

Womanifesto

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CENTER

February/March, 2013

“Women Inspiring Innovation”: National Women’s History Month-- Women in STEM by Lee Bickford and Beth Bakken

National Women’s History Month (NWHM) is a significant time for women to celebrate, to reflect, to educate, and to empower each other. Our foremothers fought many battles for equity to make the world a better place for women, and undoubtedly, the status of women has risen in the United States over the past century. Women have found a collective voice with which to express and celebrate our intellect, strength and value, and our efforts and achievements are finally being recognized for the remarkable triumphs they signify.

One area where women are very gradually gaining recognition is in the realm of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The National Women’s History Project’s (NWHP) theme for 2013 is “Women Inspiring Innovation through Imagination,” and focuses on women’s accomplishments in these fields. The scarcity of opportunities for women in STEM resonates with the attitude that these disciplines were male-only territory. Even today, although women make up nearly 50% of the United States’ workforce, they are employed in only 24% of available STEM positions in the U.S.--a proportion which didn’t increase between 2000 and 2009, “...even as women’s share of

the college-educated workforce has increased” (esa.doc.gov 2011). Female faculty members with PhD’s in science and engineering, for example, trail behind their male counterparts in proportion by a ratio of 1: 2.3 (nsf.gov 2012). The 2013 National Women’s History Project theme “...honors generations of women who...have used their intelligence, imagination, sense of wonder, and tenacity to make extraordinary contributions to the STEM fields” (nwhmp.org 2013). At MSU, funding from the National Science Foundation ADVANCE Institutional Transformation Grant represents proactive efforts toward increasing female faculty, enrolling more women students in STEM programs, and fostering the retention and success of both female faculty and students.

Women’s research and contributions in the STEM fields must be recognized and valued. The most comprehensive solutions to problems will be found when the different spheres of cognitive aptitude of both sexes are combined. Greater representation of women in STEM fields is possible when we inspire and support our daughters in programs such as “Expanding Your Horizons.” We can also encourage our female friends and family members to be STEM students, educators, and mentors. Finally, we must have the courage to challenge the short-sighted, traditional paradigms that limit us.

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a benefit production of
the
VAGINA
monologues
by eve ensler

thursday
FEBRUARY 28
and friday
MARCH 1

show begins at 6pm
\$5 general admission
msu procrastinator theater

directed by
Ellie Newell &
Hannah Pearce

Sponsored by the The MSU
VOICE Center, MSU Women's
Center, MSU Health Promotions,
Students Against Sexual Assault,
and Men Stopping Rape.

tickets on sale at the MSU VOICE Center
SUB 370 (above Leigh Lounge)
doors open at 5:30 pm

VOYAGE
BOZEMAN

The VOICE Center
Montana State University

All proceeds benefit The MSU VOICE Center, Students Against Sexual Assault and Men Stopping Rape.
For more information: Contact The MSU VOICE Center at 994-7662 or visit <http://sasamsu.webs.com>

**The
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are
back!**

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MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH BE SURE TO JOIN US FOR THESE TERRIFIC ACTIVITIES!

March 6: 12- 1 p.m.

Sack Lunch Seminar--Listening is an Act of Love: "Tuesdays with Morrie and Maureen" SUB 168

Come learn about this intergenerational writing project offered by Jill Davis, instructor of English, pairing MSU students with senior elders in the Bozeman Community. This assignment gives students the opportunity to learn not only about national history, the Great Depression, farming in the dust bowl, and the experiences of women as they entered the work force, but also teaches students local histories of the Gallatin Valley and Montana State University. Join us to learn more about this fascinating process from the students' perspectives.

Wednesday, March 6: 7:00 p.m. Elsie Fox: Portrait of an Activist Procrastinator Theater

Elsie Fox gave a speech in Bozeman for a 2006 Mother's Day Peace Rally organized by Montana Women For. Ninety-nine year old Fox stepped to the podium, shook her fist at the crowd, and challenged everyone present: "*We, the people, must have solidarity...unity! The voice of action must be heard, by the people, for the people, from the people. We, the people, can take back our country. We can make a difference!*" Karen Stevenson, who lives near Miles City where she continues to be inspired by the eastern Montana landscape and the people who live there, authored the book: *Elsie Fox: Portrait of an Activist*. Stevenson will discuss the interviews with Elsie that culminated in the writing of this book, and the ways in which Elsie's voice still resonates—we the people, *can* make a difference!

Wednesday March 20: Noon- 1 p.m. Sack Lunch Seminar--Midwifery in Montana SUB 168

Midwifery has been practiced in Montana since the Territorial Period, but the profession had questionable legal status until the state's 1989 legislative session. Join American Studies doctoral candidate Jennifer Hill who is focusing on Women's History in the American West at MSU, for a discussion about

the handful of individuals who fought for the legalization of midwifery and established licensing procedures for homebirth midwives in Montana. The struggle for legalization questioned cultural beliefs about women, birth, and medicine, and revealed conflicts that remain relevant for contemporary reproductive issues.

Wednesday, March 20: 7:00 p.m. Women in Wonderland: Lives, Legends, and Legacies of Yellowstone National Park SUB Ballroom B

Like much of America's history, Yellowstone's historical narrative contains numerous stories of the adventures, heroics, and contributions of men, while the contributions of women have become invisible and largely forgotten. In fact, their contributions to Yellowstone were many. In her book *Women in Wonderland: Lives, Legends, and Legacies*, author Elizabeth Watry has profiled fourteen remarkable women whose contributions to and experiences in Yellowstone figured significantly in the development of the park. Ranging from park rangers developing nature trails and sealing guns to scientists researching bison and plants to concessioners supplying visitors with comfortable lodging and curios, these spirited, ambitious, and independent women have long gone uncelebrated. Her lecture will explore several of the enterprising lives of these noteworthy women as well as a few "behind the book" research experiences.

Wednesday, March 27: 5:30 p.m. Women's History Reception and Student of Achievement Award Ceremony Leigh Lounge, Strand Union Building, MSU

Join us for the 21st annual Women's History Month Reception and presentation of our Student of Achievement Awards—an event co-sponsored with our friends in the MSU Alumni Foundation. Our keynote speaker this year will be Dr. Anne Camper, Associate Dean for Faculty and Administration and the Chair of the President's Commission on the Status of University Women.

**These events are free and open to the public—
come join us!**

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want to know more? visit www.montana.edu/women
want your group to participate or volunteer? email msutunnelofoppress



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