



UWomen

'Complementary' medicine: *Suzanne Garber and Ngozika Okoye*

By Susan Maas



Patrick O'Leary

Welcome to U Women!

I'm pleased to present you with our annual issue of *UWomen* in the Minnesota Women's Press. This is our third year of collaboration with the *Women's Press* on this snapshot of the exceptional work by, for, and about women at the University of Minnesota, and I am proud to once again showcase the U's vibrant and extraordinary community of women.

Like all communities across Minnesota, the country, and the globe, we, too, are feeling the pressure of the economic crisis, and struggling to make the tough decisions that have to be made in a global financial downturn. At the time of this writing, it is still unclear what the repercussions of this downturn will be.

What is clear, however, is that the community of women at the University of Minnesota continues to grow stronger in voice, in spirit, and in leadership. Our Women's Center recently appointed a new permanent director—Dr. Peg Lonquist, whom you'll hear more from on page 2—and continues to serve women faculty, staff, and students in new and creative ways. In these pages, you'll also read about the two medical students who are heading up a student organization dedicated to fighting health disparities; research in the School of Nursing aimed at eradicating Type 2 diabetes in American Indian youth; and what women around the University of Minnesota system are reading this summer.

I hope *UWomen* will inspire you to become a part of the University's community of exceptional women.

Nancy Rusty Barceló

Dr. Nancy "Rusty" Barceló
Vice President/Vice Provost for Equity and Diversity
University of Minnesota

Scott Sreble



Suzanne Garber and Ngozika Okoye

One was born in Rochester, Minnesota, the other in Nsukka, Nigeria. One is 39; the other is 24. One is passionate, even a bit of a hothead; the other is analytical and judicious. Both are deeply committed to medicine and to combating health disparities — locally and globally. As copresidents of the University of Minnesota's chapter of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA),

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Bringing forward the voice:

A Q & A with Lisa Martin

Interview by Ami Berger

Lisa Martin is a clinical instructor and doctoral candidate in the School of Nursing at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. A member of the Lac Du Flambeau Band of Chippewa Indians in Northern Wisconsin, Martin's research focuses on Type 2 diabetes in urban American Indian adolescents.

UWomen: How did you initially become interested in the topic of diabetes in American Indian youth?

Martin: My interest grew through personal experiences with family members living with the disease and previous work I had done as a public health nurse with adolescents. Type 2 diabetes is one of the forms of diabetes that has previously

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The Women's Center: Encouraging U women to 'lead from where they are'

By Anitra Cottledge

"Helping women find their voices as leaders—and helping others understand the value of listening to those voices—is an important part of our mission," says Peg Lonquist, director of the Women's Center at the University of Minnesota. In fulfilling that mission, the Women's Center and the Office for Human Resources are partnering on the "Leading From Where You Are" program (LFWYA), a semester-long cohort for women in Civil Service and Bargaining Unit positions at the University.

Participants in the LFWYA program meet on a bi-monthly basis for peer networking and to read and discuss a selected book. Over the course of the year, they also develop and assess their personal leadership goals, select and implement a small climate change project, and reflect and learn from a capstone speaker.

"The sharing that happens in the LFWYA cohorts is terrific," says Millie Woodbury, a small-group facilitator in the 2008-2009 LFWYA program. For their group project, Woodbury's LFWYA group chose to host a seminar for their colleagues entitled "Social Networking: What is Web 2.0?" which focused on clarifying different types of social networking and their uses. The seminar was successful, according to Woodbury, because each member of the five-woman group was committed and took ownership of a part of the event's coordination.

Providing a learning environment for women at all levels of leadership, even those who may not have previously considered



Millie Woodbury (center) with the LFWYA group she facilitated: pictured left to right are Pam Rose, Bonnie Marten, Woodbury, Mary Ann Forseth, and Polly Peterson

themselves "leaders," is the cornerstone of the program's mission to support the development of Civil Service and Bargaining Unit women. "LFWYA has helped my confidence in my presenting and facilitation skills," says Woodbury, who has been involved with the program since its inception. "I've learned how to do things I wouldn't normally do."

Anitra Cottledge is a coordinator in the Women's Center at the University of Minnesota.



Bringing forward the voice *continued from page 1*

Courtesy U of M School of Nursing



what does exist focuses on negative health indicators of American Indian youth. The literature tends to be problem-focused on such topics as alcoholism, drug use, poverty, violence, and other descriptions on the inability of American Indian youth to succeed in the western world. I have found little that brings forward the voice of American Indian youth on present day problems or in the development of solutions. My dissertation explores the nature and meaning of living with type 2 diabetes through face-to-face

occurred only in adults; we are beginning to see type 2 for the first time in children and adolescents. There is very little written on this topic, and

interviews with adolescents to produce real life accounts of their experience.

UWomen: What are your findings showing so far?

Martin: There is great need in the Indian community for more research in this area, but some essential learnings have become clear. To reduce health disparities and improve the lives of American Indian people, tribes must strive for internal capacity to develop and conduct their own, tribal-based research. Also, in order to develop a sustained relationship between large institutions like the U and Indian tribes, a high level of knowledge is required on how to bridge cultural views, norms, and develop alliances. Additionally, it is essential to develop trust over time and culturally acceptable communication in order to bring research goals to reality. At this time I am developing findings from my research. The approach I'm using permits learning directly from American Indian adolescents living with type 2

diabetes, the meaning of historical events, family, and community in their daily lives, decisions, and perspectives. Importantly, this approach is similar to American Indian cultural practices—storytelling and talking circles, where verbal sharing of perspectives is valued to interpret meaning.

UWomen: How do you envision your findings being used?

Martin: My hope for this research is that it will contribute to the development of culturally acceptable diabetes prevention efforts in American Indian communities. I hope it will also broaden understanding on developing research projects between research institutions and tribal communities.

Ami Berger is the director of communications for the Office for Equity and Diversity at the University of Minnesota, and the editor of UWomen.

So, What Are U Reading?

A snapshot of the books on UWomen's shelves and minds

KARLA PADRON, Ph.D. Student, American Studies, College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

I recently read *Trans/Forming Feminisms*, edited by Krista Scott-Dixon. My research focuses on the activist work of transgender Latina immigrants in the U.S., and this anthology has helped me develop practical and theoretical approaches for working with transgender communities. The work both names and challenges the power invested in gender binaries as a way of knowing and being in the world.

JOSEPHINE LEE, Associate Professor, Department of English, and Director of the Asian American Studies Consortium, College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

I recently enjoyed reading Martha Sandweiss's *Passing Strange: A Gilded Age Tale of Love and Deception Across the Color Line*. It's the story of Clarence King, a white man who was the first director of the U.S. Geological Survey, and his wife Ada Copeland, an African-American woman born into slavery. The book teaches a great history lesson about turn-of-the-century racial politics, but it also reads like a detective story.

ANN MEIER, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

I'm currently reading *Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies* by Charis Thompson.

Because assisted reproductive technologies (ART) are more often used by older and wealthier women or couples, the increasing use of ART has the potential to create more "unequal childhoods" by creating a group of particularly advantaged children. *Making Parents* offers a deep and interesting investigation of the political and moral risks and possibilities that are inherent in this technology.



Richard Anderson



Patrick O'Leary



Kathy MacWilliams



Brett Crowther



Courtesy Hamline University School of Law



Senah Deval

CARMEN M. LATTERELL, Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Minnesota, Duluth

Two of my life roles are very important to me: being a teacher of mathematics and being a mother of a young girl. *Why Gender Matters*, by Leonard Sax, addresses why parents and teachers should have an understanding of sex differences and how these matter in everyday life and in education. I care about this both in the respect that I am raising a daughter, but also from the respect that I want both females and males to do well in mathematics.

KIM BOYD, Director, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

The last book that I read was *Unaccustomed Earth* by Jhumpa Lahiri, an amazing collection of short stories. The last three stories are really a novella, entitled "Hema and Kaushik," about the relationship between a man and a woman, both second-generation Bengali-American, from childhood through adulthood. It is a beautiful series of stories that will make you laugh and cry.

JULIE A. PELLETIER, Associate Professor of Anthropology and American Indian Studies, Division of Social Sciences, University of Minnesota, Morris

I recently read *The Third Space of Sovereignty: the Postcolonial Politics of U.S.-Indigenous Relations* by Kevin Bruyneel, who describes how Indian tribes were viewed as existing "out of time": situated in a mythical past, damaged by colonization and their own savagery and therefore naturally under the care of the settler-state. More recently, successful gaming tribes are also seen as "out of time"—too far removed from their "Noble Savage" essence—and thus too strong, needing to be governed for their own good. Bruyneel reveals the cultural and historical underpinnings of American Indian policies, unveils complex social relationships and understandings, and brings policy to life for students in a way that surprises and engages them.

'Complementary' medicine *continued from page 1*

Suzanne Garber and Ngozika Okoye make a formidable team.

The SNMA's mission is "to achieve better medical standards for people of color and underserved communities." Among its goals are increasing the number of culturally competent physicians and helping to educate and encourage pre-medical and medical students of color.

Okoye, whose family moved from Nigeria to Mississippi when she was 2, knows firsthand of the need the SNMA attempts to fill. "When I grew up, we were poor immigrants. We didn't have health care; we used free clinics and the ER," she recalls. "We need to educate people, including providers and the public, about health-care disparities here and around the world."

Garber's upbringing informs her commitment to the SNMA, too. "My mom, who is Mexican, worked as a migrant health nurse for 20 years, and it's just horrendous, the health care these people get," Garber says.

There's a definite yin-yang dynamic in Garber's and Okoye's collaboration. "We feed off of each other very well," Okoye says. "I'm like the calm for her fire sign. I'm the water sign — I throw water on her and cool her down," she laughs.

Garber agrees. "I try to be [diplomatic], but when I get mad about something, she's the first one I go to. She makes it so easy for me to ask for help."

Mary Tate, director of the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, advises the SNMA chapter, and agrees that the pair's symbiotic relationship brings tremendous value to the organization. And that, Tate says, benefits the Medical School and the University as a whole.

"The SNMA has really helped put the U of M Medical School on the map," Tate says. "It's won regional and national awards. People I've run into — parents, faculty, people outside of the school — know about the group's efforts. The students who join SNMA, serving is at their core. They just have a heart to serve."

Susan Maas is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer. This is an excerpt of an article which originally appeared in the Winter 2009 issue of the University of Minnesota Medical School's Medical Bulletin.

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U of M Women's Center Celebrates 50 Years in 2010

Founded in 1960 as the first women's center on a university campus, the University of Minnesota Women's Center will celebrate its 50-year anniversary in 2010.

Over the decades, the Women's Center at the University has served as a model both nationally and internationally, with a wide range of programs and services that have supported and influenced thousands of women students, staff and faculty directly and indirectly.

This 50-year success story will be celebrated in 2010. The festivities will include speakers, networking events, and a gala event in March 2010. We invite all those who support women's success at the University and beyond to join us in honoring this milestone and the University women and men who have made it possible.

www.umn.edu/women