



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Southwest Institute
for Research on Women

The SIROW Voice

Community-based collaborative research, working toward a society in which the wellbeing of women and families is paramount, resulting in their equity, empowerment, and prosperity since 1979.



Girls Who Code Completes First Year

by Jill Williams and Allison Dumka

The 2017-18 academic year marked the first full year of the UA Girls Who Code Club. This club aims to eliminate the gender gap in technology by providing free weekly coding classes to middle and high school girls. We train UA undergraduate and graduate students, and successful program alumni, to facilitate the program. This serves to provide opportunities for mentoring relationships to develop between facilitators and participants, while also enabling UA students to gain valuable outreach experience that they can mobilize when pursuing other opportunities.

This year, we enrolled 26 middle and high school participants and trained 6 UA student facilitators from the Colleges of Engineering, Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.

As their culminating project, participants used the skills gained through the club to complete a Computer Science Community Impact Project. Participants selected the topic of kindness, and coded a randomized compliment generator and games about ending littering to be kind to the environment, wrote poems, and created kindness memes and stickers. Visit us at <https://uofagwc.jimdo.com/> to see the final product!

We completed the application and selection process for our 2018-19 Girls Who Code facilitators in May. We received over 25 applications from students across the University who want to give back to the community, increase interest in computer science, and help foster more diverse and inclusive STEM fields. Our new cohort of facilitators includes a high school graduate of Girls Who Code and several graduate students studying computer science and data analytics, along with many returning facilitators who have generously donated their time to the program for 3 semesters thus far. We look forward to building our club next year and thank the UA Libraries for donating use of a computer lab for our weekly meetings.

Special thanks to the UA College of Engineering and the Rebecca Fund at the Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona for making this program possible during the 2017-18 academic year. For more information, please contact Jill Williams at jillmwilliams@email.arizona.edu.

Staff Spotlight: Monica Davis

by Allison Dumka and Monica Davis



I've been working with SIROW since July 2016. Since then I have worked on numerous projects, most of which have been youth and/or family focused with an emphasis on health education and risk reduction.

You have worked extensively in HIV prevention. Can you explain how that background helps your work at SIROW?

I have been working in the area of HIV prevention nearly 20 years. Having that background helped me obtain my first position in SIROW with Conexiones Sanas (Healthy Connections) project aimed at providing and evaluating an HIV, sexually transmitted infection, Hepatitis and TB prevention program for at-risk adolescents enrolled in substance misuse treatment. Several of the projects that I have worked on have been included comprehensive sexual health education, which encompasses HIV prevention.

What is your favorite thing to do when you're not at work?

Playing with my almost 4-year-old. I get to be a kid again!

What do you love about working at SIROW?

My colleagues, I work with a group of dedicated, compassionate, bright leaders! I am inspired by them and the work they do. I love working at SIROW because I strongly believe in the work that we do.

What is your biggest achievement to date?

One of my biggest achievements has been a personal one. I organized the first Spanish production of The Vagina Monologues in the U.S., and it was here in Tucson. I competed against UA Presents to have the rights to it as part of the [V-Day movement](#) to prevent violence against women.

What does a typical day look like for you?

I am currently working on the Women in the Arizona Department of Transportation Workforce (WADOTW) Study and the Bridges to Wellness (B-Well) Project. It's really fun for me that I don't have a "typical" day. My work varies depending on the day of the week and the stage of the projects. Some usual tasks include report writing, prepping for and actual implementation of the SIROW Health Education for Youth (SIROW-HEY) curriculum, and team/partner meetings. I love the opportunity to interact with people outside an office, and it's very rewarding not to just sit behind a computer all day.

What are some things that have helped you grow at SIROW?

The Juvenile Drug Court/Reclaiming Futures (JDC/RF) Evaluation was a project that offered tremendous professional growth. I had the opportunity to collaborate with national organizations and a number of juvenile drug courts across the country. I worked in a completely different capacity than what I was used to. A bonus was that I got to travel to places that I never been to before. I've also had mentors here at SIROW; Alison Greene was my supervisor for several years, but more than a supervisor, she was and continues to be a mentor. She encouraged me to try new opportunities and provided guidance along the way. She is a great role model. I would not where I am now in my career without her support.

What inspires you at work?

I may not immediately see the difference in the people that I work with, but knowing that I have imparted knowledge that may keep youth healthy and safe truly motivates me.



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MISSION

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

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.



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