

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Dr. Sona Andrews
Jan Bennetts
Kara Brascia
Jennifer Edwards
Melody Sky Eisler
Rebecca Evans
Marcia Franklin
Sheri Garmon
Dr. Jill Gill
Norma Jaeger
Kali Kurdy
Pamela Lassiter-Stacy
Dr. Lynn Lubamersky
Yolanda Martinez
Ellie Merrick
Dr. Amy Moll
Wendy Morgan
Dr. Mamie Oliver
Ro Parker
Sister Betty Schumacher
Dr. Sarah Toevs
Teresa Vazquez
Melissa Wintrow
Begoña "Sam" Zabala

women
history

BOISE STATE
UNIVERSITY

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY
WOMEN'S CENTER

2006

WOMEN

&

THEIR
STORIES

By walking history's pathways, we learn to step forward with confidence. The legacy of how others shaped society sparks our own longings to contribute. Everyone needs role models—footsteps enough like our own to inspire us.

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Why Celebrate Women's History?

(The following excerpt was taken from the National Women's History Project Website)

By walking history's pathways, we learn to step forward with confidence. The legacy of how others shaped society sparks our own longings to contribute. Everyone needs role models—footsteps enough like our own to inspire us.

Yet in 1992, a national study found that history texts devote only two to three percent of their total content to women. Educators are willing, often eager, to introduce women's history. But they lack materials and support. Only three percent of educational materials focus on women's contributions. Yet recently legislatures in three states—Illinois, Florida, and Louisiana—mandated teaching women's history in their K-12 classes. The need for more accurate information about women's historical contributions is further confirmed in a recent poll funded by General Motors (GM). Conducted prior to GM's sponsorship of a Ken Burns film on Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, two women "who transformed a nation," the results show that only one percent could identify Stanton as in some way connected with women's rights. In 1980, the National Women's History Project (NWHHP) was founded in Santa Rosa, California to broadcast women's historical achievements. The NWHHP started by leading a coalition that successfully lobbied Congress to designate March as National Women's History Month, now celebrated across the land. Today, the NWHHP is known nationally as the only clearinghouse that provides information and training in multicultural women's history for educators, community organizations, parents and for anyone wanting to expand their understanding of women's contributions to U. S. history.

W O M E N M A K I N G H E R S T O R Y

Since 2001, the Boise State Women's Center has honored 183 local "Women Making History": ordinary women leading extraordinary lives. This publication has become a tradition in our Women's History Month celebration. In the following pages, you will read about 24 women who are changing the history of Idaho. These women were nominated as Women Making History for their admirable work in our community.

Often the word "history" connotes images and thoughts of the past, but history is what we do every day. We hope to recognize women who have been influential in our community and to educate you about their work, programs, concerns, and successes. Most importantly, we hope to inspire each person who reads this publication to become involved and to make their own impact—make their own history.

NOMINATE A WOMAN YOU KNOW FOR NEXT YEAR'S PUBLICATION!

<http://womenscenter.boisestate.edu>

Click on "Women Making History Award" to submit on-line or pick up a nomination form at the Women's Center at 1605 University Drive, 426-4259.

Criteria for selection:

Nominees are selected based on how they are "making history": challenging sexist stereotypes and norms, working/advocating for equality within institutions (law, health care, education...), role modeling healthy self-esteem and self-worth, breaking ground in traditionally male dominated fields (sports, engineering, politics...), and/or challenging other forms of oppression (racism, ageism, homophobia), etc.

Categories for nomination and selection:

.....Boise State faculty/staff members
Local community members
Students

BOISE STATE
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Gloria Steinem & Melissa Wintrow

Melissa Wintrow

Melissa Wintrow walks with a smile across the Boise State campus, home of the higher education she has participated in since she was eighteen. Diverse ideas and questions about how we structure our lives have kept her coming back to these grounds year after year. And it is the ability to impact each college that she's either worked for or attended that keeps her in higher education.

Five years ago, Melissa became the first coordinator of the Boise State University Women's Center, a journey that led her to effect social and political change in the lives of students as well as the larger Boise community. Today, Melissa is the Assistant Director for Residence Life, embarking on a new way to effect change at Boise State.

Raised in a charismatic family in Ohio, Melissa began her undergraduate degree in English literature at Miami University, Ohio. "For me, as a first-generation college student, college was more about unlearning than learning."

In the residence halls and classrooms of universities, Melissa learned to challenge social norms and their foundations. Her development as a feminist, as well as her passion for advocacy, are grounded in her academic experiences.

While working as a full-time Complex Director at Michigan State, Melissa was approached by a young woman who had been brutally assaulted. Melissa began her path of support and service by becoming the young woman's advocate in the student conduct process, and walking her through an unfamiliar system. The two women sat, facing the hearing officer, and when Melissa began to question the perpetrator, she could feel the victim's hand tremble as the attacker admitted the horrible acts he had committed.

"Afterwards, the hearing officer looked at me and said if it hadn't been for my knowledge, the perpetrator probably would not have been held accountable for the rape. He would have probably not found him guilty if it hadn't been for the questions I knew to ask," said Melissa.

The moment that woman received justice, Melissa realized the power of knowledge: "Not to be too cynical, but in my experience people are more likely to get justice if they have access to resources, many times financial resources, and knowledge. How few, especially among our college students, have either. This student found justice because I knew how to manage a system that she had never been taught to access or felt she had the privilege to access."

Melissa's dedication to providing knowledge and advocacy became inherent in her work. After receiving her Master's Degree in higher education from the University of Georgia, Melissa worked at Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State, and Portland State before making her home in Boise. Her educational experiences and advocacy with these colleges helped her prepare for the job at Boise State.

As the coordinator of Boise State's Women's Center, Melissa helped initiate programs like the Sexual Assault Protocol and Hotline, self defense workshops, and the Returning Women's Mentoring Program. To educate students about gender equality, Melissa brought national experts to campus, including feminist activist Gloria Steinem. Melissa's work with the Boise Women's and Children's Alliance helped to bring the national Clothesline Project display, which features t-shirts decorated by victims of sexual assault and/or domestic violence, to campus. Melissa also implemented programs that celebrate women, including the Women Making History Project itself.

"All these programs came about because of student need. It was after we received innumerable phone calls from victims that we created the sexual assault hotline. I witnessed female students getting shuffled through systems and I refused to be a part of it. I wanted the Women's Center to be more than a place that referred women out; I wanted to provide the direct service that so many students needed the moment they walked through our door. We created programs so we wouldn't be part of the shuffle."

Through the Women's Center, Melissa dedicated herself to social service. She worked closely with a group of allies that invoked social change at Boise State. Among the hundreds of individual interventions, together they succeeded in over 65 interventions dealing with physical, sexual, and emotional violence within a single year, some requiring up to five months of assistance.

In these personal interactions, Melissa makes history. "It becomes frustrating to not see a direct change in the system, but when you help one person, like the individual I worked with for five months, it all becomes worth it. To see her moving on and, in her own big lungs, demanding justice; I think the interaction I had with her changed the course of her life."

In June of 2005, Melissa received the Award of Excellence from the Idaho Council on Domestic Violence and Victim Assistance, given to individuals demonstrating outstanding service in support of domestic violence victims. Her additional work with the Women's and Children's Alliance has helped to build a network of advocates for victims of domestic violence within our community.

Through her work and innovation with the Women's Center, and now in Residence Life, Melissa greatly impacts campus life. After five years, she saw that a firm foundation of indispensable programming had been laid for the Women's Center and it was time for others with different visions to make new contributions.

Throughout Melissa's career and personal life, she is driven by her passion to make a difference in the lives of others. Her mother's influence has been essential to such strong drive: "She is a strong woman who has persevered through great adversity. Because of my upbringing, I was blessed with a big voice and a passion to help those who can't stand up for themselves."

Melissa has dedicated herself to the preservation of others' rights through activism, both as a leader and as an educator. Her presence at Boise State, and her ambitions to provide innovative programming through Residence Life, continue to change Boise State's history, one interaction at a time.

By Amanda Micheletty

Amanda is an undergraduate student at Boise State majoring in English literature.

**A person's true wealth is the good he
or she does in the world.**

—Mohammed



ALL STUDENTS WELCOME!
Please visit us on the 2nd floor of the Student Union

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY
**CULTURAL
CENTER**

*The Boise State University
Cultural Center salutes Women
everywhere making history.*

The Cultural Center is committed to raising awareness and understanding about marginalized and oppressed groups in both minority and dominant culture, creating understanding about the needs of these groups and providing opportunities to all for action and interaction. We focus on education in the areas of identity development, issues of power and privilege, social justice and internalized oppression and promote an environment where people with different values and beliefs are treated with respect and dignity.

culturalcenter.boisestate.edu
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Begoñe "Sam" Zabala

Beep. Beep. Beep. A mom sits in the dark next to her newborn, listening to that beep, hoping it's followed by another. The overly efficient nurse walks into the room, avoiding eye contact, maybe says a word or two. This is not how Mom dreamt it would be when her child was born. She wants to reach out, hold, cuddle, and share her love with her child. Inside, she screams, needing someone to understand what she is going through.

I have been that woman and felt the terror that comes with helplessness.

There is a woman who is revolutionizing how families are treated while experiencing such fearful moments, a woman who understands that medical care doesn't need to be cold and intrusive. Begoñe "Sam" Zabala has been a nurse for over 30 years, but it's not how long she has been at St. Luke's that's important, it's how she changes the lives of the families in NICU (neo-natal intensive care unit) every day.

Sam told me, "Your heart has to sing for your job, no matter what you do." It's this love for her job and for her patients that forces her to ask herself in every situation, "How would I want to be treated and what would I need?"

As a staff nurse and member of the Specialty Team for Maternal and Neonatal Transports with Air St. Luke's, Sam flies with newborns and their moms by helicopter from rural hospitals to St. Luke's. These newborns are in distress, are often premature, and would not survive without the knowledge of the elite transport team.

With each flight, Sam tries to find new and better ways to help save the families she encounters. She understands that she is often the first representative of St. Luke's NICU these families will meet, and she strives to be respectful and understanding of their needs.

One family Sam worked with was Native American. This family had just lost a newborn and, after speaking with them, Sam arranged for them to hold their ceremony of bereavement at the hospital. This family believed that, to say "goodbye," one must first say "hello." The family made a circle and passed the baby around, each person saying hello. The baby was then passed around again and was told good-bye. Two years later, the same family had another child and, remembering Sam's kindness, took the child to see her. After sharing their loss with Sam, they wanted to share their joy.

Sam believes bereavement should not be something a family goes through alone. She believes the hospital staff, too, is a part of a child's life. She feels that it's proper to cry along with the families, hug them when they need to be hugged, listen when they need to talk, and care about each and everyone of them; she teaches this belief to her nursing students.

Another example of Sam's patient-centered approach is raising awareness about the fact that it can be very scary for parents to take their child

home, after days, weeks, or even months of relying on nurses and doctors to keep their child alive. It's especially frightening for families from rural areas, where they can be hours from specialized care.

Sam and St. Luke's believe in keeping the child's local community a part of the healing process. Without the support of communities and hospitals, survival rates drop. Sam, therefore, keeps track of all moms and babies, sends local hospitals notes about their welfare and information needed to support the baby upon the family's return home.

As a mother who has been in similar situations, I wish I could have had Sam by my side, her kind eyes telling me I wasn't alone in my fear. No mom should have to face that moment, but I am so grateful that Sam has taken the time, not only to be there for hundreds of families, but to teach others in the field to ask themselves, "How would I want to be treated?"

Sam teaches nursing students informally, as they "shadow" her during the 12-hour shifts she works at the hospital. Each day a new situation arises, something she has never dealt with before. Sometimes grief comes as anger and, under stress, a parent can only honestly hear half of what is explained. Demonstrating to the nursing students how to handle these situations is part of her daily routine.

Teaching is fun and fulfilling for Sam, who said, "Being sought out for information is exciting, but the most rewarding part is seeing the new generation of nurses coming up. Thirty-four years ago, when I started my nursing career at St. Luke's, I had the honor of working with many older nurses who were my mentors. Now, I am finding myself in that role!"

By setting such a wonderful example, Sam ensures that her patient-centered approach will grow and continue. She has changed how NICU treats newborns and their families; she has changed the chances of survival for the hundreds of Idaho newborns in rural areas that have no way to reach St. Luke's. Each time she climbs into the plane or helicopter, Sam has once again touched her community and been a part of a family's history.

*By Cyndi Blue
Cyndi recently left the Department of Corrections to pursue a law degree and is now in her sophomore year as a political science major.*

Rebecca Evans

"People need to hear the message that you owe the world; you need to let your light shine and become a gift to the world around you." Rebecca Evans leads her life based on this philosophy by dedicating her time and energy to improving the lives of women and children throughout her community.

Rebecca left home at 14, escaping an abusive environment, and set out in the world to turn negative situations into better circumstances by making positive differences. She has played many roles: personal trainer, track runner, Desert Storm veteran, competitive cheerleader, coach, Mrs. Idaho 2004, and currently, director of the Girls on the Run/Girls on Track program, as well as a wife and a mother to three young boys.

Physical fitness and well-being has always been a vital aspect of Rebecca's life. She was a dancer at age 4, a track runner in the 7th grade, and a competitive cheerleader in high school. She transformed her passion into a career by majoring in nutrition and becoming a personal trainer. Currently, Rebecca is the Fitness Consultant for both The Idaho Statesman and local television channel, KTVB.

Exercise is not something she does to stay trim; it's a way of nurturing herself, an approach she calls "Fitness from the Inside Out." Her dedication to health has given her great confidence and makes her feel empowered, even when everything else is out of control. Exercise also helps her maintain "sanity throughout crisis," and crisis she knows.

In addition to struggling in an abusive home as a child, Rebecca's middle son was born disabled, having undergone a total of 26 surgeries before the age of four. But despite difficult challenges, she remains steadfast

by believing in a strong body, strong self, and strong mind. When asked why she feels that self-care and self-worth are so important, Rebecca replied, "When I don't take the time to take care of myself, then I don't feel as good about myself ... self-care makes me a better mom, wife, and friend."

"The nature of women is to want to take care of others," she said. "The best way one can do this is starting with caring for ourselves—mind, body, and soul. I really believe that we must first love who we are, accept who we are, and then become all that we can be ... with the internal process of love and acceptance, we can then help others, especially our children, reach their own potential."

Currently, Rebecca's focus is her non-profit organization, Girls on the Run/Girls on Track, a program for girls from third through ninth grade that involves more than just physical fitness training. Participants discover self-empowerment by learning to focus on mind, body, and soul, and by understanding the fun and self-nurturing aspects of exercise. Each girl is assigned a personal coach for ten weeks who teaches the necessary skills for growing up to be healthy, well-rounded women—emotionally as well as physically. There is a sense of camaraderie among the girls, and the emphasis is on self-care and not on competition.

Rebecca is also committed to mentoring mothers with children who are developmentally disabled. She hands out business cards in doctors' offices and other establishments that serve disabled children, offering help to parents. She had help from other parents when she had difficulties with her own son and feels a strong responsibility to do the same.

There is no handbook telling parents of disabled children what to do or what resources are available, but Rebecca has "been there, done that" and can help lead them in the right direction. Through her reign as Mrs. Idaho International 2004, she was able to bring the issue of developmental disabilities directly to the governor, to be a voice for all mothers who are parenting children with disabilities and do not have the access to campaign directly.

In addition to her many current projects, Rebecca is involved in starting yet another organization to help women. She described this program, Life's Little Solutions, as one for "those who have lost themselves ... women nurture (and mother) everyone—friends, spouses, co-workers, bosses—placing their own needs on the back burner." Life's Little Solutions will help educate, support, and empower women in all their relationships. Through Rebecca's efforts, participants will learn how to best care for themselves as well as for others.

Rebecca not only reminds us of how successful we can be if we strengthen mind, body, and soul, she is a living example of why self-care is essential to happiness, helpfulness, and achievement. She is proof that difficult challenges can be met with hard work and determination.

*By Elizabeth Herbst
Elizabeth is a Boise State student, majoring in social work, with a minor in psychology and multi-ethnic studies. When she's not in class or doing homework, she works with the developmentally disabled in Boise.*





Pamela Lassiter-Stacy

On a plane from Manhattan to Las Vegas, Pamela Lassiter-Stacy sat, laptop at her fingertips, typing a novel she never intended to write. Her protagonist, like herself, was a victim of relationship violence. Struggling to figure out, in her own life, why this had happened to her, Pamela came across the metaphor that changed her character's story, as well as her own. "If you take a live frog and drop it into a pot of boiling water, it will jump out and save itself. If you take that same frog and put it in a pot of cold water and slowly turn up the heat until the water is boiling, it will die."

Pamela realized that she and her character had become this frog: strong, independent women who had somehow tolerated violent relationships.

Six months after that flight, Pamela entered the world of non-profit domestic violence prevention. She founded "A Frog in the Pot," an organization dedicated to preventing violence, one relationship at a time.

A native Idahoan and alumna of Albertson College of Idaho, Pamela used her talents and education to develop three core programs that would offer extensive insight into the prevention of relationship violence as well as the long-term healing process.

She became intricately involved in providing an intensive, customized academic and corporate workshop on how to recognize and respond to early warning signs of violence called "Certified for Life." This workshop gives participants the skills they need to keep themselves safe and provides access to available resources.

It was through the loneliness and isolation of her personal trials with relationship violence that Pamela became inspired to create an organization that would allow other people with similar experiences to find their voice. The program, "Voices: Breaking the Silence of Violence," allows people who have experienced violence to tell their stories through creative writing.

"We tend to emphasize the victimization process more than anything else. We need to move beyond that and create some kind of meaning over the violence, allowing each individual to tell their own story," said Pamela.

Through her research, Pamela has found that violence proceeds exponentially from one generation to another, one relationship to the next. But it stops the same way. It takes one individual to recognize that violence can stop with them.

The message of Pamela's work is unique in that it emphasizes that we are all victims of violence. Because violence is learned behavior, it is everyone's responsibility to stop it. This message of acknowledgement allows men and women who have been the abusers to feel comfortable enough to come forward and get the help they need.

After beginning "A Frog in the Pot," Pamela found she was frustrated by the lack of research available on violence prevention nationwide. She made

the decision to start a separate institute focusing on prevention research and founded the Institute for the Prevention of Relationship Violence.

Pamela knew she would need help, so she went directly to Bob Hoover, president of Albertson College of Idaho, who put her before the annual ACI Board of Trustees. Within 15 minutes, the board voted unanimously to work with her. Albertson College is the current home for the Institute for the Prevention of Relationship Violence and is invaluable as the center of its research. The Institute is dedicated to finding empirical research for academic, public service, and corporate institutions interested in the prevention of relationship violence.

But Pamela's greatest work is not in being the president and founder of these incredibly successful acts of social work. It is the ability to change the lives around her that distinguishes Pamela's work.

"When you are dealing with the magnitude of an issue like violence, it is really easy to feel beat up, like you can never really do enough. It is working directly with people who have been through the process, and have them talk about how their lives have changed as a result of the work that keeps me going," Pamela said.

Having struggled with violence herself, Pamela had the strength and compassion to make a way for those who are presently as lost as she once was. It is through her empathy that she has provided help, looking beyond societal stereotypes to see all those involved as victims of this cycle of violence.

At a conference for a Spanish-speaking audience, Pamela watched the faces of the crowd as she waited for the translator to finish interpreting. It was then she realized, as tears came to her eyes, "issues of relationship violence breach cultural barriers." She hopes that the programs of "A Frog in the Pot," as well as the research of the Institute for the Prevention of Relationship Violence, will one day extend themselves internationally.

Although Pamela Lassiter-Stacy has no trophies, no pages dedicated to her in Idaho history books, and few people even recognize her work, she is changing the histories of individual lives. "We are making little waves," she said. "But these little waves will ripple out into society and possibly change everything."

By Amanda Micheletty
Amanda is an undergraduate student at Boise State majoring in English literature.

*When one thinks that with each
passing second one's life is
shortened, one must profit intensely
from this second; it is the sum of all
the lost or harvested seconds that
makes for a wasted or successful life.*

—Mariama Bâ



Take Back the Night, Domestic Violence Awareness Project | Boise State University, 2005

SUBSTANCE

The Boise State Student Union serves as the center for campus life providing educational, cultural, social, recreational, and leadership programs and services that are integral to the academic experience.

<http://sub.boisestate.edu>



Dr. Jill Gill

"I feel I haven't done much to deserve this," exclaimed Dr. Jill Gill when asked for her response to being selected for the Women Making History recognition. "I feel like a baby compared to the more established women." Jill has been a professor at Boise State for only six years, but she already has developed a reputation as a caring and dedicated human rights organizer.

Born and raised in Seattle, Jill set her goals exceedingly high, even as a young girl. "Well, when I was six, I wanted to be Secretary General of the United Nations." Fortunately for Boise State students, Jill chose to teach instead. After receiving her Ph.D. in American Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania, she went on to teach at the University of Findlay in Ohio. She thought she could make the most difference in a smaller, more intimate teaching atmosphere. However, as time progressed, she realized the university did not emphasize research enough. She interviewed at Boise State and immediately became excited by the high quality educational atmosphere and opportunities for research. She believes it's "important to balance research with teaching and community volunteer work." Her actions reflect her philosophy.

Along with presenting annually at the Boise State University Martin Luther King, Jr. Human Rights Celebration, she has also worked with the Ada County Human Rights Task Force for the past three years. The organization offers compassion to those who have been exposed to hate crimes or incidents, operating on the belief that ignoring hateful occurrences is the same as condoning such actions. In fact, Jill was on the "front lines" organizing and speaking out against Fred Phelps's homophobic message of hate in the summers of 2002 and 2003.

Even with all her outside interests, Jill is most avid about teaching. "I am a teacher at heart. It's not just what I do, it's who I am." One of her main goals in the classroom is to generate dialogue among the students. While she realizes some activists are better at being "hell-raisers," she feels her place within the movement is to simply be a catalyst for social change, which she accomplishes as an instructor.

Jill views these dynamic in-class discussions as a safe but candid way to show students the good, the bad, and the ugly parts of American history. "Teaching history encompasses all that human beings have sought, said, and done. It's a composite of human events, wisdom, and failures." She believes knowledge of the past is more than just knowing what has already happened; this knowledge also helps students understand what is currently happening in the world.

She is always certain not to make the students feel as though she is pushing some kind of personal agenda. "I learn from my students, as well," Jill explained when discussing how these journeys through history with her students affect her. "I'm not fixed. I am an open, moldable slate. Now, that doesn't mean I'm wishy-washy, just open to new ideas."

Of course, no one can spend every minute working. After purchasing

her first house in Boise, Jill was introduced to gardening by a colleague with some spare seeds. "I killed every house plant I ever owned," she said. Still, her gardens have managed to produce a variety of vegetables. For example, she has grown blue, red, and Yukon gold potatoes that when tossed together, "make a terrific red, white, and blue potato salad." She also enjoys theatre and performed a bit in high school, and would like to try out for some small parts in local plays, when she has more time.

Currently, Jill is working on revising her dissertation on the National Council of Churches and the Vietnam War into a book so it can be accessible to anyone interested in the Vietnam War and the peace movement. She completed the first 300 pages this past summer and is applying for a sabbatical to edit and polish her work.

Jill feels optimistic about Idaho's future. She hopes that, one day, our hate crime laws will include discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identification. "I would love for the Idaho constitution to not be amended in regards to marriage," says Jill. Most of all, she would like to see the members of our community continue to grow, learn, and explore questions of race and ethnicity. In addition, she hopes others will also take the time to explore issues of class, and the role class plays in our society.

Through Jill's activism and teaching, she has given Boise a fresh outlook on politics and human relations and made numerous contributions to the community. In return, she has learned much. "That's why I love good conversation and I love teaching," she said. "I'm always learning new things. It opens up opportunities to explore."

by Melissa Trout
Melissa is a sophomore studying journalism and gender theory. She enjoys scarf knitting and videogame playing.



Melody Sky Eisler

Melody Sky Eisler, a Boise intellect, is declaring the power of pink with streaks of pink throughout her hair and in her artwork. She is declaring the power of women and silenced voices through her feminist talk show and Web journal/blog (www.posthumanism.blogspot.com). She is declaring the political power and importance of art by exhibiting her politically charged work throughout the Boise community. If you have not yet met Melody Sky Eisler, I am honored to introduce her.

Melody said she's been vocal ever since she learned to speak; she carries that strong voice and sense of self with her today. Undoubtedly, her family has played a major role in Melody's development. She was raised and home-schooled by progressive parents; her mother, a philosopher and writer, and her father, a world-traveling musician. In addition, she has "incredibly aware and supportive younger twin brothers." Thanks to her upbringing, Melody realized the importance of cultural diversity at a young age and fights for equality as an adult.

Last year, Melody graduated *summa cum laude* from Boise State with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in visual arts with a double major in sculpture and art history, and with a minor in gender studies. Her studies reflect Melody's belief that art and the sociopolitical sphere are inextricably intertwined.

During her academic career at Boise State, Melody received many awards, including scholarships that allowed her to study abroad in Germany and Egypt. She was awarded the 2005 Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Award and was one of the Top Ten Scholars of 2005. Melody was also recognized for her contributions to the community, both on and off campus, and for her leadership skills in the spring of 2005 when she was named a member of the Boise State Founder's Leadership Society.

With so many academic successes, Melody feels that one of her most important accomplishments was her senior project, *The Posthumanist Aesthetic Manifesta: An Artist's Statement for Social Change*, which included the public sculpture *A Portal To Social Change*. She did not just want to write a thesis, or simply have an exhibit; Melody wanted to use her final project as a tool for social change. She saw her senior project as an opportunity to put her beliefs about the relationship between art and politics into practice.

With the support of her advisors and grants from the art and research departments, she accomplished her goal. She placed her nine-foot-tall *A Portal to Social Change* sculpture in front of the doorways to nine local organizations: Boise State's Women's Center and Cultural Center, Snake River Alliance, Your Family Friends and Neighbors, Boise City Arts Commission, TVTV, Northwest Animal Companions, Agency for New Americans, and the Boise Weekly. Visitors to these organizations were encouraged to pass through the "portal" in order to recognize themselves as agents for social change. For Melody and the participants, this was an act of raising awareness about the important work of the organizations and the people who work so diligently to effect change in Boise. *A Portal to Social Change* was also an opportunity for Melody to provide public access to her art.

Another opportunity for public access to Melody's art is through her feminist talk show. She produces and hosts a show called *Our Posthumanist Future* that airs Tuesday nights at 5:00 p.m. on public access Treasure Valley Television (TVTV), Channel 11. During the show, Melody links feminism and human rights as ways to end the oppression of all humans, animals, and the environment. As a lifelong vegan and animal rights activist, Melody considers herself a "voice for the voiceless" and, on *Our Posthumanist Future*, discusses the issues that feminists, as human rights advocates, encounter.

Though her time at Boise State has ended, Melody remains grateful to the university and to her instructors for what she refers to as "an Ivy League education." She stressed the importance of the support she received from her professors and advisors, for whom she is eternally thankful and who she hopes will remain a part of her life. She is very appreciative of the support of her nominators Dr. Ginna Husting, Richard Young, Dr. Peter Lutze, Dr. Louie Simon, Melissa Wintrow, and Dr. Marcy Newman. She credits them with helping her develop her dual role as an artist and an activist. Her most influential mentor, however, is her mother, someone she calls, "the most important feminist heroine who began encouraging me, while I was still young, to start a revolution."

Since graduation, art continues to play a major role in Melody's life. Last summer, she enjoyed an internship at the Boise Art Museum, which led to a position as a curatorial assistant. The position was ideal for her because the museum is committed to the community in the same way she is. She's also been exhibiting her feminist sculptures in fundraisers to benefit women's organizations, and writing grants for local nonprofit organizations.

Melody plans to pursue her MFA and will continue to encourage public discourse by using her artwork to create social change. As Dr. Peter Lutze wrote of Melody, "Her actions stem from deep convictions, not from passing fancies."

By Casey Harper
Casey is a sophomore at Boise State hoping to double major in linguistics and sociology with a minor in gender studies.



Dr. Sona Andrews

Dr. Sona Andrews made history in 2004 when she became Boise State's first female provost. But as she likes to point out, no one makes history alone. Sona says she ended up in college because of her seventh-grade teacher, Mr. Hardy, who turned her on to geography and cartography. He complimented her on a map she had made by saying she'd make a great cartographer some day. Up until then, she hadn't even known that cartography existed, but she knew at that moment it was what she wanted to do.

She says encouragement from her undergraduate professors led her to graduate school. A love of teaching and research—and support along the way—led her to join the faculty ranks and later move in to administration. Sona's career path was anything but traditional; she became provost and vice president for academic affairs at Boise State without ever being a department chair or dean. She was able to make her way up in university administration because, as she said, "people saw I could get things done and had a sensible head on my shoulders."

"People who get to where they are by unusual methods are unusual people," she laughed.

Sona credits as role models her sister, who "always did the right thing," and her mentor at the University of Milwaukee, who taught Sona to constantly take a critical look at herself and to learn from her mistakes.

But perhaps her strongest support and inspiration came from her mother, Vartanoush "Rose" Karentz. Sona smiled as she described her mother as a "really bright and capable individual who has always managed to find solutions."

Sona and her siblings were first-generation college students. Their parents were Armenian, and Sona grew up speaking Armenian. She spent her freshman year in an Armenian college in Beirut, Lebanon. As one of only two American students living in an international dorm, Sona learned about languages, cultures and the world, and was able to travel throughout Europe, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

"It was a fabulous experience," Sona said of her year abroad in the early 1970s. "It was also interesting being a young American woman in a Middle Eastern country. Even though Beirut was a very cosmopolitan city, the climate for women was a sharp contrast to what I had experienced in the United States."

Sona brings her belief in the importance of cultural variety to her position as provost, where she is responsible for advancing the academic and scholarly life of the campus, working in close collaboration with deans, faculty, and staff. "Diversity and inclusiveness are important," she said. "We all benefit from the richness of different individuals approaching the same problem in different ways. It is particularly important for students to be able to function in a world with so many different opinions."

Cheryl Schrader, dean of the College of Engineering, and Stephanie Witt, associate vice president for academic affairs, nominated Sona as a "Woman Making History." They wrote, "Dr. Sona Andrews makes a difference every day. She leads the academic mission of the university with a style and flair uniquely her own ... she models integrity, openness, and collegiality with a little bit of fun thrown in besides."

One way Sona has worked to improve the lives of faculty and their families is a "tenure clock extension" policy that allows faculty starting their families, or those with disability, chronic illness or circumstances beyond their control, to request extra time to earn tenure, a policy that signals the value Boise State places on faculty members and their families.

Sona, a self-described optimist, said she wants to make Boise State University an "absolutely fabulous place for our students to learn and our faculty to work." She wants BSU to be responsive to the needs of the state and to set the standard for higher education and scholarly work not just in Idaho, but nationally.

"I really believe that anything is possible," Sona said. "A truly optimistic person can really stretch the university, can have vision and goals that others may see as impossible, because with an optimist, nothing is impossible."

Her advice for faculty coming up through the academic ranks is to "network, focus on the job you are doing and do it well, get a mentor or more than one, take a critical look at your strengths and weaknesses and work on them, and be yourself." Women especially, she says, don't have to deny who they are to make it in what has traditionally been a "man's world."

Sona also has advice for students: "There are no boundaries for what you can do or what interests you. Study hard, because it does matter what you learn and how well you do. It opens doors for you. And also—maybe I shouldn't say this—determine when the time is right for college; maybe you're not ready or you need to take some time out."

Sona's personal life includes her husband, Joseph Shaker, an endocrinologist who is still living in Milwaukee. Sona and Joseph see each other several times a month, and get a lot of work done in airports and on planes. Their daughter and son are in college. She is close to her parents and siblings. And her personal goals?

"My goal is to be happy and to stay happy, does that sound corny? I want to do things that are worthwhile, that have an impact, and to live for a very long time."

By Anna Fritz
Anna works for Boise State's Office of Communications and Marketing.

*The good we secure for ourselves is
precarious and uncertain until it is
secured for all of us and incorporated
into our common life.*

—Jane Addams

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Wendy Morgan

Wendy Morgan finds herself far from where she was born and raised in Middleboro, Massachusetts, but Boise, Idaho, has become her second home. And she does not intend to leave for some time. She received her Master's degree in social work from Boise State University and, through her efforts with the Idaho Women's Network (IWN), she is helping to ensure that Idaho moves towards more progressive and accepting values.

As Community Organizing Director at the IWN, Wendy focuses on legislation analysis, grassroots mobilization, and research and message development. She has worked to shift the approach of the IWN from that of a single-issue organization to an organization working within a true human rights framework. The human rights framework enables Wendy to analyze which rights are being denied women, families, and communities in Idaho. Further, this approach allows her to examine legislative policies in terms of how they will protect, promote, and fulfill these human rights.

In her work with the IWN, Wendy alters the way social justice is discussed, pursued, and accomplished. Often, the focal point for activists is on the policies they find regressive or bad for Idahoans, so their work is reactionary. She encourages her associates to fully understand what they represent and to assess all work based on human rights; this approach has allowed her to better promote positive and progressive policy changes. Her straightforward philosophy is, "Don't beg for the rights you want, but demand fulfillment of the rights that are already yours."

Wendy feels fortunate to be able to pursue human rights development as a career. She believes it would have been impossible for her to do this work full-time if it were not for the New Voices Fellowship she received in 2002. This award is given out to fifteen finalists in the U.S. each year and provides financial support for the recipients in their efforts for two years. This fellowship gave Wendy the opportunity to begin her work with the IWN as the Project Organizer for the Idaho Reproductive Rights Project, an initiative created to promote and protect the reproductive rights of women throughout the state.

In 2002, Wendy met her fellowship mentor, Krishanti Dharmaraj, who continues to teach Wendy new methods in human rights education and policy development. Through her work with Krishanti, Wendy has become a Human Rights Trainer. As a trainer, she has worked with multiple organizations to rethink and shift from single-issue advocacy to a more encompassing human rights activism. These small changes result in a large alteration of how our community views public policy.

Grassroots projects are Wendy's favorite part of human rights organizing. Through community-based endeavors, she is able to apply her academic knowledge in the political arena. While the IWN works closely with elected officials, Wendy finds organizing with community members to be the most satisfying. She assists people from all over Idaho in interpreting laws and policies so they can understand how policy affects their everyday lives; she helps demystify the political and legislative processes. For example, Wendy noted, "Most people don't even know that they can set up appointments to talk to their policymakers and congressperson face-to-face."

In addition to statewide community organizing, Wendy recently helped

to establish a Boise State student organization called the Organization for Gender Equality and Education (OGEE). As a result, she has been successful in expanding her message of human rights advocacy to the campus community.

While Wendy believes that politics are personal, she still wants to protect the rights of all marginalized people, not just work on those policies that would directly affect her. "You need to be a voice for all people who cannot be as loud as they want to be. Speak when others cannot. We have to change the playing field to make everyone heard, not just the wealthy or powerful," she said.

Although her enthusiasm for her work is infectious among her peers, Wendy admits it can sometimes be a challenge working with a progressive organization in a state that is often viewed as "conservative." She said, "I am not convinced that far right conservatives outnumber the amount of moderates or even progressive people [in Idaho]. They just yell louder and attempt to take the moral high ground."

According to Wendy, using a human rights framework and perspective, both in the political arena and in one's personal life, is the key to moral living and to living in a better world. She is inclusive of all people regardless of skin color, religion, or sexual orientation. She strives to teach people to respect and help each other. Her goal is that Idahoans learn to actually embrace a community that looks different than it did twenty years ago—not just tolerate those who are different.

Wendy takes great pleasure in her work with the Idaho Women's Network: "I continue to be excited to work for proactive policies that lessen poverty, discrimination, and violence in Idaho." While it is her work to help others accomplish political goals, they have also helped her in fulfilling some of her dreams. And while Wendy knows it takes time to make positive social changes, her work has already contributed to making Idaho a more welcoming place for all people.

*by Melissa Trout
Melissa is a sophomore studying journalism and gender theory. She enjoys scarf knitting and videogame playing.*

Dr. Amy Moll

Dr. Amy Moll looks at home in her brightly lit office in the Engineering and Technology Building at Boise State University. She sits behind a large desk, facing a picture window, an excellent view of the Boise Foothills where she and her husband, Dr. Bill Knowlton, also a professor of engineering, like to take their two dogs hiking. As we speak, she leaves her office door wide open, a reflection of her welcoming personality.

As an undergrad in Illinois, Amy began her journey in engineering. "I never felt like I always knew what I wanted to be. It was always kind of what interested me ... I don't think there was a moment when I said okay, this is the right career: 'ta daa!' It was 'does this make sense now, am I enjoying it?'" Certainly, Amy must have enjoyed engineering because she went on to earn her Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from the University of California at Berkeley.

When Amy joined Boise State's Engineering College as an assistant professor six years ago, the program was just beginning. She and husband, Bill, worked together to create the Materials Science program. "Six years ago there wasn't a program here," Amy said. "Being able to [build an engineering program] in that amount of time—what a lot of fun, actually!" Then she added with a smile, "and a good accomplishment."

Contrary to the popular "Dilbert" engineer stereotype or "nerds sitting in a corner," as Amy called it, engineering is a creative field. "You get to apply your knowledge. Obviously you've got to tolerate math and get through it—enjoy sciences and things like that [but] there's a lot of creativity." It's the creative opportunities that Amy was especially drawn to in materials science. "Everything is materials science. In everything you do, you use a material."

Amy's creativity earned her and her department the largest single grant received by Boise State in fiscal year 2005. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, an organization affiliated with the U.S. Department of



Defense, granted Amy \$1.6 million for "Advanced Processing Techniques for Fabrication of 3-D Microstructures for Future Electronic Devices."

The grant is for research to develop and test microchips that can be stacked vertically instead of spread out in a single layer. The innovation would increase the functionality and reduce the size of electronic devices. One application would be to create hand-held devices for checking luggage for explosives in air terminals, replacing the current machines that are large and immobile. But Amy is not working on the project by herself. The grant will provide hands-on research experience for her undergraduate and graduate engineering students. It's not just about working on her own "crazy" ideas. "There's a dual focus here [at Boise State] on building research programs, but also a strong focus on quality undergraduate programs," she said.

For Amy the most important aspect of teaching is making learning fun for her students as well as for herself. Though she enjoys teaching every class, she especially loves the freshman-level engineering courses where she gets to introduce students to what engineering really is and "let 'em have some fun." To learn the physics of motion, her students assemble cars made out of mousetraps. "They have to build the car [and] compete for distance. And I sneak in some math and other things with it," she said.

The "peanut butter cracker" manufacturing project is another fun activity for Amy's students. They get to design and run a process to make peanut butter crackers. "So there's multiple ways you can do this, right?" Amy asked, her eyes wide. "After they do this we bring in operators and each group has ten minutes to train the operators and then we run the process for ten minutes. We see who can turn a profit." Last year's operators were: BSU Provost, Sona Andrews; Vice President of Finance, Stacy Pearson; Vice President of Academic Affairs, Stephanie Witt; and Dean of Engineering, Cheryl Schrader. "It was very entertaining," Amy said of the competition.

Since Amy's arrival on the Boise State campus, she has played an important role in hiring many of the women who work on the faculty in the department. As a result, BSU has one of the highest concentrations of female engineering leaders in the country, including the dean, associate dean, and several other faculty positions. Currently, 41% of the graduate students in the Materials Science and Engineering program are women and, as chair of the department, Amy continues to actively recruit and encourage others to consider engineering as a career.

According to Amy, the percentage of women in engineering has remained fairly static at 15-20%, while the number of women in other fields, like medicine and business, is increasing. "[Engineering] is not just this nerdy thing. It's an interesting and creative field, and there's a heck of a lot you can do to help humanity."

At the end of the interview Amy asked me why I wasn't studying to be an engineer. "I'm not into math," I said.

"You see, that's the impression," she said, explaining that mathematics is just one of the many tools engineers use. She leaned forward over the desk, looking at me intensely—"It's not too late."

*by Ginny Eggleston
Ginny is an English major at Boise State.*



Sister Betty Schumacher

As the eldest of ten children, Sister Betty Schumacher has been a leader, a teacher, and a person who has cared deeply about others since childhood. Sister Betty's kind nature and generous spirit are reflected in her deep commitment to the Catholic Church and her Benedictine community. As a member of this community, she strives to live out the Rule of St. Benedict: "Now is the time to place all your energies, your talents, and your creative abilities in the service of Christ to help build up the reign of God" (Prologue).

After graduating from high school, Sister Betty entered the Monastery of St. Gertrude, where she joined the Benedictine Sisters in Cottonwood, Idaho. She said, "I wanted to share in what they had. They are known for their gift of hospitality and sense of community."

Sister Betty pursued her Bachelor's degree at the University of Idaho and graduated with a degree in elementary education and special education. She went on to obtain two Master's degrees at Seattle University; one in ministry, the other in counseling.

Professionally, Sister Betty taught in Catholic schools at both the elementary and middle school levels. Nominator and friend, Lorry Roberts, described Sister Betty's enthusiasm for teaching, "She loved to teach and to watch the excitement that beamed on the children's faces as they learned a new skill, gained a new insight, and celebrated their accomplishments."

As a teacher, Sister Betty was especially sensitive to the needs of children with developmental disabilities. In the early 1970s, in collaboration with the Catholic Education Office in Boise, and the leaders of All Saint's Episcopal Church, she helped to organize a religious education program for children with special needs.

Sister Betty described her call to special education, "I was drawn to Special Education as I felt I had something to offer and a great deal to learn from children living with disabilities. I believe that there are many things special needs children, youth, and adults can accomplish in life and if I can, in any way, help them to realize their potential or dreams on some level, then I want to be a part of that process."

After 12 years of working in Catholic schools as a teacher and principal, Sister Betty transitioned into parish ministry. She has served as a Pastoral Associate in Idaho and Washington. Her recent parish ministry included being one of the first Parish Life Directors for the Diocese of Boise. When reflecting upon her parish experience, she said, "It is always my hope that everyone feels welcome in the parish community, that they experience a sense of belonging and are called by name." She continued, "I stand in awe when I think of the privilege I have to walk with others in the journey of faith."

Sister Betty's appreciation for diversity has been an integral part of her parish work. She strives to create a sense of community for all members of each parish in which she works. Some of the programs she has

designed include support groups and workshops for those dealing with grief. Sister Betty also helped to develop a church support system for those who are living with, or are affected by, HIV/AIDS.

"When we look at the way Jesus reached out to all people, it didn't matter who they were or what they did," she said. "The mission of the Catholic Church is to teach, to serve and minister as Jesus did. Therefore, we are called to serve diverse populations. Jesus taught inclusiveness, he sought out the people on the margins. If we say we are His followers then we are to do the same.... When we minister to diverse populations, we see and experience how rich our church can be and is."

Another example of Sister's Betty devotion to promoting diversity is a project she worked on with Habitat for Humanity in Bellevue, Washington, as well as in Boise. Though Habitat for Humanity is a Christian organization, it welcomes volunteers from all faith traditions. In 2001, shortly after September 11th, Habitat for Humanity embarked on its first multi-faith build with the help of Sister Betty. Volunteers from Sacred Heart Church in Bellevue began to meet with volunteers from varying Christian denominations and Muslim and Jewish congregations. Sister Betty said of the experience, "Through this process we learned about the beliefs, rituals, and customs of one another's faith. After the house was built, we left with a sense of richness of sharing in something much bigger than ourselves."

In addition to fostering diversity, Sister Betty helps women to recognize and use their gifts within a faith tradition. Lorry Roberts said, "Her focus has always been on strengthening the role of women in the Catholic Church." Sister Betty has facilitated retreats not only for women who are Catholic, but also for women within the Methodist and Presbyterian faiths. She has regularly formed spirituality groups for women by providing an opportunity for them to gather with one another to reflect upon and learn more about their faith and to celebrate it. She said of women in the church, "Women bring wonderful gifts to a community and when these gifts are combined with the gifts of the leadership within a parish, the parish becomes a richer place."

Lorry Roberts noted, "Sister Betty is one of the first women in the Catholic Church in Idaho to accept the position of Parish Life Director, which means she was responsible for all parish activities. As a leader in the church, she has served as a role model for others by affirming that there is a place for girls and women within the Church."

In July of 2005, Bishop Michael Driscoll appointed Sister Betty to the position of Director of Education Ministries for the Diocese of Boise. Bishop Driscoll said, "Sister Betty is very well qualified for this position. She has a deep commitment to Catholic formation and education, and I know that under her direction our education ministries will continue to help Idaho Catholics of all ages grow in their faith."

Indeed, it is Sister Betty's commitment to promoting growth in herself and others that compels her in her work. She believes that we are each blessed with gifts, and those gifts are meant to be shared with one another. For Sister Betty, this is not just a philosophy, but the way she leads her life.

*Interviewed by Lael Hollingsworth
Written by Heather Strempe-Durgin*

*How wonderful it is that
nobody need wait a single
moment before starting to
improve the world.*

--Anne Frank

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gender equality
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Yolanda Martinez

As I walked through the doors of the Women Of Color Alliance (WOCA), I was greeted warmly by Yolanda Martinez, a well-dressed woman who exudes passion and kindness. Immediately, a statement about Yolanda, composed by the women of WOCA, popped into my head: "Many of us are thankful to be in the presence of Yolanda Martinez, a strong woman, a leader, a Latina sister, a visionary." Yolanda did not disappoint.

Yolanda Martinez was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Whittier, California. No one told Yolanda she was poor, but she realized at a young age that there were differences between her and other children. She remembers opening her sack lunch to find a burrito, while the majority of children around her opened theirs to sandwiches and cookies.

At the age of six, Yolanda began to see the divisions and barriers of class and language. Her first language was Spanish and, because of her accent, she was placed in a speech class. This left Yolanda frustrated and disconnected; she felt as if she had lost her voice at school. Due to this experience, she avoided teaching her own children Spanish.

At home, Yolanda reclaimed her voice. There, she felt loved and connected. Growing up in a large, close family, she learned much from her family's stories. Her mother, Sabina Duarte, was her greatest influence growing up. Yolanda stated, "I do see a lot of her in myself."

As a little girl, Yolanda's mother taught her about the importance of respect. Her mother believed that all people should be respected; if someone disrespects you, she said, they don't need to be a part of your life. Yolanda has held this as a core belief throughout her life.

At seventeen, Yolanda left school and began a family of her own with husband, Paul. She was a homemaker and stayed very busy raising the four children she had with Paul, who ran his own landscaping business at the time. In 1981, Yolanda and her family came to Boise to visit friends and fell in love with the city. They sold their business and moved to Boise. Despite initial difficulties, the couple was able to rebuild their landscaping company and Yolanda stayed busy with their children.

After her children left home, except for her youngest who is now seventeen, Yolanda felt a yearning to be around women who share her culture and hear her own language. She saw an ad for a Latin women's writing group and, although Yolanda has never considered herself a writer, she went. The group met to share their own stories of triumph and adversity and, eventually, they published a combined poetry book. While reading through the group's publication, Yolanda felt herself drawn to the pieces by group member, Sonya Rosario.

Yolanda was touched by Sonya's works and, today, recalls feeling a great need for Sonya in her life, before she ever met her. When the opportunity arose, she was excited to attend an internal oppression workshop taught by Sonya through WOCA. Soon after, Yolanda began volunteering at WOCA as a bookkeeper, but has done much more than keeping track of finances.

Yolanda has become a trainer, teaching a workshop called "Internalized Racial Oppression," which deals with the myths that people of color might have about other people of color. This workshop also encourages discussion of historical racism in the United States and how people of color are played against one another by the dominant culture. As a WOCA trainer, Yolanda travels all over Idaho to hear the stories of women living in rural areas, who are shaking up their communities.

In addition to her work with WOCA, Yolanda has worked with the Peoples' Institute of Survival and Beyond, a New Orleans-based organization that promotes the elimination of racism in the U.S. and internationally. Yolanda also sits on the board of directors of the Idaho Hispanic Caucus, a Latino political watchdog organization, and serves on the committee of the Idaho Network to End Domestic Violence and Trafficking Against Immigrants.

Yolanda feels like she has finally found the way to be heard. She stated, "I believe I have become what was already there. I want to give that to other women." Yolanda will continue her involvement with WOCA, as well as working in the Hispanic community. She also wants to work with women and adolescents as a counselor and would like to begin to teach about domestic violence. Yolanda said, "There's so much I want to do, I just can't choose!"

Happily, Yolanda has accomplished two major personal goals. One was having the opportunity to go back to school, which she has accomplished by adventuring to colleges and learning as a student in workshops. The other was having a traditional Mexican wedding with her husband of thirty-four years, which took place this past twenty-fifth of June.

Yolanda's spirit shines through to others, as nominator Sonya said, "I am often in awe of her skills and talent that she, herself, is unaware of. She is not only a wife and mother, she is much more to us who know her and who have come to love her and call her *hermana* (sister)."

*By Casey Harper
Casey is a sophomore at Boise State hoping to double major in linguistics and sociology with a minor in gender studies.*



Kara Bracia

As the Service-Learning Coordinator at Boise State, and through her own volunteer work, on and off campus, Kara Bracia spends a lot of time giving back. And giving involves teaching others how to give back, too.

Kara's dedication to the Service-Learning program stems from her personal experiences as a volunteer. After she graduated from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, with a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental studies, she was trying to figure out what to do with the rest of her life. She decided on joining VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) and, through that program, became a volunteer in a domestic violence shelter in Moab, Utah.

In the beginning of her VISTA service, Kara worked regular hours at the shelter and had a pool of volunteers to help cover shifts but, as time

went on, the number of people in the pool began to diminish. Kara's workload doubled. She became tired and discouraged. And eventually, due to lack of funds and volunteers, the shelter had to close its doors. On her way home from the shelter one day, she passed people in their homes, "just sitting there watching TV." The question that kept coming back was: "How can we get people to become more involved?" She wanted to figure out a way to get people off their couches and into their communities.

In her role as the Service-Learning Coordinator, it's her job to do just that—get people out of the living room and into the community. Since 2000, when Kara assumed the position, she has promoted civic engagement at Boise State and inspired many students through the Service-Learning program. This year, over 1,800 Service-Learning students are out there making a difference on and off campus.

The Service-Learning Program matches students with non-profit organizations such as the Boise State Women's Center, local schools, and the Idaho State Veteran's Home to name just a few of the many programs. Whether it's writing an article, planning an event, tutoring, or fulfilling some other need, young men and women help provide service while applying course theory to community problems. Service-Learning is different from interning in that participation is intended to address community issues, as well as help students learn course material.

Kara's position also includes coordinating with the many departments across campus to match Service-Learning opportunities to specific coursework. According to one of her nominators, Dr. Denice Goodrich-Liley of the Boise State School of Social Work, Kara "has the highest level of commitment to making Service-Learning work for all who are involved."

According to Kara, the success of Service-Learning is the result of the dedicated members of her student staff. They are "indispensable . . . A lot of what makes this program work is good student staff." In her role as supervisor, she fosters leadership and helps build professional skills. A former student employee and one of Kara's nominators, Clay Cox, wrote, "Kara believes that the students she works with can change the world."

In addition to her work in the Service-Learning program, Kara finds time to continue her own service to others. On campus, she serves on the Women's Center Advisory Board and participates in the Returning Women's Mentoring Program. As a mentor, she helps women who have had a significant break in their formal schooling to acclimate to college life. She thinks it's "important to not only focus on social change, but also to reach out and work directly with individuals." She is also a member of the Student Leadership Development Committee, a group dedicated to preparing students for leadership roles, and she is on the Family Studies Initiative Advisory Board for a research group focused on improving relationships between children and their families throughout Idaho.

Off campus, Kara serves on the Board of the Idaho Women's Network, an organization that promotes human rights through community organizing, advocacy, and education.

Despite her commitments to so many organizations, Kara is currently focused on getting the word out on the benefits of participating in the Service-Learning Program. Nominator Clay Cox related his feelings on the power of the Service-Learning experience: "I know students who have not only changed their own lives, but have positively impacted the lives of community members through involvement with Service-Learning."

When asked what her dreams for the future are, Kara said simply, "For more people to realize the value of Service-Learning as a teaching method and a learning experience."

Kara asserts that, in addition to the students and the organizations they serve, she, too, is rewarded by Service-Learning. For her, the most gratifying aspect of her job is hearing about students who, through participation in the Service-Learning program, are truly inspired to get involved, changing their own lives and the lives of others through the simple, yet powerful act of giving. Because of her encouragement and support, Boise State students are getting off their couches and into the community.

*By Elizabeth Herbst
Elizabeth is a Boise State student, majoring in social work, with a minor in psychology and multi-ethnic studies. When she's not in class or doing homework, she works with the developmentally disabled in Boise.*



Kali Kurdy

"I think you have to educate kids in a lot of different ways ... academics is just one way," said Kali Kurdy as we sat in her classroom at Borah High. Though the setting looks standard, certain things are out of place. The desks, for example, are not arranged in tidy rows. They are spread around in a relaxed, if disorganized, manner. The decor reflects the different curricula Kali teaches. There are posters about literature, economic and international issues. On the blackboard are notes about Piaget, a scientist known for his studies on the cognitive development of children.

The room is gigantic. Its bare floor and high ceiling create a feeling of smallness in a big world. The space dwarfs Kali's small frame, but as soon as we begin the interview, I can tell only a classroom of this size can accommodate a teacher like Kali Kurdy.

Kali boasts a vita in real-life experience that would rival any university professor's. She went to Russia in 1990 as a representative for Junior Achievement—a program she piloted. That trip inspired one of her most successful programs—Economic Summit.

"I went over there with a big group of people to introduce market economics to Russian schools. When I came back, I was just so taken by the fact my kids didn't know where Russia was. They didn't know what I was talking about. They had no idea of the world outside of this classroom and this community ... so a friend of mine and I started this little classroom project."

Economic Summit started with Borah High students, but later, Kali spoke to a teacher at Capitol High about the project, and Capitol became involved. After that, a friend of a friend convinced Kali to apply for the NASDAQ National Teaching Award with her Economic Summit curriculum. She won both the regional and national titles.

Since winning those titles, Kali's program has spread from about 300 students per year in one high school to 10 to 15 thousand kids per year in five or six states. But that's not all. Russia has two Economic Summits per year with students in Moscow. She said, "[Economic Summit] has really grown into something that, educationally, is very sound and significant ... most of us [teachers] don't see our ideas spread outside of our classroom."

Winning the NASDAQ National Teaching Award created even more opportunities for Kali. She traveled to Croatia to present her Economic Summit project, and to Romania where she presented her published international economic curriculum. "Globalization is here to stay," she said. "It is on the tongue of almost anybody in business or national economics. I was a little bit—maybe—in front of the game."

Though Economic Summit has been quite successful, Kali's best experience teaching was with the Discover Idaho Program which she and her husband, Michael, a now retired Borah High teacher, developed. For this program, they team-taught Borah seniors who wanted experience

beyond the classroom. "We allowed them to study anything they wanted to, as long as it related to the state of Idaho."

Kali said she and her husband acted as facilitators, helping to direct the project, but it was the students who were in control. "They did all the research," she said. With another fellow Borah teacher, they ran the program for 10 years until curriculum rule changes brought it to a halt. "Economics all had to be at the same place at the same time across the city. There's a value in that, but programs like Discover Idaho sort of get left behind."

While Discover Idaho was in its prime, the annual budget was \$10,000 a year. "We [the teachers and students] raised every bit of the money through sales. We used economics to start businesses [and] to operate events to raise money ... the kids knew when they signed up for Discover Idaho they were signing up for a rigorous special study and a lot of outside-of-the-school work. But they saw it as an honor and an opportunity, an exciting thing to do in their last year at school."

One of the final Discover Idaho projects involved the study of rural vs. urban societies in Idaho. "We wrote a 100-page book on whether or not rural Idaho should be saved. Should we put money into saving it, or should we just let it go? They went to Cascade the last week of school and did their presentation to the Idaho Rural Partnership ... it was a fabulous thing."

Though academics are important to Kali, sports are also a big part of her life. She coaches the Borah golf team now, but in the past she was a serious competitor in her own right. She started golfing when she was nine. "I made it a personal goal to win the state amateur championship. During my teens I was second six times." Finally, she won state at age 22. "It was not just a part of my life, it was my life. I managed to win three times in a row, then got pregnant, focused on my family and quit playing competitively."

Though Kali's successes as a teacher and coach have been numerous, personally she is a dedicated wife and mother of one daughter, Jennifer. She and husband, Michael, enjoy gardening, visiting their cabin in McCall, and attending as many Borah student events as possible.

As the next group of students piled into Kali's expansive classroom and our time together drew to a close, I reluctantly gathered my materials to leave. "I've had a great time," she said, referring to her career. "I've felt fortunate."

Kali's students also feel fortunate to have had such an influential teacher. Nominator and former student, Josie Evans, wrote of Kali, "Just like any college professor, this high school teacher expands her students' minds, and they can never go back."

by Ginny Eggleston
Ginny is an English major at Boise State.

You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something,

build a new model that makes the

existing model obsolete.

--Buckminster Fuller

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Jennifer Edwards

Jennifer Edwards, a Boise State undergraduate, has always had a passion for human rights. In fact, she was so passionate that, when she began her higher education, she went through the process to create her own major in Human Rights Studies by combining history, sociology, and literature courses.

Jennifer first remembers being exposed to the topic of human rights in the late 1980s when the story of Ryan White was well publicized on the news. White was a teenager who contracted HIV from a blood transplant and was eventually, along with his family, forced out of his hometown. Jennifer educated herself about HIV/AIDS and encouraged her peers to do the same. She still retains that same fervent desire for research and believes that only through knowledge can we create a space for true equality.

"At first I wondered how I fit into this picture," Jennifer said, "then I realized I create my own space for change." One way she creates her own space for change is through hosting "Sociology Salon." The salons bring together educators and students in a casual setting to discuss social issues. Dr. Ginna Husting, professor of sociology, hosted the first salon in the fall of 2004; it consisted of fewer than ten people, primarily graduate students. Jennifer was invited and immediately fell in love with the warm, informal, and highly educational atmosphere.

Now, she arranges salons every month at various Boise restaurants and, as a single mom, does her best to schedule the gatherings in child-friendly locations. Sociology Salon has become very popular, with group sizes ranging from four to twenty people. There have even been special requests to address specific topics, but Jennifer prefers open-ended conversations that flow more naturally. She believes her place is not to moderate discussion, but rather to assist in starting the dialogue.

Jennifer has also developed a following for "A Different Vision," her online blog. Though not regularly updated, her writing has attracted many people from various backgrounds to engage in discussion through her writing. This is yet another way she addresses a range of issues and allows for an exchange of ideas. While she may not always agree with what others say, she respects their right to voice their opinions. Jennifer says she often comes away from such discussions with greater understanding and a desire to further educate herself and cement her own belief systems. She thinks such dialogue is crucial and, one day, would like to bring it with her into the classroom as a teacher.

In addition to her blog and salons, Jennifer is a poet. Mostly political and specifically feminist in nature, her work is inspired by Adrienne Rich and Carolyn Forché. She strings words and images together to create a distinct vision of the beauty, sadness, and hunger in humankind. She believes poetry is a form of activism and has relevance beyond the aesthetics of the words themselves. "[Poetry] has a place and power," she said.

A military "brat" growing up, Jennifer continued a military tradition and served in the Navy for a number of years. It may be because of these experiences traveling the world and being surrounded by diverse cultures, that she considers herself more than just Idahoan or American, she sees herself as a "global citizen." She laments the fact that many Americans find it difficult to focus on events that do not directly impact their lives. "I belong to this world and have to act as such," Jennifer remarked. Her actions support her words: many of the issues she addresses in her activism

do not directly concern her, but they are moral issues nonetheless.

According to Jennifer, it is her education and desire to learn at Boise State that has helped her understand and grow in the world. She believes, "Education is critical. It makes human rights more than just a bandage, but a true framework of understanding."

Often, we see the perils of human rights violations only after they've already occurred. Jennifer also believes that having a deeper awareness of politics, history, and social conditions allows us to piece together how these violations can happen. This understanding is crucial if we wish to identify and prevent human rights violations in the future and create social systems that support justice and equality for all people.

In her free time, Jennifer enjoys reading poetry and the journals of other human rights activists. She has also spent much of her time researching the most suitable graduate school for her needs with the help of the McNair Program, a program that encourages low income or first-generation undergraduate college students to pursue graduate degrees.

The focus of Jennifer's free time is on her 11-year-old son, Julian. They enjoy reading, biking, and swimming together and have the discussions that she sees as so crucial in development. "We discuss many things together," she said, "and he knows he can come to me and talk about anything he questions, so that is very nice. I also encourage him to question his own thinking as I think this is one of the most critical things anyone can do for growth as a human being."

Ultimately, what Jennifer values most in the activist movement is the power of the individual. "Every person has some power. You can make a difference [in the future], even if it seems you haven't made a difference now."

*by Melissa Trout
Melissa is a sophomore studying journalism and gender theory. She enjoys scarf knitting and videogame playing.*



Ro Parker

Ro Parker makes people uncomfortable.

Actually, she encourages us to make ourselves uncomfortable by compelling us to challenge our assumptions about those whose lifestyles or cultures are different from our own, by questioning the cultural status quo, and by confronting oppression on a personal level.

Ro, the Cultural Center Coordinator at Boise State for nearly three years, believes that it's crucial to talk about our differences, and not to consider any subject off-limits. "It's an issue of human rights," she said. "It's really about understanding that it's another human being you're dealing with. We need to be aware that people come from different places, and we can't place our values onto them—we don't learn very much unless we put ourselves outside our own boundaries."

And learning inside a safe and friendly environment is one of the reasons the Cultural Center exists. Ro describes the Center as very welcoming,

and stresses, "We're here to support any student who walks through our doors and wants to find out more information, whether it's about another culture, or their own culture, or who wants to participate in the [Diversity Round Table] discussions or volunteer." Boise State staff and faculty, as well as the public, are also invited.

The Center supports 17 student organizations, including BGLAD (bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgendered students), the Black Student Alliance, Filipino-American Student Organization, and Organizacion de Estudiantes—Latino-Americanos (OELA), though not all students who utilize the Center's services belong to an organization.

Ro wants to clarify what the Center is *not*: It is not a museum and, although the Center does advocate for marginalized students, it is not only for students of color. Ro has been approached by students and faculty who have asked her why white students are included in the Center's activities, and her answer to them is simply that the Center has to be inclusive. "Just because we feel we've been marginalized, doesn't mean we do it back," she said.

One program that Ro is particularly proud of is the Tunnel of Oppression. The Tunnel, which originated 10 years ago in Illinois, walks audience members through various scenarios depicting graphic acts of oppression inflicted against a particular person or group of people. She had been trying to bring the Tunnel to the Boise State campus for two years and, in November of 2005, finally succeeded. "I wanted it to be like walking in somebody else's shoes. I didn't want [the audience] to be peeking into certain rooms, and seeing the oppression—I wanted them to be smack in the middle—I wanted them to *feel* it," she said.

Her two biggest fears concerning the Tunnel were that either no one would attend, or people would be so offended they would complain to administrators, who would ban the event. She needn't have worried—the event was so popular, people were turned away, and the program was so well-received that Ro hopes this year to expand its run from one day to three.

Ro credits her family with fueling her passion for social activism. "I grew up questioning everything I've ever been told, because my parents told me, 'Question teachers, question us,' and, as a result, I didn't have a very easy time growing up, because I was constantly questioning everything and getting into problems. And now I'm questioning things in this job and asking students to do it, as well." Ro continues to ask why marginalized populations are often encouraged to remain silent in order that others, particularly those in the dominant culture, can remain comfortable.

Even as a young girl, she chose to make a school administrator uncomfortable, rather than compromise her family, her culture, and herself. She said, "My older sister was part of a very militant '70s movement in college with Chicano Power. I remember at 12 years old, having a jacket with a big brown fist on it that said 'Chicano Power,' and our principal telling me to take it off, and I said, 'I can't take it off.' I felt that if I took it off, it was somehow letting my family down, it was letting *me* down."

Ro continues to lead by example by consistently forcing herself outside her own comfort zone. In February, 2004, she participated in *The Vagina Monologues*, and remembers being extremely uncomfortable. But with some coaching from director, Kathy Simpson, Ro found herself saying things she never thought she'd be able to—in front of an audience.

Recently, Ro began the uncomfortable process of acknowledging her role in perpetuating heterosexism, and continually works toward raising her consciousness when it comes to GLBT issues. Using a term coined by a colleague to describe her present state, she said, "I'm a recovering homophobic. I am fully aware of my privilege as a heterosexual." She believes that it's important for us to admit that we're all in some sort of cultural recovery, be it from homophobia, racism, sexism or any of the belief systems that divide us and, if anything is to change, we must find the courage to ask questions and learn from one another.

"We should be okay in asking the questions that we want to ask without the fear of being labeled ignorant or racist," said Ro. "And we shouldn't be offended to have people call us on our misconceptions—we have to question our own value systems in order to move forward."

*By Dené Breakfield
Dené lives in Boise with her children, cats, and dog.*



Jan Bennetts

In her position as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the Ada County Prosecutor's Office, Jan Bennetts works diligently in assisting victims of domestic violence to reclaim their independence and gain control of their lives. As the head of the Domestic Violence Unit, she enjoys helping others and sharing her knowledge to make Idaho a safer place for everyone.

Raised in the small town of Challis, Idaho, Jan knew her place in life was to make a difference and work in a public service oriented career. "I'm passionate about people," she said. After attending the University of Idaho, where she received her Bachelor's degree in English with a pre-law emphasis, she continued her academic career at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, where she graduated with a Juris Doctorate degree. Still, she always knew she would return to Idaho one day. That day came when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals offered her a clerkship based in Boise.

As a prosecutor, a primary goal for Jan was changing the system so victims of assault could get the help they required more easily. Her supervisor hoped to create a program that would make the process of testifying safer and less stressful for victims. Jan was put in charge of that program and, in September of 2004, The Domestic Violence Case Orientation and Resource Program (DV CORP) was created.

One important intention of DV CORP is to hold offenders accountable for their actions. However, the program more immediately provides victims with the proper safety and legal information so they can make the most well-informed choices for themselves, as well as for their families. One of Jan's three nominators, Bonnie Glick, describes Jan's work: "Her efforts include educating women, empowering them within their relationships, and helping them develop self-advocacy as well as doing everything within her power to prevent their re-victimization in the criminal justice system." Jan is proud of her work with DV CORP and has received much positive feedback from the families she has helped.

In addition to her work with DV CORP, Jan has spent countless hours training law enforcement officers, victim advocates, prosecutors, and police dispatchers, both locally and in other jurisdictions, on domestic violence and how to best serve victims.

With such dedication, it's easy to see how Jan could easily lose herself in her work. A self-described "workaholic," she confessed that sometimes the job can be stressful, but she knows she's up to the challenge and feels deeply gratified knowing that she is giving the victims she serves the opportunity to regain control of their lives.

While Jan takes great pride in what she does, she also understands that there are professional boundaries she cannot cross. She is known for kindness while carrying herself with remarkable professional integrity. "When it's so personal you lose objectivity, then it's a problem," she said. "I care about the people I work with. I want to see the best for them." It is important to her that she never becomes too aggressive and that she continues to allow victims to make these tough decisions on their own terms. The result of her approach, according to many people, means more empowerment for victims and less intimidation.

The little free time Jan allows herself is often spent outdoors. When the weather is right, she loves taking long walks along the Greenbelt. She also enjoys running and exercising, activities that help provide the energizing boost she needs for her highly demanding career.

Currently, Jan is collaborating on creating a Justice Center for Ada County that will help meet the needs of child abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence victims. She envisions a single location where medical, legal, emotional, and other resources converge. Such a center will make it so victims of abuse will not have to travel as much and can therefore better cope with trauma and focus on healing.

Even with all she has accomplished to help piece other peoples' lives together, Jan Bennetts remains humble about being chosen as an example of Women Making History. "I am so honored," she said. "I don't feel that I deserve this." In fact, Jan finds herself impressed by how victims of abuse can overcome adversity. She is moved by "watching the courage and depth of emotion it takes to make safe decisions. The choice is up to them. They're very courageous." One can easily argue, however, that Jan, too, is courageous. By taking on the abusers and changing a system in which victims of these crimes can sometimes feel lost, she helps them find their way.

By Melissa Trout

Melissa is a sophomore studying journalism and gender theory. She enjoys scarf knitting and videogame playing.



Ellie Merrick

For Boise State student, Ellie Merrick, human rights activism is not only a way to understand society and politics, it is also a way to view life. Professionally, she has worked for non-profit organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Planned Parenthood of Idaho, and the Boise State Women's Center. Privately, she volunteers her time at several human rights advocacy organizations. Perhaps most importantly, as a parent, Ellie strives to instill the values of equality and humanity in her son, Lyric.

Ellie comes from a fundamentalist Christian background, which she views as a closed atmosphere and not so welcoming to progressive thought. However, challenging her conservative upbringing led her to understand that all people are equal and that survival is not simply a matter of pulling yourself up by your bootstraps. After all, what if you don't have boots? Poverty and discrimination contribute to the inability of many to fulfill their basic needs and access their basic human rights.

After graduating from Northwest Nazarene University, where she majored in English and philosophy, Ellie volunteered for The Agency for New Americans, a refugee center in Boise that helps people who have been displaced by their native countries. She enjoyed helping immigrants acclimate to life in the Treasure Valley. Ellie found this work fulfilling and

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GREEN LIGHT

- > White House awards Cheryl Schrader, dean of the College of Engineering, with 2005 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring.
- > The March of Dimes, Idaho Chapter names Ingrid Brudenell, a faculty member since 1981, as the 2005 Idaho Nurse of the Year for Academic Education.
- > Cancer Research, the most frequently cited cancer journal in the world, publishes article on the ongoing work of biology professor Cheryl Jorcyk.
- > The town of Stanley elects alumna and political science major Hannah Stauts as mayor, making her one of the youngest mayors ever in Idaho.

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Beyond the BLUE

began working at the ACLU, continuing to advocate for those who needed assistance in accessing their human rights.

At the ACLU, Ellie worked in Civil Rights Intake, researching complaints about civil rights violations and recommending actions based on her findings. In 2001, she left the ACLU to promote women's rights as the Director of Public Affairs for Planned Parenthood of Idaho.

Ellie says it was her work with Planned Parenthood that made for some of the greatest learning experiences she has had in a professional capacity. She focused on grassroots organizing, did programming work, lobbied policymakers, helped clients access family planning services, and counseled women facing unplanned pregnancies. She developed partnerships throughout the state that led to successfully protecting the rights of people by listening to community needs and working to draft good public policy to meet those needs.

According to Ellie, many people working as human rights advocates can burn out easily, but she chooses to maintain an upbeat approach. Her motto is: "We aren't going to do anything, if we can't make it fun or funny." She also knows that, while the work she does as an advocate can be taxing, it's meaningful.

After four amazing years at Planned Parenthood, Ellie returned to school to pursue her master's degree in social work. Although this is her first year at Boise State, she has already made a huge impact. She currently works at the Boise State Women's Center as the graduate assistant, in charge of outreach and programming. She also helps raise awareness about gender issues, both on campus and off, through educational programs, such as the Clothesline Project, a display of t-shirts decorated by survivors of sexual and/or domestic violence. She passes on the gift of knowledge, for which she has been so grateful for the opportunity.

Ellie credits her relationships with friends and colleagues as having the greatest influences on her life, both as an activist and as a person. But she especially credits her son, Lyric. He inspires her because she knows what kind of world she wants him to live in and, right now, that world does not exist. But she strives every day to create that world.

Ellie is a woman of many goals and progressive ideals. Though she has not yet decided what she would like to do after graduation, she will continue to examine her work and life through a human rights framework. The choices and opportunities available to such a dynamic woman might overwhelm someone else, but Ellie takes a positive view of all the available options. She said, "Although I have no idea what I will end up doing, I'm sure it will be worthwhile and fulfilling."

Ellie was surprised to be nominated as a Woman Making History. She said, "I look at all these women who have done such great things ... and think 'I'm just beginning.'" Despite all her many accomplishments, she remains humble, "I have just started," she said.

By Casey Harper

Casey is a sophomore at Boise State hoping to double major in linguistics and sociology with a minor in gender studies.

**You may never know what results
come of your action, but if you do
nothing there will be no result.**

--Mahatma Gandhi



Teresa Vazquez

Teresa Vazquez has prevailed—against poverty, lack of education, and a culture that often devalues women—to make a better life for herself and her children, and to serve as an example to other women who struggle to rise above their circumstances.

Teresa was born in Illinois, but soon after her birth was sent to Mexico to live with her grandmother, while her mother stayed in the U.S. to work in the fields. After her grandmother died, Teresa, still a young girl, moved to Caldwell to live with her mother and to work in the fields. At 14, she had a child, and at 16 dropped out of school, married at 21, and had four more children, including a set of twins, by her late twenties. She worked off and on in a series of low-paying jobs until her twins were born.

Her first marriage ended in divorce when her twins were infants, leaving Teresa unemployed, uneducated, and devastated. "I tell you, that was the hardest time I ever had," she recalled. "I got into a big depression. I thought the world had ended for me when my husband was not there for me anymore. When I was in the middle of all these problems, it was hell."

When Teresa felt as though she had hit rock bottom, she turned to prayer. "I finally gave my world to God, and I told him, 'I can't live this life anymore. I need your help, your guidance. Here's my life—take it, guide it, because I can't. I don't know how to get out of this.'"

Although she had never been religious, Teresa started going to church, where she met her current husband, Antonio, who was a co-pastor. Soon after the two married, they started their own non-denominational Christian church from their home, Jesus el camino de Salvacion, where Teresa sings in the choir and assists her husband with their ministries.

It was shortly after her marriage to Antonio that Teresa decided to get her GED. "I tried to get my GED before, and I couldn't do it on my own. I tried about two years after I dropped out of school, and I tried again about four years later. When I tried the second time, I was married to my [first] husband, and I started having problems with him because he didn't want me gone from home [to attend GED classes]. So I had to decide between my husband and school, and I ended up with no husband, no education, and no job."

Determined never to let that happen again, Teresa enrolled in HEP (a high school equivalency program, where she now tutors) at Boise State and got her GED in two months, then started classes at BSU in January, 2005. She earned a 4.0 her first semester, and has no intention of stopping until she reaches her goal of becoming a social worker.

But Teresa isn't waiting until she earns her degree to change people's lives. When a woman Teresa had known during her days as a single parent turned to her for help in escaping an abusive relationship, Teresa encouraged her and helped her gain access to the community resources she needed to be safe and to make a better life for herself. Teresa said,

"There are a lot of people out there like her, in deep need, and if we don't get out there, we're not going to see what's going on. If we don't see it with our own eyes, we won't believe it. When we see it, we realize there are people in big need."

Teresa's own home is a testament to her generosity. She and Antonio accepted guardianship of their nine-year-old nephew, because his parents were unable to deal with his rebelliousness. Said Teresa, "He'll try to challenge us, but I think that love and patience help a child. He gives me hugs and tells me he loves me." Teresa said that, as far as she is concerned, her nephew is like one of her own children.

In addition to the four children she has living at home, Teresa has "adopted" the young people she tutors at HEP, and sees herself as a role model for them. "I enjoy tutoring my students at HEP. I think they learn more from me than just [academics]; they learn that they can improve their lives, that they can get their GED. I tell them, 'Listen to your teachers.' The kids look up to me as a second mom—I really like them."

But Teresa's greatest satisfaction comes from her children's pride in her accomplishments. Teresa said, "They look at me and say, 'My mom goes to college. She's going to be a social worker.' It's a big thing. We were so used to working in the fields and being just workers, so Mom going to college is a neat thing in the family." And it's also a first: Teresa is the first in her family of six siblings to attend college.

Because of her own struggles brought on by a lack of education, Teresa wants to see other Hispanic women get their college degrees. She said, "Hispanic women have a right to have a voice. In our culture, women are expected to stay home and raise kids. But what happens when there's a divorce or the husband dies? Education is important, especially for Hispanics, and I want to be an example."

By Dené Breakfield

Dené lives in Boise with her children, cats, and dog.



Dr. Lynn Lubamersky

In the back of the library, old rooms that once held stocks of microfilms now house the offices of Boise State's History Department; Dr. Lynn Lubamersky has one such office. But instead of testing a feng shui furniture arrangement for her desk and shelves, Lynn's office embraces the art and books of women's history. Her shelves are brimming with books, piled on one another, an immense mass of historical findings. Her walls are covered with pictures of women from different ethnic backgrounds, relics of her many travels. Without ever having heard one of her lectures, one can tell simply by looking at her office décor where Lynn's passions lie.

Growing up in progressive San Francisco, Lynn saw early in life the power of education. Raised by parents who were first-generation Americans, children of immigrants from Ireland and Lithuania, Lynn was encouraged to do better and work harder. "I am a strong woman because I was raised by a strong woman," said Lynn of her mother.

It was the mentality that nothing was going to be handed to her that shaped Lynn's drive throughout college. While studying history at the University of California at Berkeley, Lynn related to her professors and began to envision herself in the realm of higher education as a professor.

She recalls sitting in class as one professor assigned the reading of *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*. Most vivid for Lynn was reading about the Rape of Nanking. "I had never heard about these war crimes and I couldn't believe how much of women's experiences are completely ignored historically. That's why I became a women's historian. Erasing women from our past really erases them from the present, as well as the future," said Lynn.

Because of Lynn's passionate belief in the past's connection to the future, she assigns books like *A Woman in Berlin* to her History 102 students, exposing them to the mass rape campaigns in Germany after WWII. "Erasing crimes against women and not believing that they belong in our history books is a norm in our society that must change," which is why she strives to increase her students' awareness of women's history.

Lynn works to connect her students to the past by encouraging an emphasis on preserving people's stories. She believes too few people in our society learn from history, which creates hindrances. "Every generation writes their own story. Every individual writes her own history and in so many ways [those stories] are a reflection of our own lives," said Lynn.

As an educator, Lynn was recently awarded tenure and promoted to Associate Professor in the Department of History at Boise State. She has published several articles on noblewomen's access to political power in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Friend and colleague, Angie Blain, says of Lynn's work, "Her classes are constructed to get younger generations of students, male and female, to gain a historical perspective on socially and culturally constructed issues that have consequences locally, nationally, and internationally."

Tenure has also encouraged Lynn to begin a project researching women's resistance in WWII. Because of the fall of the Soviet Union, there has been more information made available about WWII; Lynn hopes to expose the important role civilian women played in combat. Yentl (Jewish) women, for example, didn't go to their deaths passively. "It wasn't just the GI Joe who won the war or the nurse standing behind him; civilian women were part of the battle."

Lynn believes that women of today should see the women of yesterday as strong combatants, able to fight for themselves. Passivity, although sometimes emphasized as a desirable trait for women in our society, is not a realistic ideal. "That's why new ideas about women's strength and resistance are truly imperative to change our culture."

Most importantly, Lynn reaches her students by giving them the chance to understand the importance of struggle. She highlights in her teaching that, at no time in history, were rights attained without conflict. Lynn strives to help her students realize their role "in the struggle for justice, peace, and ideals that will make the survival of humanity more certain."

Lynn's influence as an educator has inspired students like Sarah Mawhirer, who has an M.A. in women's studies from Oxford University and is currently pursuing a doctorate degree. She said, "As a mentor and teacher, Lynn does the most honorable thing a woman in academia can do: she fights systematic oppression in her position as a professor. I will take her practices with me into the classrooms and personal life."

It's not her Ph.D. from Indiana University that Lynn is proudest of, but rather the fact that she is a women's historian. She works every day, telling women's stories and incorporating them into the courses she teaches, inspiring students to recognize their own abilities to make choices that are good for peace, justice, and equality—while making their own history.

By Amanda Micheletty
Amanda is an undergraduate student at Boise State majoring in English literature.



Norma D. Jaeger

As a young girl growing up in Boise in the 1950s, Norma Jaeger, statewide drug and mental health court coordinator for the Idaho Supreme Court, wanted more than the dreams being offered to most girls. While her friends played house, she played secretary. By middle school, she knew she wanted not only a job, but a career. Never mind that she married the day after graduating from Boise High School in 1962 and had a baby daughter the following year. If men could juggle a family and career, she reasoned, so could she.

Although attending college while married, let alone with a young child at home, was frowned upon in that day and age, she enrolled at Boise Junior College supported by student loans and her husband's job. She earned her Associate's degree just as the school made its transition to a four-year institution, allowing her to continue her education at Boise College. In 1965 she earned her Bachelor's degree in social sciences, secondary education, with hopes of becoming a high school social studies teacher.

That's when Norma hit a wall. There were plenty of jobs available ... if you were a man and could coach sports on the side. Unable to land a position in her field, she went to work instead for the Department of Health and Welfare as a caseworker. Over the next 20 years she worked as a psych caseworker and as a mental health and addiction caseworker in several areas around the state. In 1984, she earned a Master's degree in health services administration from Whitworth College.

Not only was she laying the groundwork for her future calling during this time, she was also strengthening her role as a feminist. "The *Feminine Mystique* came out in 1964, and I read it shortly after, and I became an early feminist," she recalled. When a Supreme Court decision ruled that a woman could inherit in her own name, she invited the man who argued the case to speak to her women's professional group. In 1974, when a less qualified man was hired from within for an Idaho Transportation Department job for which Norma had been ranked the No. 1 candidate, she filed a sex discrimination suit, spurring changes in the department's hiring practices.

In 1986, she moved to Portland, Oregon, to become an administrator for drug and alcohol programs for Multnomah County, a job she held for 12 years. While there, she also established a jail-based treatment program and a mental health jail-diversion program, as well as a program to help pregnant, addicted female offenders. In 1998, she moved to Seattle to expand treatment options for drug court clients. Her duties included managing a 210-bed residential substance abuse program for offenders and a demonstration project for mentally ill offender community reentry.

In 2000, she and her husband decided it was time to return to their roots and move back to Boise. Following a short stint with the Idaho Department of Correction as manager of offender programs, she assumed her current duties. She also teaches part time at Boise State in the Criminal Justice Administration Department.

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"The word on the street among criminal justice majors is, 'Don't graduate without taking a class from Norma Jaeger,'" said nominator and friend Georgia Girvan, director of Boise State's Idaho RADAR Network Center. "She is respected for her intelligence, creativity, forthrightness, knowledge of the changing field and quick wit... She doesn't stand five feet tall, yet she can comfortably and very capably commandeer an audience of 500 persons."

Norma finds great satisfaction in all of her endeavors, both in and out of the classroom. Over the span of her career, she has had many opportunities to change lives and affect history. As an example, she points to the initiative in the 1970s to deinstitutionalize the mentally ill. While helping transfer people to community-based group homes, she worked with some who had been in hospitals their entire lives. Transferring them, she said, was like taking away everything they had ever known.

"I've found that sometimes when you are making history, you don't always know it's history at the time," she said.

Her work to set up and improve drug courts is also groundbreaking for the court system. "This is a major historical shift in the role of the judiciary," she said. "Before, the court was seen as a neutral arbitrator based on proper application of legal principles and due process. The outcome for the defendants, victims and litigants was not something that was factored into the definition of success or failure. This adds a new dimension to the determination of positive outcome."

While Norma concedes that some view drug courts as merely "Hug-a-Thug" therapy, problem-solving courts of all varieties (mental health courts, DUI courts, truancy courts, etc.) do positively impact crime. While about 20 percent of drug court graduates are rearrested for further significant offenses, that number is closer to 60 percent for those who do not graduate.

Despite all she has accomplished, Norma admits to an unanswered passion: improving the circumstances and opportunities for female offenders. "I'd love to see high-profile people like Martha Stewart talk about what they saw in terms of reality for other women in a federal prison," she said. "Things like lack of services and lack of best practices, as well as lack of education, meaningful vocational training, parenting classes, and mental health care."

She'd also like to see stronger support services for young women studying at Boise State and other institutions. "In every class I've taught, there have been young women who are obviously struggling with disadvantaged backgrounds," she said. "They have a couple of kids and rely on financial aid but want something better." A stronger support system made up of other women would help keep them motivated and on track, she says.

That support system is important in all areas of Norma's life, not the least of which is a supportive and encouraging husband. She believes that, by working together, women can accomplish anything. "You never make history alone," she said. "You never accomplish what you accomplish alone."

By Kathleen Craven

Kathleen is a communications specialist with Boise State University. In her previous life, she was a newspaper reporter/columnist following a hectic stint as a community theatre actress/director. Kathleen enjoys spending time with her husband and children, exploring nature and the arts. When she grows up, she wants to be an archaeologist.

***If we did the things we are capable of,
we would astound ourselves.***

--Thomas Edison



Dr. Mamie Oliver

Dr. Mamie Oliver has always known that her life would be filled with purpose. "I have always felt a missionary spirit pressing me forward," she said. That missionary spirit led her to volunteer for the American Red Cross and at her church as a child. She had a keen sense of awareness for the needs of others, which forced her to question herself and those around her: "How are we responding to the human beings who cross our paths?" She wondered if she was doing enough.

Mamie grew to believe that the best way to help people was to become a clergywoman. She consulted the ministers at her church, who were all men, but was told to put it out of her head. "At that time," she explained, "as a woman, that wasn't what you did." After the discouragement of not becoming a minister, the same church leaders encouraged her to become a social worker. So, that's what she did to stay on track. "If I see need, or pain, or concern, I respond to that," she said. As a social worker, Mamie was able to put her missionary spirit to work in the service of others, albeit in the secular world.

She went on to earn a Bachelor's degree from California State University at Los Angeles, a Master's in social work from Fresno State University in Fresno, California, and a Ph.D. in education from Washington State University in Pullman, Washington.

In 1972, she became the first African-American professor at Boise State University. She described her struggle to get a full-time professorship: "I came in with the potential, I was an advocate for myself. I showed them, 'You can't do without me—hire me!'" Imparting wisdom and experience through formal education has always been important, but she still always felt that her work needed to reach far beyond the classroom.

"My life was not going to be whole till I put my secular and spiritual work together," she said. "I felt a pull on my very soul—it was a call that I always knew was there and I couldn't wait any longer." In 1998, she became an ordained Baptist minister. Finally, she was exactly where she wanted to be. "My spirit was free," she said. She is the first woman to sit on the ministerial staff at the local St. Paul Baptist Church.

Through her many observations as a social worker, Mamie noticed all kinds of people searching for help, but only getting their immediate needs met. She knew there had to be a better way to be of service to others.

In response, she and her husband, Dr. H. Lincoln Oliver, also a pastor, began Community Ministries Center 25 years ago. Mamie was instrumental in designing the three center locations, each with a social service department, in Rhode Island, Washington, and Idaho. They provide long-term solutions for many needs, including medical, financial, and spiritual, and clients are able to go to one location, instead of being lost in the shuffle of visiting several different agencies to fulfill their needs.

Mamie is also an author. Through her commitment as a social worker,

she helps raise awareness about the history of blacks in Idaho, and has been instrumental in preserving black heritage. Her titles include *Idaho Ebony: Black Historic Idahoans*, *Idaho Ebony: Boise's Black Baptists: Heritage, Hope and Struggle*, and *Blacks in Idaho's White Press: 1863-1916*.

In 1990, while Idaho's centennial celebration was being planned, she thought to herself, "I wonder if there's going to be anything in the celebration to represent all the people who lived in Idaho?" With this thought in mind, she took action, wrote a grant, then received money for researching black history. Much of her research was used in creating the exhibits in the Idaho Black History Museum.

Mamie's work and contributions have not gone unnoticed. She has been the recipient of many awards, honors and appointments. She has been recognized as a Distinguished Citizen by The Idaho Statesman, was named one of the Ten Outstanding Women in Idaho by the March of Dimes, was named Social Worker of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers, and was the recipient of the 2004 Women of Today and Tomorrow from the Girl Scouts Silver Sage Council of Boise. She has been appointed by two Idaho governors, once by Governor Evans to serve as the chair of the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Taskforce, and again by Governor Kempthorne to serve two terms on the Governor's Coordinating Council for Families and Children.

In 2005, she and her husband were both inducted into the NAACP Heritage Hall of Fame for dedicating their lives to the service of others and advancing the civil rights of all. Mamie said of the honor, "I am grateful that people recognize that those things need to happen, and that they appreciate community service."

Helping others on an individual basis, or working for the betterment of a group or community, Mamie Oliver continues to build a legacy of important social and scholarly work in Idaho. Currently, she is a tenured professor of social work at Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa. In addition to over three decades of professional service as a social worker, a community organizer, a program evaluator, a public relation spokesperson, a grant writer, a counselor, a motivational speaker and a teacher, and most recently, a minister, Mamie is also the proud mother of a daughter, Sharon Yvette Poston, and a son, Jon Kingsley Oliver, and grandmother to grandson Danté James and granddaughter Ariana. Her family is an inspiration for all she does.

By Elizabeth Herbst

Elizabeth is a Boise State student, majoring in social work, with a minor in psychology and multi-ethnic studies. When she's not in class or doing homework, she works with the developmentally disabled in Boise.



Marcia Franklin in train

Marcia Franklin

As a child growing up in Washington, D.C., Marcia Franklin loved visiting places like the Smithsonian Museum and the National Archives. American history and the stories of other people fascinated her. She would thumb through books of depression-era photos, imagining the details, trying to figure out the lives behind the faces. She interviewed family and friends about their lives, and wanted to "document the stories of people whose voices are sometimes unheard." Sitting around the television with her family watching documentaries further fueled a lifelong passion for storytelling, and propelled her into a career of broadcast journalism.

Marcia knew that breaking into public broadcasting would take diligence and hard work, so she did everything possible to learn about the field. She worked as an intern for filmmaker Bill Jersey in the Bay area and at various media outlets, including "NOVA" at WGBH-TV. She worked as a secretary at KQED-TV in San Francisco but also helped the producers conduct research about the lives of marginalized people; she did anything she could to gain experience in her field.

Since 1990, Marcia has been a producer at Idaho Public Television, and regularly hosts "Dialogue," a statewide call-in program. She is also a producer for "Outdoor Idaho," a statewide documentary series, and her work has been featured on national public television. Her goal as a journalist is to continue giving a voice to those who are silent in the world. In keeping with that commitment, she produced the documentary "Hearts and Minds: Teens and Mental Illness," a program emphasizing the importance of understanding and erasing the stigma of mental illness. In 2000, "Hearts and Minds" won the prestigious George Foster Peabody Award. Marcia has won numerous other awards, including a regional Emmy and the Special Jury prize at WorldFest.

In 2003, as part of an International Reporting Project Fellowship, Marcia ventured outside Idaho to shoot a documentary about the environmental movement in Iran. She said, "I wanted to report on something that had never been reported on before." While the focus of the trip was on how rapid growth and industrialization has devastated the Iranian environment, Marcia found herself getting wrapped up in the culture and the politics.

Traveling alone from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf, she interviewed many Iranians from different backgrounds. One of the most intense moments of her trip was interviewing Massoumeh Ebtekar, the head of the Department of Environment and Iran's first female vice president since the Islamic Revolution. Ebtekar was the spokesperson for the students who took 52 diplomats hostage in the 1979 U.S. Embassy siege.

Marcia also had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, the first Muslim woman and the first Iranian to receive the award. Ebadi, a lawyer and author, was awarded the prize for her work on women's and children's issues.

Though Marcia was able to meet with two such influential women, her goal was to capture the lives of ordinary Iranians, working to save the environment. She spoke with environmentalists concerning issues from deforestation in Iran to the pollution of the Caspian Sea coastline.

After her six weeks of travel through Iran, Marcia returned to Boise in November of 2003. The resulting documentary, "From Idaho to Iran," aired on IPTV the following year. According to Marcia, her documentary is unique because instead of highlighting the usual negative aspects of the culture so often misunderstood by Americans, she focused on the positive. "I like to show a problem and give people potential solutions," she said. "So much of what we hear about Iran is negative—I knew there had to be people there working on good things." Last spring, the program was picked up by other public television stations around the country.

In her personal life, Marcia enjoys participating in groups that work to increase awareness about local issues. She is one of the founding board members of the City Club of Boise and has served on the board for over 10 years. The City Club is a non-partisan group that hosts monthly forums on topics ranging from meth use to Boise State football. Its goal is to create civil discourse among community members to improve the overall quality of life in Idaho.

Having always been interested in young people, Marcia participated in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program for nine years. "I got so much out of having a 'little sister,'" she said. "She's now 20 and doing well and that makes me feel great." Including youth in many of her projects is important to Marcia and she looks for a "youth angle" in each story she does.

Mentoring other journalists is also important to Marcia. In 1997, she traveled to Uzbekistan to mentor reporters, and found it so fulfilling that she would like to return and continue mentoring someday. Because journalism isn't an easy job, she lays it on the line for anyone interested in the field. She tells people, "If you don't want to be put in uncomfortable positions, don't be a journalist." For her, however, the rewards far outnumber the difficulties. "It can be demanding, but it is certainly worth it," she said. "I have to pinch myself sometimes because I am so fortunate."

By Melissa Trout

Melissa is a sophomore studying journalism and gender theory. She enjoys scarf knitting and videogame playing.



Dr. Sarah Toevs

As an administrator and associate professor of community and environmental health on the Boise State campus, Dr. Sarah Toevs (pronounced "Taves") has touched the lives of thousands of Idahoans. She has also played a key role in implementing many community programs. She doesn't just help people. She empowers them to help themselves.

Sarah has supported many programs such as The Idaho Children's Trust Fund, an organization that provides grants for programs aimed at the prevention of child abuse. She works with a local division of Head Start, a preschool for low-income children who may not otherwise have the opportunity to attend preschool, and she participates in the Idaho Public Health Association, an association attempting to fulfill a multitude of health needs in Idaho. And if that isn't enough to keep her busy, she volunteers as a dental hygienist at the Terry Reilly Dental Clinic, a clinic for uninsured people needing medical and/or dental treatment.

Recently, Sarah became even more generous with her time and started working with the Idaho Food Bank on weekends to help feed those in need. Part of the reward for her volunteer work has been meeting the high school volunteers. She smiled brightly while describing a young man feeding people in the park; she believes when someone is so dedicated to helping others at such an early age, there's a bright future ahead. Instilling a sense of civic engagement in young adults is important to her.

Issues related to aging are also important to Sarah. She worked with deans from the Colleges of Health Sciences and Social Sciences and Public Affairs, Governor Dirk Kempthorne, and Senator Larry Craig to

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garner support for a Center for the Study of Aging. Considered crucial, the program provides funding for Idaho-specific research on subjects relating to aging, and also allows students to specialize in gerontological studies (the study of aging) at Boise State, for which Sarah helped to devise the curriculum. The Center is also dedicated to researching better ways to meet the basic medical needs not currently being met for people on Medicare and Medicaid.

After a 17-year teaching career at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, and after earning her Ph.D. in health education and promotion from the University of Utah, Sarah came to Boise State. She currently serves as the Chair of the Department of Community and Environmental Health and works with many faculty members from a variety of academic health sciences departments. She is also the director of the graduate program in health sciences, providing information, resources, guidance, and education for students interested in pursuing Masters' degrees in health sciences.

Kind, friendly, open, and thoughtful, Sarah's excitement for, and dedication to, making positive changes in the medical and educational fields is contagious. Her nominators, Drs. Caille Spear and Ginger Floerchinger-Franks, wrote: "She is open to listening, helping people find their own answers, and allowing them to acknowledge the strength within each of us ... she never meets a stranger." In describing Sarah's approach to her administrative positions as one of bridge building, Caille and Ginger added, "Sarah has bridged the traditional gap between adjunct and regular faculty," making adjunct faculty feel just as important to the program as tenure faculty.

Even though Sarah is busy with many administrative responsibilities, she is a committed and inspiring teacher of community and environmental health. In the classroom, she teaches more than method and theory; she teaches her students to always ask themselves, "How can I empower the person I'm assisting to find his or her own solution?" She believes that health professionals should practice empathy, as well as medicine.

According to Caille and Ginger, Sarah is a popular instructor. "Her students love her classes because she helps them develop skills through real-world projects like Service-Learning, and they graduate with essential skill sets in a highly competitive workplace." They noted that, since Sarah came to Boise State five years ago, enrollment in the health sciences master's program has doubled. And it's still growing.

Sarah Toevs continues to be driven by the conviction that all people, regardless of financial circumstances, age, or any other factor, deserve equal access to proper health care. In her administrative duties, volunteer work, and class instruction, she always approaches questions and difficulties with an open and positive attitude. Sarah attempts to understand people's needs, rather than assuming she already knows what they are. She then looks to see what is being done well and build on those successes. She doesn't focus on problems. Though the many causes to which Sarah has dedicated herself could be considered difficult problems to solve, she remains dedicated to empowering others. As Caille Spear put it, "Sarah does what is right, not what is easy."

By Cyndi Blue
Cyndi recently left the Department of Corrections to pursue a law degree and is now in her sophomore year as a political science major.



Sheri and her daughter Katie

Sheri Garmon

Most people, if told they had only six months to live, wouldn't spend their remaining time advocating for others.

But Sheri Garmon wasn't most people. After learning that the breast cancer she thought she had beaten had metastasized to her bones and liver, Sheri set two goals: to watch daughter Katie graduate as a physician's assistant, and to see her fellow Idaho Downwinders receive the same recognition and financial compensation as those in neighboring Western states.

"Downwinder" is the name given to individuals exposed to radioactive fallout resulting from nuclear testing conducted by the U.S. government in Nevada in the 1950s and 1960s. According to a declassified Atomic Energy Commission document, Idaho was considered a "low-use segment of the population," compared to areas like California, so when winds blew north, the government gave the green light to conduct nuclear testing. Despite having been targets for radiation exposure, affected Idaho residents are ineligible for the \$50,000-per-person compensation under RECA, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act.

Mildred Garmon, Sheri's mother, recalled seeing a strange dust that covered the family's dairy farm when Sheri was an infant. "I can well remember when it was all over the ground, all over everything," she said. "Everybody was so amazed, and couldn't imagine what it was. If anybody knew, we didn't hear about it. They did say it had floated in from Nevada, and I could hardly believe it was possible, clear from Nevada. It was all over the pastures, and we were told that there was nothing dangerous about it at all. We had no idea that there was any danger in it."

Mildred also had no idea of the danger in giving Sheri milk from the family's dairy cows. Said Mildred, "We thought we were really safe: We had our own cows, raised our own feed—we never dreamed there was anything the matter with it. Here it was, deadly. We just didn't know. I wish we had, I tell you that for sure."

When Sheri developed thyroid cancer at age 39, her doctor was stunned. He asked her whether she had ever been exposed to radiation. Sheri said no. After being diagnosed with breast cancer at 48, another doctor asked her the same question. It was then that Sheri learned about some people in neighboring Western states who had received compensation from the federal government for cancers linked to the Nevada nuclear testing. But feeling that she had enough to deal with, Sheri focused on fighting her own illness.

After two years of grueling cancer treatments, Sheri spent a year in remission. But the cancer came back in the summer of 2003, having metastasized to her liver and bones; she was given six months to live.

At first, Sheri decided to spend her remaining time traveling and being with loved ones. But then she learned that the government was threatening to exclude any additional territories from becoming beneficiaries of what it called "compassionate compensation": \$50,000 per person and an apology from the government. Sheri called her dad, Don Garmon, who was also

battling cancer (Don died in January 2005), to express her anger at the exclusion of Idaho's Downwinders.

Don encouraged Sheri to contact a former classmate and local legislator Kathy Skippen. According to Sheri's sister, Apryl Garmon, "Sheri didn't want to pick up this huge battle in the final months of her life, but she did."

Sheri called Skippen, who, along with Idaho Senator Mike Crapo, initiated and maintained political momentum to include Idaho Downwinders in RECA, despite pressure from some fellow Republicans to back off.

Shortly after gaining Skippen and Crapo's support, Sheri organized an informational meeting in Emmett Park to make residents aware of the situation, to let them know that their illnesses weren't their fault, and to argue that they were entitled to receive the same compensation as those in neighboring states.

To announce the meeting, Sheri and Apryl made 30 fliers, "about twice as many as we figured we'd need," said Apryl. Over 100 people showed up to hear Sheri speak—the rest, as they say, is history. This meeting generated articles in the Sunday *New York Times*, and an article in the May 2005 issue of the *Reader's Digest*. Sheri and the plight of her fellow Idaho Downwinders were national news.

Thanks to the publicity, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), which had planned to close all hearings involving Downwinders, visited Boise in November, 2004. Sheri attended the hearing, although so weak from her illness and aggressive, debilitating treatments, that she had to lie down several times. This did not prevent her from speaking eloquently and passionately to NAS, urging them to include Idaho residents among those eligible for compensation. Sheri remarked that, although the money was nice, "the government's apology that came with it [would be] even nicer."

Against the odds, Sheri Garmon lived to see daughter Katie graduate, but died before learning the outcome of RECA. Sheri's family urges us all to pick up the fight that Sheri was unable to finish. Said Apryl, "It's up to those of us who are well to keep fighting to get this bill passed; those who are sick are too weak to fight. We can't sweep this under a rug and forget about it."

According to an article in *The Idaho Statesman*, dated November 12, 2005, Senator Larry Craig has requested the Department of Justice to report within 90 days as to how Congress might apply recommendations for the expansion of RECA.

By Dené Breakfield
Dené lives in Boise with her children, cats, and dog.

For information on RECA and related legislation, or to voice your support for compensation for Idaho Downwinders, contact the following people/organizations:

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Radiation Exposure Compensation Program**
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1-800-729-RECP | <http://www.usdoj.gov/civil/torts/const/reca/index.htm>
E-mail: civil.reca@usdoj.gov

Senator Larry Craig
United States Senate Washington, DC 20510-1203 | 202-224-2752
225 North 9th Street | Suite 530 | Boise, Idaho 83702 | 208-342-7985
Web: <http://craig.senate.gov>

Senator Mike Crapo
239 Dirksen Senate Building | Washington D.C., 20510 | 202-224-6142
251 East Front Street Suite 205 | Boise, ID 83702 | 208-334-1776
Web: <http://crapo.senate.gov>

Representative Kathy Skippen
5454 West Central Road | Emmett, ID 83617 | 208-365-5686

Idaho Downwinders
254 West 500 North | Malad City, ID 83252 | 208-766-5649
Web: <http://www.downwinders.org/>

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what you are doing in this moment.

—Tibetan Proverb

2001

Connie Thorngren
 Becky Hays
 Leacadia Powell
 Phyllis Smith
 Margie Van Vooren
 Kara Janney
 Alex Higdon and Kath'ren Bay
 Pennie S. Cooper
 Zeda James
 Juandalynn Taylor
 Justice Cathy Silak
 Marilyn Watts
 Dallas Chase
 Sue Billington Wade
 Stephanie Neighbors
 Monica Hopkins
 Barbara Newell
 Kay Mack
 Ruth Harris
 Kelley Johnson
 Dr. Stephanie Witt
 Evelyn Ferrari
 Bonnie Vestal
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 Ginger Floerchinger-Franks
 Renée B. Mullen
 Lesley Goranson
 Karen Cross
 Dana Miller
 Susan Burkett
 Nancy Jacobsen
 Felixia (Felix) Bogard
 Dianna Longoria
 Barbara Miller
 Fatima Mohammadi
 Lorry Roberts
 Lalani Ratnayake
 Ellie McKinnon
 Irene Wilcox
 Clarisse M. Maxwell
 Faida Muzaliwa
 Alma Gomez
 Sylvia Dana

2002

Cindy Clark
 Helene "Binky" Jacoby
 Gay Tisdale
 Joanne Mitten
 Lesleigh Owen
 Gaetha Pace
 Jyl Hoyt
 Jo Anne Russell
 Gwen Kimball
 Jane Moore

2003

Jan Salisbury
 Lee Flinn
 Katherine Pavesic
 Megan Sorvaag
 Mary Rohlfing
 Angela Newell
 Chris Loucks
 Leah Taala
 Amy Haak
 Alicia Hochhalter
 Susan Pedde
 Maria Lorenzana
 Rocci Johnson
 Pat Dorman
 Nicole LeFavour
 Susan Qualls
 Opal Dickson
 Sue Cobley
 Sonya Rosario
 Pat Clark and Virginia Sarriugarte
 Shelly McDonough
 Tegwin Millard
 Sally Craven
 Tam Dinh
 Mary Jane Bryant

2004

Jasmin Aguilar
 Lolita Anastasio
 Dr. Teresa Boucher
 Janelle Brown
 Kathleen Craven
 Dr. Sue Chew
 Judy Cross
 Carol Denise Dawson
 Betsy Dunklin
 Lynn Gabriel
 Maria Gonzalez Mabbutt
 Dr. Christine Hahn
 Ginna Husting
 Vicky Irving
 Lori Joyce
 Jane Kinn Buser
 Dr. Suzanne McCorkle
 Pam Parker
 Anne Pasley-Stuart
 Beverly Pressman
 Pat Pyke
 Carolyn Rahn
 Wanda Lynn Riley
 Fatma Slaton
 Maxine Sower Randall
 Kelly Spafford
 Dr. Valerie Steffen
 Winnie Tong
 Christina Van Tol

2005

Anji Armagost
 Hildegard Ayer
 Zella Bardsley
 Evangeline Beaver
 Peg Blake
 Marie Blanchard
 Ingrid Brudenell
 Lorissa Wilfong Holt
 Shirley Christoffersen
 Maureen Clark
 Karry Fischer
 Maria Alicia Garza
 Joanne Habben
 Marla Brattain Hansen
 Dian Hoffpauir
 Maybeth Hogander
 Jeni Jenkins
 Angiline Kearns Blain
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- Internalized Racist Oppression Workshops
- Annual WOCA Conference in April
- Raising awareness about the impact of the "S" word
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- Fair trade program



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 \$10 Student/Elder

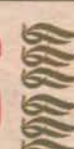
**WOMEN OF COLOR ALLIANCE**

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MARCH SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



3.4.06

MONEY WISE WOMEN CONFERENCE

9:30am - 4pm | Student Union Jordan Ballroom

This conference offers financial strategies and advice just for women. Marcia Brixey, lunchtime speaker, will share tips about achieving financial fitness, minimizing the risk of identity theft, and help you understand the importance of Social Security. To register or for more information visit <http://www.moneywisewomen.net> or email mww@silverlink.net.

3.8.06

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The Women's Center will present roses to the women of Boise State University. If you see or receive a rose, remember to celebrate the wonderful diversity, talent, and potential of all the women of the world.

3.8.06

WOMEN WITH WINGS

7pm - 8:30pm | Student Union Barnwell Room

Chandra Silva, Boise State History Department, will discuss narrative stories of Boise's shamans, artists, healers, teachers, and activists.

3.9.06

WOMEN AND RESISTANCE

7pm-9pm | Student Union Special Events Center

A screening of the film "Daring to Resist: Three Women Face the Holocaust," produced by Women Make Movies, will be followed by a discussion led by Rabbi Dan Fink. This film focuses on the intelligence and resourcefulness of women and broadens our understanding of resistance. This film also reminds viewers of the enormous potential of young women and how they can effect change.

3.10.06

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH NATIONAL JURIED ART EXHIBITION

Opens in the Student Union Building Gallery

3.10.06

STORIES RARELY HEARD: REFUGEE WOMEN SPEAK

7pm-9pm | Student Union Barnwell Room

Listen to the stories of Boise's refugee women as they relate their unique and poignant experiences of immigrating to the United States. These brave women will share their perspectives on culture, religion, and tradition and why they chose to leave their homelands.

3.16.06

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: 6:30pm doors open, 7pm begins | Student Union Jordan Ballroom

HADANI DITMARS



Hadani Ditmars is an international journalist and author of the bestseller *Dancing in the No Fly Zone: a Woman's Journey Through Iraq*. Her experiences in Iraq, before and after the U.S. invasion, have allowed her unique insight into the culture, humanity, and strength of the Iraqi people. Ditmars's mixed European and Middle Eastern heritage has enabled her to pass as an

Iraqi woman, and as a result she's had many opportunities not afforded to other journalists. She has made powerful connections with the women of Iraq and gives an unwavering voice to their experiences and struggles.

>>> A question and answer period and a book signing will follow her lecture.

3.11.06

STUDENT UNION CLASSIC PERFORMANCE SERIES: THE MOSCOW STRING QUARTET

8pm | Student Union Special Events Center

3.13.06

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: THE CASE OF FEMALE INFANTICIDE IN INDIA

7pm-8:30pm | Student Union Barnwell Room

Professor Renu Dube, Boise State Communications Department, will lecture on systemic violence against women in India as part of a discussion of her recently published book, *Female Infanticide in India: A Feminist Cultural History*.

3.14.06

LARRY SELLAND HUMANITARIAN AWARD BREAKFAST

8am-9:30am | Student Union Lookout Room (by invite only)

3.14.06

A WOMAN'S HOME FRONT PERSPECTIVE

7pm-8:30pm | Student Union Farnsworth Room

A home front perspective of the eighteen-month deployment by Ms. Susan Emerson whose husband, Roger Emerson, was a part of the 2004-2005 116th deployment to Iraq.

3.15.06

THE HAGUE WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL

Noon-1:30pm | Student Union Lookout Room

Bring your lunch! Professor Nick Miller, Boise State History Department, will explore the Hague War Crimes Tribunal for Yugoslavia, which is attempting to bring justice to the victims of the Balkan Wars of the 1990s.

3.15.06

THE WOMEN FROM THE 116TH SPEAK

7pm-9pm | Student Union Jordan Ballroom

Female soldiers from the Idaho National Guard will tell stories of their deployment to Iraq and discuss their experiences in the armed services. The public will be invited to ask questions as part of a facilitated discussion following the panel.

3.17.06

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH NATIONAL JURIED ART EXHIBITION RECEPTION

5:30pm-7pm | Student Union Gallery

3.20.06

MONDAY NIGHT LAUGHS: VICKI SHAW

8pm | Student Union Special Events Center

Vickie Shaw is a seasoned comedian hilariously addressing the triumphs and trials of being a woman, a mother, and a lesbian in America. **FREE** to Boise State students, \$5 general admission. Sponsored by Student Programs Board.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE TO THE PUBLIC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

For More Information about the events listed on the calendar contact the Boise State Women's Center at (208) 426-4259