President’s Message

April has finally brought us our spring! Now that spring is in our step, we can warmly welcome it and celebrate our 2013 Women of the Year at our 36th annual Women of the Year luncheon on April 24. I’ll be turning the Women’s Commission gavel over to our new president and looking forward to serving her and the other women of the executive board and Saint Louis University in new ways in the year(s) to come. Being a part of the Women’s Commission has added so much richness to my life at SLU, and has introduced me to so many phenomenal women across the university with whom I have developed new relationships and friendships. I hope to share many future adventures with the wonderful women of Saint Louis University and its amazing Women’s Commission. I will be forever grateful to have served in this, the Commission’s Ruby anniversary year. Our commission is a jewel I will always treasure.

Warmly,
Nancy Culbert, 2012-2013 President, Women’s Commission

Michelle Lewis Joins Commission Board

Forty years ago, president Rev. Paul C. Reinert, S.J. requested that the newly appointed Vice President for Personnel Administration and Affirmative Action Officer serve as liaison for the University while establishing an “Advisory Commission on the Status of Women.” That position has been on the Commission board since.

The newest woman to hold that position is L. Michelle Lewis, who joined SLU as its new director of the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action in January. Lewis will plan, organize and direct all aspects of SLU’s program for diversity, affirmation action and equal employment.

Lewis comes to the University from the American Red Cross Biomedical Services, where she served as Regional Human Resources Manager and Diversity Consultant, specializing in affirmative action program compliance and diversity initiatives. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Illinois State University and a master of science in administration with an emphasis in business management from Lindenwood University.

Outside of work, Lewis has a passion for movies that are older than the Commission itself. She loves black-and-white movies from the 1930s and 40s, especially crime dramas and comedies, and has seen more than 20 times the amount of old movies as current releases.
Women of the Year Luncheon

The 36th annual Women of the Year luncheon will be held on Wednesday, April 24 at noon in the Wool Ballroom of the Busch Student Center. In the 40th anniversary year, the Commission will honor six women for their contributions, commitment and lives of service to the University and community. The women, and some of their accomplishments, are listed below. Luncheon reservation forms are available at wc.slu.edu and due to the Women’s Commission office, DuBourg Hall, room 359, by April 15.

Meg Connolly, Associate Vice President, Alumni Relations. Meg is a two-time SLU alumna (College of Arts and Sciences 1990, Graduate School 1992). She has worked in SLU’s Alumni Relations office since 1995 and as Associate Vice President since April 2008. During her time in the office, she has created many alumni events that are now traditions, including the annual Alumni Easter Egg Hunt; “Golden Billiken Reunion,” the family fun area and fireworks during the soccer game’s halftime at Homecoming; and theater events that bring alumni to campus for a speaker and then a show at the Fox Theatre or Powell Symphony Hall.

Judith Carlson, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Traditional Option for Baccalaureate Nursing Education, School of Nursing. When Judith “Judy” was a master’s student, Sister Teresa Noth, then Dean of the School of Nursing, approached her with a job opportunity to join the nursing faculty, which Judy accepted. Her unwavering and outstanding work and dedication to the School of Nursing – Madrid led the program to be recognized by the Institute of International Education. The faculty have also voted Judy chair of the department multiple times beyond the usual limits of chairing a department.

M. Susan Heaney, M.D., M.P.H., General Pediatrician, Division Director of the Pediatrics Department Division of General Academics Pediatrics. Dr. Heaney has been at SLU for over 25 years. She was Vice President for Medical Affairs of SSM Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center from 2003 to 2011, and chair of the School of Medicine AAMC Faculty Forward Task Force from 2008 to 2010. She was also chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee for the School of Medicine from 2003 to 2010, and Chair of the Dean’s Task Force for Women in Medicine in 2009. For the past seven years, she has also been the chair of the Junior Faculty Mentoring Committee.

Hallie Kaiser, English and Communications major, Colleges of Arts and Sciences. When Hallie saw a leadership void in Students for Life, she stepped up to fill the role of Vice President of External Affairs, and recruited three other Executive Board members. Hallie led the transformation of the organization’s annual display to help promote positive movements. She is also a facilitator of a Christian Life Community with Campus Ministry where she is a de facto spiritual guide for many freshmen girls, and she planned a health fair with 10 organizations that offered more than 100 students information on healthier choices.

Cynthia Stollhans, M.D., Associate Professor of Art History, College of Arts and Sciences; Associate Chair of Fine and Performing Arts, Department of Fine and Performing Arts. Dr. Stollhans is internationally recognized as one of the leading experts of the depiction of St. Catherine of Alexandria. She is the author of numerous scholarly articles and currently has a book in production with one of the most respected academic publishing houses of art history scholarship. Through her own scholarly activities, she ensures that her students are given access to outside scholars to learn about what their career choice might mean. Her students give her course evaluations that are among the highest in the department.

Virginia Westermeyer, Business Manager, Department of Family and Community Medicine, School of Medicine. Described by her colleague as the “right-hand man” to the department chair, Virginia is involved in many important, challenging initiatives in the department. Because of her vast experience, she is often asked to provide guidance to other departments, which she enjoys doing to ensure the success of the School of Medicine. In the St. Louis community, she organizes the “field day” event at Our Lady of the Pillar each year and served on the Parish Council for five years, including three as co-president.
40th Anniversary Celebration Dinner

On the evening of Friday, March 22, guests, friends, and past and present board members of the Saint Louis University Women’s Commission joined to celebrate its ruby anniversary. The evening was full of surprises and creativity, honoring three women in particular who have joined with SLU and the St. Louis community to make a difference in the lives of others.

The three women honored were: Dr. Blanche Touhill, Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Missouri-St. Louis, for her contributions in Education; Kathleen Hummel, Founder of Our Little Haven, for contributing through Enrichment; and Dr. Ellen Harshman, Interim Academic Vice President at SLU, for her contributions through Empowerment. These women have provided a lifetime of service to the community and the Commission was thrilled to recognize each for her unique contributions, past and present.

The Commission decided to honor these women through a unique presentation. Cecilia Nadal, SLU graduate and Executive Director of Gitana, produced and presented a dramatic dance, song and dialogue to blend with a performance that recreated highlights from each woman’s life. Gitana brings art and music to the city, along with dramatic performances in support of justice, peace and interpersonal relations, which is Nadal’s personal passion.

The celebration was made even more memorable when, Mary Bruemmer, Ex-Officio and founder of the Commission, unveiled the proclamation from Mayor Slay that declared Friday, March 22, 2013 as Saint Louis University Women’s Commission Day.

To find out more about the Commission or the 40th Anniversary, visit the Women’s Commission display case in Pius Library, second floor, and the displays that celebrate Women’s History Month on the first and second floors. Additional information can be found on the Women's Commission website.
The Sister Shirley Kolmer Memorial Endowment Fund

In July 1994, a SLU employee who had been honored as Woman of the Year by the Women’s Commission in April wished to show her appreciation by establishing a University Fund, which could be used to advance the work of the Commission. She directed that the name of the donor should remain anonymous. She did, however, attach a special name to the Fund, that of Sister Shirley Kolmer, ASC, who had been brutally killed while teaching in Liberia, Africa during the revolution there in 1993.

At the Women of the Year luncheon that year, the University community had mourned the loss of Sister Shirley, a former faculty member and chair of the Department of Mathematics, and member of the Sister Adorers of the Blood of Christ. When Sister Shirley left the University, it was as a Fulbright Scholar to teach mathematics in Liberia, Africa. She was called from there to serve as the elected head of her order, with headquarters in Ruma, Illinois. Following that position, she decided to join four of her Sisters on a mission to teach in Liberia, despite the unsettled political situation. Her enthusiastic and dedicated work with the impoverished peoples of Africa led to the martyrdom that she suffered. The loss to her order, to the University of which she was an alumna, and to the Church was immeasurable. It was fitting that the “named endowment fund” should bear the name of this valiant woman. Her blood-sister, Sister Elizabeth Kolmer, ASC, 1993 Woman of the Year and retired former Chair of the Department of American Studies, is still actively involved in the Social Ministries of St. Francis College Church.

THE FUND AND HOW IT GREW

After the Fund was established, the Board occasionally made requests for donations to the fund, but the account grew slowly. As income from the investments increased, the Commission began to offer small grants, in keeping with the donor’s wishes:

- 1999 - a challenge grant of $1,000 was awarded to Dr. Lyn S. Amine of the Business School Faculty to attend the Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education at Bryn Mawr College.

- 2001 - $500 was granted to Martha Allen of the Pius XII Library Staff to help fund attendance and presentation of a paper at a conference on Information Technologies in Beijing, China.

- 2002 - the Commission provided $500 for Commission President, Julie Howe, to attend the National Conference of Women in Higher Education in Santa Clara, CA.

- 2007 - the Commission voted to make a gift of $500 to the School of Medicine Education and Research Fund in honor of Dr. Patricia Monteleone upon her retirement as Dean of the School of Medicine and over five decades of service to the University and its women.

- 2008 - the Board voted to give $500 to Students for Life for their Scholarship Fund, the Pregnant and Parenting Student Assistance Fund.

TODAY - TIME TO GIVE AND GROW

To celebrate the Commission’s 40th Anniversary, a decision was made to build the fund to the minimum of $25,000 required for designation as an endowment. A successful trivia night in March added $3000 to the balance, which now is just short of the desired $25,000.

Gifts in any amount can be designated for the fund by sending checks payable to SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY, with the notation “Women’s Commission Kolmer Fund,” to Office of the Women’s Commission, 221 North Grand Boulevard, DuBourg Hall, Room 359, St. Louis, MO 63103. Gifts to the University are tax-deductible for those who itemize their donations.
Member Development Committee Created

The Women’s Commission revised their bylaws this year, consolidating redundant details, clarifying roles and adding missing information. One major change was the addition of a Member Development committee. In consultation with the Executive Board, this committee will coordinate biannual receptions for new women employees, keep track of awards received by SLU women, and maintain a contact list of women interested in serving on the Commission board or committees, among other activities. The goal of the committee will be to make all SLU women aware of the Commission events and ways to get involved.

Anyone interested in joining this committee or any other committee of the Commission can e-mail wc@slu.edu. To read the updated bylaws, visit the Women’s Commission website.

Board Welcomes New Employees to University

Members of the Women’s Commission board welcomed new female employees to the University at a private reception in Pere Marquette on Thursday, April 4. President Nancy Culbert spoke to the women about opportunities for growth in the areas of education, enrichment, and empowerment, while at SLU. Additionally, new employees were able to meet other women from all areas of the University and both sides of campus.

This is the fourth new employee reception hosted by the Commission. The newly formed Member Development Committee will be responsible for organizing the reception going forward. The next welcome will be held in the fall.

Display in Pius Library Celebrates 40 years

Staff, students, faculty and guests are invited to stop by the second floor of Pius Library to enjoy a display of artifacts from the Women’s Commission’s 40 years of existence. The display is an additional way the Commission is celebrating their anniversary. Among the items are old photos, awards and programs from over the years. It will be up until April 30.

Calendar of Events

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 15, 2013</td>
<td>Reservations due for Women of the Year Luncheon</td>
<td>Send to Women’s Commission Office, DuBourg Hall, Room 359</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 24, 2013</td>
<td>Women of the Year Luncheon</td>
<td>Wool Ballroom, Busch Student Center</td>
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<td>Reception at 11:30 a.m., Lunch at noon</td>
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