and 3% off-campus community members (including family members).

Project Lifeline will continue to offer QPR trainings. The project team will also conduct a series of focus groups with diverse student groups across campus to develop a mental health awareness video campaign.

For more information about Project Lifeline, please contact Project Co-Director, Josephine Korchmaros, jkorch@email.arizona.edu.
UA Women in Science Student Council (WiSSC) Initiative
Making Significant Impact on Campus

By: Stephanie Murphy and Jill Williams

In January, the Women in Science and Engineering Program (WISE) in SIROW launched the Women in STEM Student Council (WiSSC) with funding from the UA Office of the Provost. WiSSC is a student-directed council that supports the recruitment, retention, and graduation of women in STEM at the University of Arizona (UA) by serving as a centralized network for the many existing “women in STEM” student groups on campus and offering university-wide coordinated programming.

In January 2019, the inaugural WiSSC Executive Board election was held, and nine executive board members were appointed by their peers to lead these efforts on campus. After this election, WiSSC hit the ground running with a number of events and initiatives that took place in spring 2019. Events included a day-long professional development and networking symposium and a lunch-time discussion series addressing issues and challenges facing women in STEM.

In addition to providing forums for female students to gain knowledge and skills, these events proved to be important mechanisms for fostering a sense of belonging and community among attendees. Over 95% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the event they attended made them feel more connected to women in STEM at UA, more comfortable at the UA, and more confident in their ability to succeed in STEM.

WiSSC also administered a travel grant program to help women in STEM pursue professional development activities crucial to their success, such as presenting at conferences. WiSSC received 33 applications and was able to dispense a total of $3,854 among seven awardees from three colleges.

During summer 2019, WiSSC and WISE established the infrastructure for the launch of the 2019-2020 WiSSC Mentorship Program that will pair first and second year STEM students with STEM mentors from private industry and university faculty. No mentorship programs currently exist at the UA that are dedicated to supporting the entry, persistence, and success of female students in STEM fields. Therefore, this program will fill an important gap in the UA landscape!

For more information on WiSSC or ways to get involved, please visit https://wise.arizona.edu/women-stem-student-council or contact Jill at JillMWilliams@email.arizona.edu.
SIROW Continues Supporting Homeless LGBTQ+ Adults with New Lighthouse Project

By: Shannon Fowler

SIROW is excited to introduce The Lighthouse Project, which opened its doors in May 2019. The purpose of The Lighthouse Project is to provide LGBTQ+ affirming and trauma-informed supportive services for individuals ages 18 and older experiencing housing instability. Lighthouse is a five-year collaboration between SIROW, Our Family Services (OFS), and the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF), funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Lighthouse provides linkages to housing services, mental health and substance abuse treatment, as well as recovery support groups, referrals, and community events for LGBTQ+ young adults and their straight allies. The project offers weekly support groups addressing trauma, substance abuse, and sexual health. Lighthouse’s Tuesday group utilizes the evidence-based curriculum, Seeking Safety, to teach coping mechanisms for trauma, substance abuse, relationships, and other challenges. The Thursday group, SHE-Q is a queer, sexual health discussion group.

During drop-in hours, participants are supported with an inclusive community space and a free meal. Participants are also able to engage in activities such as art, volunteer projects, social events, and life skills classes. Computers are also available to participants to help with educational and job endeavors. Lighthouse staff supports participants emotionally and with case management for their everyday needs.

OFS’s role on the project is to connect participants to the community’s coordinated entry system for housing, as well as other housing resources. OFS also offers case management for individualized needs.

SAAF’s role includes training community-based providers on best practices for serving LGBTQ+ youth and young adults in need of housing and/or substance use disorder and mental health treatment. This component of the project supports Lighthouse’s broader goal of improving the system of care for LGBTQ+ youth adults. SAAF will also conduct HIV and Hepatitis C rapid testing during drop-in hours.

Lighthouse staff is excited to grow this project and support our community. Staff continues to participate in street outreach, present at various collaborator meetings, and utilize social media platforms to spread the word about the Lighthouse Project.

For more information, contact Project Director, Claudia Powell at claudiap@email.arizona.edu.
SIROW Researchers’ Recent Accomplishments

Rosi Andrade

Publications & Reports


Keith Bentele

Publications & Reports


Josephine Korchmaros

Publications & Reports


Beth Meyerson

Publications


Accomplishment: Appointment as Associate Editor and Editorial Board Member, BMC Public Health.
Sally Stevens

Publications


Congratulations to SIROW’s Research Professor on receiving the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM). Presented by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Science Foundation in October, 2019.

Jill Williams

Publications


**New SIROW Projects**

**Aging Successfully:** Identifying and characterizing the needs of LGBTQ older adults ages 55+ in Pima County, Arizona  
Contact: Beth Meyerson; bmeerson@email.arizona.edu

**Addressing the Opioid Epidemic:**  
1) *Comprehensive Evaluation of an Innovative Collaborative Response to the Opioid Epidemic*  
2) *Safe Haven: A project to increase capacity and infrastructure to provide medication-assisted treatment and recovery support services to adults with opioid use disorder in Springfield, Massachusetts*  
3) *U-MATTER: A project to increase capacity and infrastructure to identify, engage, and retain adults with opioid use disorder in comprehensive medication-assisted treatment and recovery support services*

**Diving into Task Assignment Bias:** A project to develop, implement, and evaluate an intervention aimed at reducing gender-based disparities in the Marine Advanced Technology Education remotely operated vehicle program  
Contact: Jill Williams; jillmwilliams@email.arizona.edu

**Dragonfly Project:** A project to aimed at reducing homelessness among individuals and families in Pima County, Arizona  
Contact: Rosi Andrade; rosia@email.arizona.edu

**Evaluation of Earth Conservation Internship Program**  
Contact: Jill Williams; jillmwilliams@email.arizona.edu

**Examining Public Information Campaigns as a Strategy of Border Enforcement by the US and Australia**  
Contact: Jill Williams; jillmwilliams@email.arizona.edu

**Health Hope Home (H3): A project to end the cycle of homelessness**  
Contact: Claudia Powell; claudiap@email.arizona.edu

**Help and Hope for YOUTH:** An initiative to work with an alliance to assess the best strategy to promote mental health education and reduce stigma in all Arizona schools  
Contact: Claudia Powell; claudiap@email.arizona.edu

**The Lighthouse Project:**  
A project to link homeless LGBTQ+ youth and young adults to a trauma-informed system of care  
Contact: Claudia Powell; claudiap@email.arizona.edu

**Personal Empowerment in Adult Relationships:**  
Workshop curriculum for women in Federal Bureau of Prisons pilot project  
Contact: Rosi Andrade; rosia@email.arizona.edu

**Pharmacist Practice:**  
Contact: Beth Meyerson; bmeerson@email.arizona.edu
2) *PharmNet: A multi-component pharmacy-based intervention to reduce opioid misuse and overdose among pharmacy patients*  
3) *State Syringe Sale and Possession Policy in the Southwest: A project to characterize state law, regulation and pharmacy board policy regarding syringe sales and possession in Southwestern U.S. states*  
4) *Substance Use Related Harm Reduction Attitude and Practices among Arizona Pharmacists*

**Project Lifeline:**  
A comprehensive suicide prevention strategy for students at the University of Arizona  
Contact: Josephine Korchmaros; jkorch@email.arizona.edu

**Wellbeing of Justice-involved Youth in Pima County Arizona**  
Contact: Sally Stevens; sstevens@email.arizona.edu

**Women in STEM Mentorship Program & Women in STEM Student Council (WiSSC)**  
Contact: Jill Williams; jillmwilliams@email.arizona.edu
Southwest Institute for Research on Women
925 N. Tyndall Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85721
Tel (520) 621-3839
Fax (520) 621-1533
https://sirow.arizona.edu/

To join the SIROW mailing list, contact Nikole Justvig at njustvig@email.arizona.edu