Members of the Women’s Action Coalition of the Mid-South come out for a CROW event to support women’s rights.
For over three decades the Center for Research on Women (CROW) has developed a reputation for contributing reliable data to the community. Our data is used to inform sound public policy in the areas of economic self-sufficiency, childcare, women’s health, infant mortality, and teen pregnancy. In the pages that follow you will read about CROW’s accomplishments over the past year and the continued work we do to uplift the status of women and girls both locally and nationally.

CROW has continued its partnership with the Shelby County Office of Early Childhood and Youth and other community organizations to work on the $4.2 million federally funded Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Success grant. CROW released the Shelby County Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Needs Assessment last year, and recently released a report detailing the effectiveness of the program.

Following up on last year’s Child Care As An Investment For The Future, CROW has partnered with local economist David H. Ciscel, PhD to understand the impact of the child care industry on the child care worker in Memphis and Shelby County. A full report with recommendations for policy changes was released this summer.

CROW continues to develop relationships with local agencies and organizations that serve women and girls in Memphis. This year CROW continued our partnerships with Girls Incorporated of Memphis, A Step Ahead Foundation, and the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis to provide research support for the important work they contribute to our community.

In addition to direct research, this year CROW sponsored events that promoted women’s scholarship and celebrated women’s achievements, such as the Lunch With A Leader event where we worked with several UoM departments to bring successful and influential women in our community to share their experiences with our female college students. We also continue to partner with a growing list of campus and community organizations on a number of projects and programs that help to both support women’s rights and ensure their well-being.

On behalf of our staff and outstanding team of Faculty Affiliates, I want to take this moment to thank each of you for your interest in our issues. It is your continued interest and support that has allowed us to operate for over thirty years. With the help of supporters like you we look forward to another year of investigation, discovery, and activism on behalf of women’s quest for social equality.

With best regards,
The University of Memphis
Center for Research on Women

OUR MISSION

The Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis has investigated issues of gender, race, class, and social inequality for more than a quarter century.

Our mission is to conduct, promote, and disseminate scholarship on women and social inequality.

An interdisciplinary unit within the University’s College of Arts and Sciences, this thriving academic center is home to collaborative researchers committed to scholarly excellence and deep community involvement. The Center is regarded as a national leader in promoting an integrative approach to understanding and addressing inequities in our society.

The Center’s approach to research, theory, and programming emphasizes the structural relationships among race, class, gender, and sexuality, particularly in the U.S. South and among women of color.

This kind of action-oriented, community-based research strengthens the public’s understanding of women’s experiences and informs local, regional, and national public policy.

Staff:
Lynda M. Sagrestano, Ph.D., Director
Lornette W. Stokes, Administrative Secretary
Naketa Edney, M.A., Research Associate
Ace F. Madjlesi, M.A., Research Associate
Teresa A. Rawlings, M.A., Project Coordinator

CROW is saying good-bye to staff members Nikki Edney, Lornette Stokes, and Teresa Rawlings. CROW would like to thank them for their incredible contributions and years of dedicated service.

CROW DIRECTOR AWARDED EXCELLENCE IN ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

CROW Director, Associate Professor of Psychology, and affiliate faculty member in Women’s and Gender Studies, Dr. Lynda Sagrestano, has been awarded the Alumni Association Excellence in Engaged Scholarship Award from the University of Memphis.

Her research is oriented toward applying psychological theory to understand and intervene in social problems and to advance theory development. She especially highlights the role of contextual factors in health processes and outcomes, with the goal of taking a more integrated approach to prevention and intervention in the public health sector. She has developed numerous constructive relationships with local nonprofit organizations to address issues related to infant mortality, adolescent pregnancy, economic security for women, and girls’ empowerment.

Dr. Sagrestano is described as a “model for engagement” and as a highly respected mentor to faculty and students interested in pursuing engaged scholarship in the Mid-South and beyond. Dr. Sagrestano was recently elected a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Society for the Psychology of Women. She was a member of the inaugural class of PI Millionaires at the University of Memphis. She serves on the Board of Directors of the National Council for Research on Women.
STATE OF CHILD CARE WORKERS IN MEMPHIS AND SHELBY COUNTY

Following on the heels of the recently released *Caring for Our Nation’s Future: The Impact of ARRA Funding on Access to Childcare* report, which was presented at a briefing on Capitol Hill last summer, CROW Director Dr. Lynda Sagrestano, with funding from the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis, teamed up with local economist David H. Ciscel, PhD to understand the impact of the childcare industry on the childcare worker.

Although the quality of childcare has improved over the years, the conditions for those entrusted to care for our children has changed very little. Often undervalued, childcare workers work in a field with few regulations and high turnover rates, which force employees to work for low wages and few benefits. Because of this, childcare workers do not typically make the living wage they need to care for their own families.

In the report, *Taking Care of Our Caretakers: Elevating the Standard of Living for Child Care Workers*, Dr. Ciscel outlines the national and local trends in child care and puts forth several recommendations for elevating the status and standard of living for our childcare workers.

To read the full report, visit www.memphis.edu/crow/childcareworkerreport.php.

INFANT MORTALITY

In 2008 the Shelby County Mayor’s Office, with support from the Governor’s Office of Children’s Care Coordination, began funding an initiative called *Community Voice*—a program aimed at reducing the number of infant deaths in Memphis and Shelby County. CROW was commissioned to conduct a multi-year evaluation of the program’s effectiveness, and in 2011 began working with new lead agency Hickory Hill Community Redevelopment Corporation (HHCRC). HHCRC took this program to the people of Memphis and Shelby County and trained over 750 community members to become Lay Health Advisors (LHA). LHAs then went out into their local communities to educate people about infant mortality and how they could prevent it. CROW released *Taking it to the People: The 2013 Community Voice Program Evaluation Report* in the summer of 2013.

Visit www.memphis.edu/crow/infantmortality.php for the full report.
TEEN PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health awarded Tennessee $4.2 million to design, implement, and evaluate a system of care to support pregnant teens and improve outcomes for teen parents in Shelby County. Tennessee is one of 17 states to receive this funding, and Memphis was the only community to receive all of the funds awarded to its state. Since 2011 the Shelby County Office of Early Childhood and Youth and several other community organizations have been working together to streamline the coordination of community-based pregnancy and parenting services in Shelby County. CROW's role is to conduct a teen pregnancy and parenting needs assessment and evaluate the outcome of the streamlined services.

In an effort to identify key themes and policy needs, CROW spent a year working with community stakeholders conducting interview and focus groups; administering surveys to area teens; and creating an inventory of programs and resources for pregnant and parenting teens in Shelby County. Armed with this knowledge, community stakeholders implemented the Teen+ program, which connects pregnant and parenting teens to local resources and services. CROW conducted an evaluation of the program's effectiveness, especially as it relates to improved health, educational, and parenting outcomes for teen parents and their children, and recently released the Shelby County Teen Pregnancy and Parenting Program Evaluation Report.

Visit www.memphis.edu/crow/tpps.php for the full report.

GIRLS INCORPORATED OF MEMPHIS

A local affiliate of a national non-profit organization for girls ages 6-18, Girls Incorporated of Memphis works to build confidence through outcome-based programs that offer instruction in such areas as financial literacy, self-reliance, career planning, and health and sexuality. CROW was commissioned in 2010 by Girls Inc. of Memphis to conduct a multi-year evaluation of their programming for girls ages 9-18. This evaluation examines general outcomes as well as outcomes specific to curriculums used by Girls Inc. of Memphis.


A STEP AHEAD FOUNDATION

A Step Ahead Foundation (ASAF) was established in 2011 to provide free long-acting, reversible, contraception (LARC) to women in Shelby County in an effort to prevent unplanned pregnancy, thus allowing women to more effectively plan their futures, including when and how they choose to have families. The model of service delivery established by ASAF includes partnering with local health clinics that serve low-income women to provide access to LARC at no charge. ASAF hopes to improve the educational, economic, and health outcomes for women and their families by promoting scholastic, personal, and professional development and reducing the economic strain on families due to unintended pregnancy, thereby reducing poverty.

CROW partnered with ASAF to track progress toward goals and outcomes. From August 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012, a total of 431 women received long-acting, reversible contraception (LARC) with financial support from ASAF. The vast majority of recipients were either uninsured (72%) or on TennCare (18%), and over 75% of the women who received LARC with financial support from ASAF had already experienced at least one pregnancy, indicating significant need among the women served. Read the full report at www.memphis.edu/crow/research/asaf.php.
WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH 2013

A PERSONAL JOURNEY THROUGH WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH

Beloved professor and former CROW Faculty Affiliate, Dr. Janann Sherman, Chair, History Department, kicked off Women’s History Month (WHM) by sharing what she has learned about the historical women she has researched over her career, and how these women have shaped her own journey.

Unbeknownst to Dr. Sherman this event was held in recognition of Dr. Sherman’s scholarship on American women, service to the UofM, leadership in the Memphis community, and in celebration of her retirement from the UofM.

Over 150 people came out to celebrate Dr. Sherman and her accomplishments at the UofM.

LUNCH WITH A LEADER

CROW worked with members of Student Leadership and Involvement, and the Institute for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership to bring female students together with some of Memphis’ most successful and influential female professionals. These professionals, some of which were UofM alumnae, joined us for lunch at the UofM to network and engage in meaningful conversations with our students.

CROW faculty affiliates joined our community leaders and students to facilitate these conversations and frame their questions with a gendered lens in an effort to promote dialogue on the unique issues women face in the workforce.

WOMEN WHO LEAD

Closing the WHM 2013 events was a panel discussion celebrating the first time in the history of the University of Memphis that the President’s Executive Council was predominantly female. Students, faculty, and staff came together to honor these leaders, and listen to the journeys they took to their current roles.

The female senior executives who comprised the “Women Who Lead” panel included President Shirley Raines; Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Rosie Bingham; Vice President for Communications, Public Relations and Marketing, Ms. Linda Bonnin; Vice President for Information Technology, Ms. Ellen Watson; and Vice President for Advancement, Ms. Julie Johnson.

This event was sponsored by representatives of Women in Higher Education in Tennessee (WHET) at the University of Memphis.
RELIGION, LAW, & REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

RELIGION, LAW, AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

In January, CROW and almost 50 local organizations observed the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade with a documentary screening and panel discussion.

Nearly 200 people came out to attend the screening of the Emmy-award winning documentary From Danger to Dignity: The Fight for Safe Abortion. This film weaves together two parallel stories: the evolution of ‘underground’ networks that helped women find safe abortions outside the law, and the efforts of activists and legislators who dedicated themselves to legalizing abortion. Archival footage, combined with interviews, brings history alive by documenting the courage of those who broke the silence and saved women’s lives.

Betsy Mandel-Carley, who participated in the initial Texas hearings that led to Roe v. Wade, opened the evening. Following the documentary, host and co-producer of the WKNO TV-10 weekly series “Local Color”, Mamie Shannon, led audience members in a meaningful discussion with our esteemed panelists: Carl Reddix, MD, MPH; Owen Phillips, MD; Rosalyn R. Nichols, D. Min; Brian Faughnan, JD; and former State Senator Beverly Marrero. Dr. Sarah Wilkerson Freeman, Professor of History at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, ended the evening by thanking our guests, panelists, hosts, sponsors, and especially the Charl Ormond Williams Foundation, whose generous contribution catalyzed this event.

For full biographies and to read more about this event visit: www.memphis.edu/crow/religionlawreproductiverights.php.

Women’s History Month 2013 Flashmob!

To celebrate the opening of the 2013 Women’s History Month series of events at the University of Memphis, CROW staff Member Teresa Rawlings worked with Jennifer Schnabel from the University of Memphis Library to plan an opening event that would grab the attention of students, faculty, and staff.

Ebone Amos, Dance and Movement Educator at the UoM, choreographed this piece which was performed to Janet Jackson’s “Control”. Amos recruited students from the theatre and dance department to perform in the lobby of the University Center on the University of Memphis campus.

Dozens of students, faculty, and staff members gathered in the lobby to watch this incredible performance piece.

To watch a video of the 2013 WHM Flashmob or to learn more about WHM events visit: www.memphis.edu/crow/whm/womenshistorymonth2013.php.

From L-R: Carl Reddix, MD, MPH; Owen Phillips, MD; Rosalyn R. Nichols, D. Min; Brian Faughnan, JD; Beverly Marrero.
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

The Center Director continues to serve as sponsor for the Planned Parenthood Greater Memphis Region’s VOX chapter at the University of Memphis. A student-run organization, VOX educates the campus community on reproductive health topics and raises awareness for issues that impact the reproductive rights of women. Over the past year, the U of M VOX chapter has distributed condoms on campus, offered educational training on condom use, and provided tailgating opportunities for Planned Parenthood volunteers and supporters. In 2013, CROW Graduate Research Assistant Sarah Hoover was elected President of VOX.

MEMPHIS TEEN VISION

CROW serves as one of the lead agencies of Memphis Teen Vision (MemTV), a collaborative effort of over 40 local agencies working to address teen pregnancy and sexual health through a coordinated community response. Integral components of the MemTV include comprehensive sex education across Shelby County, delayed onset of sexual intercourse among teens, and sufficient support for pregnant and parenting teens. Over the past year, MemTV has compiled and published local resources for teens and their families and hosted numerous discussions on the topic among service providers, policy makers, and community members. The CROW Director recently completed her term on the MemTV Executive Committee. For more information, please visit www.memtv.org.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH ON WOMEN

The National Council for Research on Women (NCRW) works to end gender inequity and discrimination against girls and women by exposing their root causes and advancing research-informed action. Working with multiple sectors and disciplines, they are shaping a world that demands fairness across difference. Comprised of national, state, and local-level cross-sector individuals and institutions, the Council’s network connects research, policy, and practice to end gender inequity. Institutions include cross-sector representation from academia, business, government, labor, philanthropy, and nonprofit organizations—such as social justice, cultural, health-related, and women’s organizations. Individual members include advocates, change agents, policy thinkers, practitioners, public intellectuals, researchers, and other allies. NCRW harnesses the collective power of its network to provide knowledge, analysis, and thought leadership on issues ranging from reducing women’s poverty to building a critical mass of women’s leadership across sectors. CROW is a member organization of the NCRW network, and Dr. Sagrestano serves on the Board of Directors. To learn more about the National Council for Research on Women, please visit www.ncrw.org.
EARLY SUCCESS COALITION

Launched in 2009, the Shelby County Early Success Coalition (ESC) serves as a collaborative of many local agencies working together to improve the lives of families and children in the Shelby County area. Their mission is to “develop and expand an early childhood comprehensive system of high quality services for children from pre-conception to age eight that engages families, promotes resiliency, and supports positive early childhood development.” The CROW Director serves as the co-chair for the Teen Pregnancy workgroup of the ESC. For more information, please visit www.earlysuccesscoalition.com.

H.O.P.E. WOMEN’S CAUCUS

In 2013, CROW teamed up with Homeless Organizing for Power and Equality (H.O.P.E.), a Mid-South Peace and Justice Center-sponsored organization whose members are people who currently experience or have formerly experienced homelessness. CROW Research Associate Ace Madjlesi organized the H.O.P.E. Women’s Caucus, a safe space for H.O.P.E. members who identify as women to work together on the issues that disproportionately affect them.

The Women’s Caucus met regularly for “Dinner and Discussion,” out of which a core group of organizers emerged to focus on the unique challenges the women faced, specifically violence. After several weeks of fundraising, eight Women’s Caucus members completed 5 weeks of intensive self-defense training which equipped members with the fundamental skills needed to handle an attack and get out of violent situations quickly. Over the next year, the H.O.P.E. Women’s Caucus plans to conduct outreach to more women experiencing homelessness, and learn to train others on self-defense, on the street and in shelters.
Please add the Center for Research on Women to your list of annual charitable gifts!

Our researchers are working on issues of vital importance to women and girls in Memphis, the region, and the nation, including:

**Sexual harassment in middle and high schools**

**Infant mortality**

**Poverty**

**Teen pregnancy and sexual risk-taking**

**Violence against women**

**Childcare**

**Transportation**

Almost 200 people turned out for the Religion, Law, & Reproductive Rights film screening and panel discussion hosted by CROW.
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Read CROW’s Nowhere to Hide, a report on the impact of sexual harassment experienced by teenagers in Memphis middle and high schools. Visit www.memphis.edu/crow/sexualharassment.php.

Learn how access to stable, affordable, high quality child care is imperative to sustaining employment and economic security for single mothers, in Childcare as an Investment for the Future. Visit www.memphis.edu/crow/childcare_as_an_investment_in_the_future.php.
Center for Research on Women

Supporting scholarship on race, class, gender and social inequality since 1982

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