

# Women's Resource Center



Women's Resource Center  
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**Annual  
Report  
2021-22**

## Mission & Purpose

The Women's Resource Center at the University of Utah was founded in 1971 by a group of visionary women faculty, staff and graduate students. Fifty years later, we are grounded in our mission to support student well-being and success through programs, counseling, training, and scholarships. The Women's Resource Center does this by leading out on issues of gender equity, engaging in social justice work, advocating for students, and creatively looking for new ways to holistically support students, so that they can find a sense of belonging and purpose at the University and beyond.

## Departmental Outcomes

1. Improve Access to Student Mental Health Services
2. Maintain and/or increase diverse sources of Funding to support student success
3. Offer a robust scholarship program that helps to Retain and Graduate students
4. Collaborate with other offices engage students in programming to foster belonging, and support life-long learning
5. Redesign organization's structure to expand capacity and better meet student needs

## Programs, Services, and Resources

### 1. Improve access to student mental health services through individual counseling, support groups, and our feminist multicultural therapy program

- **Individual Counseling:** Counseling at the Women's Resource Center is rooted in a Feminist Multicultural Therapy model. We work collaboratively with the client to empower them in all aspects of their lives. We understand and honor the intersections of clients' identities and the impact trauma has on every client's need for safety, connection, belonging, and dignity.

Students seek clinical services for a variety of reasons including anxiety management, depression, stress reduction, and social isolation. Often students reach out after experiencing a sexual assault, interpersonal violence, or harassment. Clinicians at the WRC often receive referrals from the Center for Student Wellness, University professors, and Dean of Students.

Since 2020, we have waived all fees- providing all clinical services at no cost. We are also able to offer a hybrid model of care which allows clients to meet virtually or in person.

During the academic year of 2021-2022, counseling and group facilitation was provided by two full-time professional clinicians, 3 advanced graduate students in the Educational Psychology program, 1 student from Social Work, and 1 Clinical Psychology PhD student. Our clinical team saw 303 clients for individual therapy and provided over 2200 individual appointments. There was a 66% increase in the number of individual clients served from the previous year.

- **Support Groups:** Additionally, we offered four evening support groups that are open to women identified students and community members. These support groups offer a welcoming space for women to find connection with other individuals with similar identities and perspectives.

In response to feedback from community members and students, we created an additional Women of Color support group. In November 2021, the second Women of Color support group began running on Thursday evenings. This group is facilitated by a therapist in the community and the funding for this offering was provided by Parent Fund. This group has been a significant support to its members.

In 2021-2022, 43 individuals participated in our support groups. Specifically, 22 Women of Color participated in the two Women of Color Support groups. These numbers represent a significant need in the community and at the University of Utah for Women of Color to have a group where they can connect with other women of color.

- **Feminist Multicultural Therapy (FMT) training program:** Our FMT training program provides a robust and in-depth clinical training opportunity to advanced graduate students in the field of Social Work, Educational Psychology, and Clinical Psychology programs. Those selected for the training program come to the center with a wide array of experiences and a specific interest in working with diverse populations. When completed, our student therapists enter the mental health field with the skills and knowledge to provide ethical and competent care.

## Goals

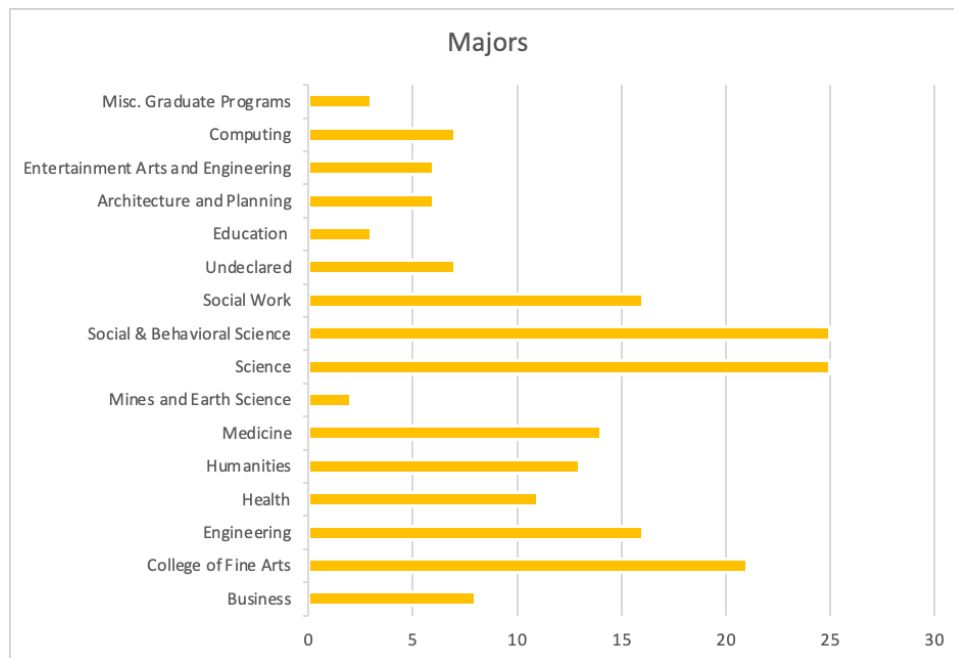
1. Minimize wait time and improve efficiency in connecting clients to mental health services.
2. Effective and timely response to requests for mental health services, providing referrals to campus resources.
3. Increase accuracy in collection and assessment of data regarding client service utilization

## Desired Outcomes

1. Decrease levels of client distress impacting students' ability to focus on their academic goals.
2. Increase number of individual client openings.
3. Increase retention and graduation rates of high-risk students.

## Quotes

- *“The Women's Resource Center has been a wonderful place to receive counseling. The best part about it is that I was able to receive emotional support trusting that my counselor had a clear sense of knowledge of the systemic structures that I was also dealing with.”*
- *“I was a part of the Women of Color Support Group. I loved my experience in this group. I changed as a person and watched fellow group members transform--all for the better of course. I'd love to have this group available in the summer. I also think it'd be amazing to have multiple WOC support groups as well as more groups for people from other marginalized groups. I've received such a profound amount of from this group and feel so much more confident with not only preparing to new my graduate program at the U but with how I show up as a person in general. I think it could create such a powerfully positive change if more people could have access to support groups like this.”*
- *“I have seen several counselors with the Women's Resource Center, and I have had a really positive experience with them all. I am grateful for the resources and support your center provides.”*



**2. Increase diverse sources of funding to support student success: In collaboration with the Student Affairs Development Team, we engage with donors and foundations to support scholarships and programs**

<b>Foundation and Donor Support</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Giving Day 2022	\$ 6,267
Raise A Glass Event During Women’s Week	\$ 1,400
Four Daughters Foundation	\$ 10,000
Parent Fund	\$ 8,500
Pete and Arline Harman Foundation	\$ 80,000
Crankstart Foundation	\$ 50,000
Bamberger Foundation	\$ 5,000
Castle Foundation	\$ 1,500
Dee Foundation	\$ 5,000
Simmons Foundation	\$ 20,000
Boundless Foundation	\$ 12,500
Alumni Completion Fund	\$ 25,000
Michaels Foundation	*Submitted application for \$10,000
Sorenson Legacy Foundation	\$ 50,000
Heidi and Greg Miller Scholarship	\$150,000
<b>Total Amount Raised</b>	<b>\$ 435,167 <i>*pending application not included</i></b>

**Goals:**

1. Create financial stability for the Women’s Resource Center
2. Maintain and cultivate a broad donor base

**Desired outcomes:**

1. Maintain and increase the continuity of donor support for all areas of the WRC.
2. Maintain and increase the funding available for scholarships for students.
3. Generate revenue that can be used for professional development for students and staff.

### 3. Provide Student Support to Retain and Graduate Students

During the 2021-22 AY, the Women's Resource Center awarded 150 Scholarships to 103 unique students through 14 different funds. Combined, the WRC awarded \$354,500. Those funds are either from endowments, or foundations.

<b>Scholarship Name</b>	<b># of Scholarships Awarded</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Alumni Completion Scholarship	25	\$ 25,000
Beta Gamma Scholarship	3	\$ 6,000
Boundless Opportunity Scholarship	6	\$ 12,000
Crankstart Re-entry Scholarship	21	\$ 75,000
Dr. Harker Advancing Women in Medicine	6	\$ 18,000
Herbert I and Elsa Michaels Foundation	4	\$ 8,000
Mary Cherry Moslander Roberts Endowment	3	\$ 6,000
Nick and Helen Papanikolas Foundation	7	\$ 14,000
Osher Re-entry Scholarship	33	\$ 87,750
Pete and Arline Harman Trust Scholarship	10	\$ 42,750
Simmons Foundation Scholarship	8	\$ 18,000
Sorenson Legacy Foundation Scholarship	17	\$ 28,000
Willie the Plumber Scholarship	3	\$ 6,000
Parent Fund Completion Funds	4	\$ 4,000
<b>Total scholarships awarded</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>\$350,500</b>

#### Goals:

1. Provide scholarship funding opportunities for a diverse group of students so that they may continue their educational pursuits and progress toward graduation.
2. Provide students with needed resources to keep them in school.

#### Desired outcomes:

1. Increase retention and graduation rates of students experiencing financial difficulties and those utilizing tuition scholarships through our office.
2. Connect students to campus and community resources that support their academic success, financial literacy, and career readiness.

**Impact:** 40% of students graduated during the AY, 6% stopped out or withdrew from their education, and we anticipate that 54% will be retained.

**Quote from Scholar:** *“When I first started at the U, I reached out to several resources for financial help, but I was always redirected to places where I found myself at a dead end. A friend of mine spoke highly of the Women's Resource Center on campus. I contacted the WRC and I was shocked at how fast I received a response! During the past year, I have seen how proactive you are with getting resources to those in need. The times I have reached out to the WRC, you are always so helpful and I genuinely feel like you always have my back! I appreciate you and how invested you are to making everyone feel like they matter! It has empowered me to do well in school, be involved in the community, go after my dreams and be a great example to those around me including my kids.”*



Additionally, out of commitment to student success the WRC has supported 25 individual students with our student support funds. We gave out \$18,918 - the majority being requested for tuition or rental assistance.

**Quote from Student Support Recipient:** *Receiving the WomanUp grant has brought some light back to the end of my dark tunnel...I lost my only support system and my housing simultaneously but I am adamant to complete my education. School meant so much to me before this great loss but now my education is all I have. It's my whole world. The more I learn, the more humbled I am and the less insecure I feel. If I lost all of my progress in my search for knowledge I would truly be broken. Your generous donation will make it possible for me to continue my journey and it brings me comfort that you would be so thoughtful to create a fund for those who find themselves abused and abandoned in a situation like mine. Once I earn my degree, I hope to be in the position to pay this forward one day. Thank you for all your time, efforts, and consideration on behalf of my education and my wellbeing."*

#### **4. Collaborate with other offices engage students in programming to foster belonging, and support life-long learning**

- **Mentorship programming**

- In January 2022, the Women's Resource Center launched a mentorship program and welcomed 24 student participants. Mentors ranged from third-year undergraduates to graduate students. Mentees included first and second-year undergraduates and transfer students. A unique feature of the program is the inclusion of the monthly Mentor Development Series, in which mentors attend workshops intended to expand their toolset and improve confidence in mentorship abilities.
- Outcomes
  - 100% of mentor survey respondents agreed with the following statements:

Through mentorship at the WRC, I...

- Enhanced my active listening, empathy, and communication skills
- Developed a relationship with my mentee based on trust
- Reflected on my personal experiences and shared insight with others
- Encouraged reflective thinking by asking thought-provoking questions
- Identified opportunities for my mentee to engage with academics and college life
- Empowered my mentee to reach their goals by connecting them directly to applicable resources and people



Quote: *“I love how I was paired with a mentor and the sort of collaboration/support I received from them! It was really nice to find another person who cheered on my pursuits.”*

- **Collaborative Campus Programs-** Without a program coordinator and due to limited staff our programming was paused this year, but we were happy to partner with offices across campus to plan and participate in Women’s Week, Pride Week, co-sponsor two film screenings, and co-host events with the Center for Student Wellness.

## **Major Accomplishments & Challenges**

### **Challenges:**

- **Staff Turnover:** In August 2021, 3 key staff members (Program Coordinator, Office Manager, the Training Coordinator) moved on, right as the academic year started. These vacancies—along with the vacant role of Director (which had been open since July 2020)--created a very limited team. Additionally, Dr. Kristy Bartley, long-time clinical coordinator at the WRC announced her intended retirement at the end of the fiscal year. The significant staff turnover forced the remaining staff to pick up additional responsibilities and reassess staffing needs while developing a new organizational structure and roles for the future. During this time, the capacity of remaining staff was really challenged leading to burnout and fatigue under already challenging conditions caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. On occasion we found we had to close the physical space especially when staff were in meetings/client sessions and no student staff could cover the desk. Additionally, the amount of time that our staff have dedicated to all aspects of the hiring process cannot be overstated.
- **Low Student engagement during a prolonged pandemic** is not a challenge unique to the Women’s Resource Center, but one that we hope to improve on in the next academic year. We have surveyed students to see what they are looking for in terms of programming, community, space, and our programming team is using that feedback to plan for the future.
- **Recruiting Mental Health Therapists** has been an on-going challenge. Our office has had difficulty filling two open positions. Feedback we have received is that the salaries the WRC can offer aren’t competitive with the employers in the community, and post-pandemic, many clinicians are looking to work from home. We are hopeful we can fill these roles early in the next academic year.

### **Accomplishments:**

- **Hiring and Team Development** has been a big priority for the team. We have hired 4 new staff members to our team and in June we did our first retreat.

- **Training Coordinator, Brit Bitters, LCSW** joined the team in April 2022. Brit was a former graduate practicum student at the WRC and has a deep appreciation for working with trainees and preparing them to be clinicians utilizing the Feminist Multicultural Model.
  - **Assistant Director, Jenna Templeton**, joined the team in May 2022 to lead our programming team and oversee our assessment needs. Since Jenna is not new to Student Affairs, she brings a depth of institutional knowledge to help develop policies, practices and a student-centered vision to the work she does at the WRC.
  - **Program Coordinator, Katie Valdez**, joined the WRC team June 1<sup>st</sup>. As a recent alum from Westminster College, she brings a critical perspective and understanding of student needs. She along with our graduate assistant and student interns will be leading out on outreach, educational programming and community building.
  - **Assistant Director of Clinical Services, Erin Norris, LCSW**, moved out of her role of Care Manager and into a clinical leadership role to oversee all of the clinical team. She brings a wealth of expertise on best practices in clinical care in a campus setting.
  - **Director, Kirstin Maanum** started in her new role as Director on February 1, and along with her, the existing staff prioritized building a new team and have hired key positions to complement the team.
- **New Donor Engagement with Heidi and Greg Miller Foundation to launch a new scholar cohort for Single Parents**
  - **Campus Collaborations**
    - The WRC was a pilot partner site with the Career and Professional Development Center to host a student internship with them.
    - The WRC was instrumental in getting the Basic Needs Center up and running for its grand opening in April.
  - **Student Success/ Retention/Graduation-** The WRC continues to have a retention and graduation rate for our scholars that is above the institution's average. We recognize that holistically supporting all students and scholars will help maintain or improve those rates.

### **Strategic Initiatives for FY 22-23**

#### 1. Organizational capacity

- Improve training and development for all staff through a formal onboarding process
  - Implement holistic review process for employees
  - Improve technology and equipment and utilization of technology
- Internal process
    - Provide annual Professional Development opportunities to retain staff and also as a way to learn high impact processes to support students
    - Expand our clinical team to offer increased access to mental health services
    - Strategically collaborate with the University Counseling Center to streamline practices, procedures and share in training opportunities
    - Improve and expand outreach and communication with students so students understand the different areas that they can engage with the WRC

- Finance
  - Maintain and increase the continuity of donor support for all areas of the WRC
  - Develop a responsible stewardship plan that is shared by the Director and Assistant Director
  
- Students
  - Increase access for historically marginalized communities specifically in the areas of mental health, student belonging, and scholarship opportunities
  - Increase student influence in WRC decision-making, programming, and leadership opportunities for their own identity development
  - Make data-informed decisions for planning student programs