



The Women of Hopkins

DLC – Diversity Innovation Grants

Final Report (4 June 2017)

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Our grassroots gender equity team “Achieving Gender Equity in Science” is actively working to drive culture change at Johns Hopkins University, by raising awareness about the barriers faced by women in traditionally male dominated fields. In our efforts, we have been supported by two \$2,500 DIG grants (received in 2015 and 2016) from the Diversity Leadership Council. These grants have helped fund the development of reading group workshops, host high profile invited speakers, and install two art exhibits on campus. Beyond the financial support, association with the DLC brand has helped to open doors and forge connections across campus that would not otherwise have been available to us.

Thank you to the DLC for their steadfast support.

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1. Gender Equity Workshops

We developed a series of reading group workshops open to the Johns Hopkins Community, in which we discussed research articles on barriers faced by women in STEM fields. The workshops developed with DLC support include:

1.1 “Can Evidence Impact Attitudes?”

(15 September 2015) This was our first workshop of the Fall 2015 semester, in which we discussed the eponymous research [paper](#) by Moss-Racusin, Molenda and Cramer, which systematically categorized the types of lash-back that can arise in response to experimental evidence of gender bias in STEM fields.

1.2 “Enhancing the Potential of Women in STEM”

(30 September 2015) This workshop was focused on educating faculty and students about gender bias at a departmental level. In this way, we hoped to reach people who wouldn’t normally go out of their way to attend our other workshops and avoid preaching to the choir. We

worked with the Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering department to make the workshop part of their weekly seminar series. Since the department requires graduate students to attend their seminar series, we had excellent attendance, with between 50 and 80 people in the audience.

1.3 “The Confidence Gap”

(4 November 2015) Here we discussed a [research](#) article documenting evidence that women systematically underestimate their professional abilities in STEM, and also [research](#) that suggests that in some areas of science confidence matters more than competence in determining peer evaluation of STEM capabilities.

1.4 “Gender and Mentoring”

(17 November 2015) In this workshop we discussed a topic that was widely requested in some of our other workshops: how to select research mentors that can assist in overcoming gender barriers.

1.5 “White Privilege. Male Privilege. In Science”

(12 April 2016) In this workshop where we discussed the concept of “privilege” specifically in the scientific and academic spheres. We reviewed data from social scientists studying privilege and data on NIH funding rates, shared personal experiences, and considered appropriate and practical responses.

1.6 “Empowering Women in STEM”

(20 October 2016) This was our second workshop that was targeted to educating faculty and Students at the departmental level. This time we worked with the department of Chemistry to include the workshop in their seminar series.

2. Dr. Jo Handelsman Seminar

On March 8th, 2016, we hosted a gender equity seminar at JHU by Dr. Jo Handelsman, entitled “The Fallacy of Fairness”. At the time, Dr. Handelsman was Associate Director of the White House’s Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), under President Obama. In addition, Dr. Handelsman is a co-author on one of the main papers discussed in our workshops, in which two CVs for lab manager positions were sent out to STEM faculty across the country, one CV for a fictitious person named John, and another named Jennifer. These faculty were asked to rate the CVs on how likely they would be to be hired, how much they would be paid, and how likely they would be to receive mentorship. John was rated significantly higher on all measures. The trick in this study was that both CVs were identical, except for their names and gender pronouns.

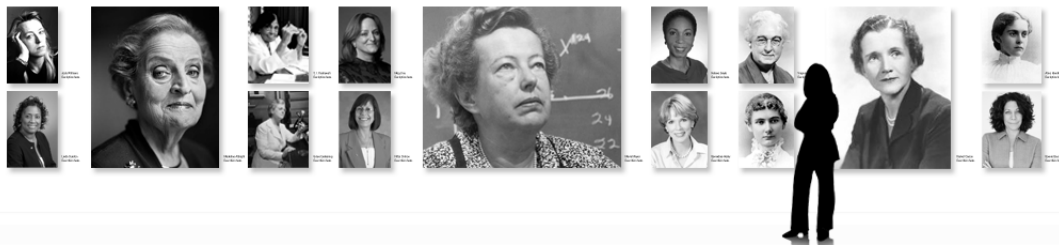
A recording of Dr. Handelsman’s seminar can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMVOrLDzOok>.

3. The Women of Hopkins Portrait Gallery

We need heroes. Pioneers that blaze trails and inspire us to follow their footsteps. In traditionally male-dominated fields, however, the heroes we hear about most often are men. Einstein, Pasteur, Roosevelt, Rockefeller... Where are the role models who demonstrate capability isn't correlated to gender? Countless women who have changed the world were molded right here at JHU, but many of us don't know them.

In her March 8th seminar, Dr. Handelsman suggested that we use the blank walls and empty spaces of this campus as a canvas to illuminate the successes of Hopkins' heroines. We took her suggestion literally, and created a ~600 square foot public art installation at the Mattin Center, honoring 23 of Hopkins' most accomplished women.

Here was our initial mockup when we proposed the gallery:



...and here is how it turned out:



The ribbon cutting ceremony for the project was held on October 18th, 2017, and included opening remarks from the DLC and President Daniels. We invited Gail Kelly, class of 1974 and one of the honorees in our exhibit, to cut the ribbon. A video of the event can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iarZVgwHA9o>. Several news articles about the project were written by [HUB News](#), the [JHU Newsletter](#), [Politik](#), and [Baltimore Watchdog](#). Here are a few more photos from the ribbon cutting ceremony:







A website accompanying the physical portrait gallery is online at women.jhu.edu, which includes biographical sketches for each honoree, written by grassroots volunteers in our community and edited by Valerie Hartman. A screenshot of the website is included below to give a flavor of the site. At the time of writing this report, the site has had 13,807 page views from 2,997 unique users. [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) profiles for the gallery are also maintained with news about our team's initiatives.



The honorees included in the exhibit are:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie - Novelist, MacArthur Genius grant winner, author of *Americanah* and *We Should All Be Feminists*.

Madeleine Albright - First female secretary of state.

Virginia Apgar - Inventor of the Apgar score.

Florence Bascom - The first woman to receive a degree from JHU, first woman hired by the US Geological Survey.

Bonnie Bassler - Discovered the molecular mechanisms of quorum sensing, whereby bacteria communicate.

Rachel Carson - Author of "Silent Spring".

Angelin Chang - Grammy award winning classical pianist

Nitza Margarita Cintron - Chief of Space Medicine at NASA.

Linda Cureton - Former CIO of NASA, CEO of MUSE technologies.

Helene D. Gayle - CEO of the McKinsey Social Initiative.

Gail Kelly - Member of the JHU undergraduate class admitted in 1970, the first year that JHU accepted female undergraduates. She has 30 years of experience in behavioral healthcare and legislative advocacy in Baltimore for patients with mental disabilities, AIDS, substance abuse, and cancer.

Maria Goeppert-Mayer - Nobel prize for the nuclear shell model of the atomic nucleus.

Carol W. Greider - Nobel prize for the discovery of telomerase.

Mary Guinan - Worked to eradicate smallpox in India, investigated some of the first cases of

AIDS, first woman to serve as Chief Science Advisor to the director of the CDC.

Bernadine Healy - Former president of the American Red Cross, former Director of NIH, and former Deputy Director of the White House OSTP.

Christine Ladd-Franklin - Mathematician. First woman to fulfill the requirements for a degree from JHU, although Florence Bascom was the first to actually receive a degree. Ladd-Franklin's degree was not granted until 44 years later, due to her gender.

Gail McGovern - President of the American Red Cross.

Redonda Miller - First female president of the JHU hospital.

Sivaramakrishna Iyer Padmavati - First female cardiologist in India.

Karen Peetz - President of BNY Mellon, largest deposit bank in the world.

Jill Rafson - Director of New Play Development at Roundabout Theatre in NYC

Florence Sabin - First woman full faculty member at JHU, first woman elected to the National Academy of Sciences.

Meg Urry - President of the American Astronomical Society, researches the role of black holes in galaxy formation, advocate for gender equity in the sciences and academia.

4. High Table

High Table is an annual dinner put on by the University for the 1st year undergraduate class, based on the Formal Hall dinners from Oxford University. Each year, the recreation center is transformed into a medieval dining hall, and students dine with invited professors who wear their formal academic regalia. The walls of the rec center are draped in black, and large portraits of some of Hopkins' most accomplished affiliates are hung around the room. However, in all previous years, the portraits that were hung exclusively depicted white male affiliates. This year, our team rectified this problem by printing portraits of accomplished women and minorities, and working with the High Table committee to have them displayed along with the portraits from previous years. In his address to the students, President Daniels referred to the new portraits and said that it was nice to see that traditions like High Table are "capable of evolution."

Here are pictures from the JHU HUB [news article](#) on High Table 2017 showing the portraits (framed in yellow along the outer edge of the room).



The portraits added to High Table include:
(1) **Madeleine Albright** - First female Secretary of State.

- (2) **Virginia Apgar (1909-1974)** - Anesthesiologist, inventor of the Apgar score for assessing newborn health
- (3) **Florence Bamberger** - First JHU full professor
- (4) **Florence Bascom** - Geologist, first woman to *receive* a degree from JHU. According to Wikipedia, "While studying at Johns Hopkins she was forced to sit behind a screen so as not to disturb the men"
- (5) **Rachel Carson** - Biologist, conservationist and author of *Silent Spring*, Masters in Zoology from JHU
- (6) **Ranice Crosby** - The first female department head at the JHU School of Medicine.
- (7) **Mary Elizabeth Garrett** - Provided most of the funding to allow the School of Medicine to open.
- (8) **Helene Gayle** – CEO of the McKinsey Social Initiative
- (9) **Alice Hamilton (1869-1970)** - Toxicologist and first female faculty member at Harvard University
- (10) **Bernadine Healy** - President of the American Red Cross, Director of the NIH.
- (11) **Buford Jeannette Johnson** - Second female JHU full professor.
- (12) **Gail Kelly** – One of three female African American students admitted to JHU as an undergraduate in 1970, the first year women were admitted as undergraduates.
- (13) **Kelly Miller (1863-1939)** - Hopkins' first African American student, admitted to JHU Mathematics in 1887. Dean of Arts and Sciences at Howard University. It would be nearly 60 years before JHU admitted our second African American student.
- (14) **Christine Ladd-Franklin** - Psychologist and Mathematician, early pioneer in understanding vision and color. First woman to *earn* a degree from JHU, although despite her fulfilling all of the PhD requirements, the degree was not given to her because she was female, it was awarded 44 years later.
- (15) **Maria Goeppert Mayer** - Nobel Laureate in Physics for nuclear shell model of the atomic nucleus.
- (16) **Sivaramakrishna Iyer Padmavati** - First female cardiologist to practice in India.
- (17) **Florence R. Sabin (1871-1953)** - First female professor in the JHU school of medicine, first woman elected to the National Academy of Sciences.
- (18) **Helene Taussig** – Founded the field of pediatric cardiology.
- (19) **Martha Carey Thomas (1857 - 1935)** - Linguist and Suffragette. First woman to apply to study at JHU, was not permitted to attend classes.
- (20) **Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.** - First African American CEO of a Fortune 500 company, foreign policy advisor to six US Presidents.
- (21) **Vivien Thomas** - Leading American surgeon, pioneered the 'blue baby' operation.

5. National Women's Studies Association 2017 Conference

A poster discussing our team's recent initiatives has been submitted and accepted to the NWSA's November 2017 conference ***40 Years After Combahee: Feminist Scholars and Activist Engage the Movement for Black Lives***. Our poster is entitled Women of Hopkins Art Installation: Creating Visible Change.

6. Jody Williams

In the process of developing the Women of Hopkins portrait gallery, we reached out to each honoree we hoped to include in the exhibit to obtain their permission. Jody Williams, who studied at JHU-SAIS and received the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for her work banning landmines, was one of the women we initially hoped to include. However, when we reached out to her she responded:

"My experience with and at Hopkins was not a positive one... When I received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, I was subsequently offered the Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1999 and I never responded to it and never

accepted it. It never occurred to me to accept it given my relationship with the school.”

Jody asked not to be included in the Women of Hopkins project, and we honored her wishes. But our team continued to talk with her by email and over the phone. We wanted to communicate that the project is not about honoring JHU, but rather it is about honoring some of the many incredible women who have been a part of our community, even when that involves discussing our university’s past mistakes.

Many of the other women we honored had equally negative experiences here. Florence Bascom was forced to sit behind a screen while attending classes, so as to not disturb the male students. Maria Goeppert Mayer, who won a Nobel Prize in physics, was hardly paid for her nine years of work at the university, and was made to perform her experiments in an attic. Bernadine Healy had to fight to shut down a play put on by an all male club on campus, which depicted her as a sexually explicit character. Christine Ladd-Franklin’s PhD was not awarded to her until nearly a half-century after she earned it (it was finally bestowed as part of the university’s 50th anniversary celebration, a few years before her death). When Ladd-Franklin’s degree was finally awarded, the *Baltimore Sun* asked, “Is Johns Hopkins University now conferring an honor upon Mrs. Christine Ladd-Franklin, or is Mrs. Christine Ladd-Franklin conferring an honor on Johns Hopkins University?” By highlighting these stories, we are trying to make JHU a more diverse, inclusive and ultimately productive place.

Through our continued discussions with Jody Williams, we were able to change her mind about the project. She has agreed to come to JHU to speak in front of students about her experiences, and we are now working with SAIS to coordinate this event in 2018.

7. Chimamanda Adichie

Eventually, our team intends to find ways to bring each of the Women of Hopkins honorees to speak on campus, so that our students can be inspired by their voices and their actions. We were able to help the JHU Foreign Affairs Symposium reach out to Women of Hopkins honoree Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and to arrange for her to [speak on campus](#) on February 8th, 2017. Before her talk, Ms. Adichie visited the Women of Hopkins portrait gallery in person. Below are some pictures from that day. One of Ms. Adichie’s quotes from her book *We Should All Be Feminists* is particularly relevant to the goals of Women of Hopkins project, where she says, “Culture does not make people. People make culture. If it is true that the full humanity of women is not our culture, then we can and must make it our culture.”



8. The Women of Hopkins Panel

We are currently arranging a moderated panel discussion, tentatively set for March of 2018. Six of the honorees from our Women of Hopkins portrait gallery have expressed interest in attending. This includes Angelin Chang, Meg Urry, Helene Gayle, Redonda Miller, Gail McGovern and Bonnie Bassler. We are working to finalize the event details.

9. Continued Activism

The University has given permission to keep the Women of Hopkins portrait installation up through October of 2017, with the possibility to extend this permission up to October 2018. We are currently working with the university to turn the gallery into a permanent exhibit. Specifically, we are in discussions with the Office of Development and the Office of Alumni Relations to develop a small endowment to maintain a permanent exhibit and to fund an annual speaker series to continue the discussion on gender equity at JHU.

In the process of researching the archives for the Women of Hopkins portrait gallery, we came across the following letter from Rachel Carson. This letter captures the moment Carson discovered the terrible effects of the insecticide DDT, at which point she felt inherently responsible to speak out in words that would soon define her career. In many ways, this project has felt similar, except that we are writing about gender bias instead of insecticides.

As perhaps you heard, I suddenly find myself writing about insecticides. I hadn't meant to, but it seems to me enormously important, and I decided far too few people (including myself only a few months ago!) knew what they should about it. So now I'm into it, but hope to do it quickly and rather briefly.

This has been a tough winter, with someone sick most of the time, but now spring has come we're all feeling better. Do hope you and Nellie are well. I meant to write to tell you how touched my mother was by your remembering her birthday- she sends her love now to you both.

As ever,

Rachel