Message from the Director

I have just completed my first semester with the Women's Leadership Initiative, and what an experience it has been. I have spent the past ten years working with Penn State alumni. Many of my efforts have been focused on finding ways to connect alumni with students and giving alumni the opportunity to give back to Penn State by sharing their experiences and expertise. Working with students through the Women's Leadership Initiative has been tremendously beneficial in two ways.

First, it has afforded me the opportunity to learn about their needs directly. In just a few short months I have discovered a great deal about how students see the world—how they feel about their classes, what concerns they have about their lives after Penn State, and what kinds of skills and competencies they need to take with them into the world. As a result, I have gained insight into how alumni and friends can best support students and prepare them for the next phase of their lives.

Second, armed with this knowledge, I hope to leverage our incredible alumni network to support the Women's Leadership Initiative in various ways. Penn State alumni are the most dedicated and engaged alumni in the world, and the Women's Leadership Initiative is one way in which alumni and friends can stay connected. Through our alumni and friends, we can provide WLI students with a leadership curriculum that rivals any college leadership program anywhere. Our spring 2009 field trip to Washington, D.C. is just one example of this. On Friday, February 27, we will be meeting various Penn State alumni who are working in leadership positions in government. We also hope that those of you who are in the D.C. area will join us for a special networking reception that evening; if you live in the D.C. area and have not received an invitation, please contact our office for more information. On Saturday, February 28, we will engage additional alumni and friends during several sessions on ethical leadership and women in politics. Mary Good '85 IFS, one of the WLI ‘five stars’ and a member of the WLI External Advisory Committee, will give a lunchtime presentation on the topic of politics in the workplace.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to interact with students, alumni, and friends, and to facilitate connections among them. Whether you are an alumna of Penn State, a friend of Penn State, or an alumna of the Women’s Leadership Initiative, I invite you to get involved with our program. Our spring semester workshop and event dates can be found on the back of this newsletter, and our syllabus and other information is available on our Web site at www.hhdev.psu.edu/wli. You are invited to lend your time and talents to the Women's Leadership Initiative by guest speaking, connecting us with other women leaders, mentoring a WLI student, or simply attending any of our workshops throughout the year.

All the best,

Abigail Diehl
Meet the Women’s Leadership Initiative Class of 2008-2009

Christine Brown
Major:
Kinesiology/Recreation, Park and Tourism Management
Hometown:
Drums, PA

Alissa Cheatham
Major:
Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown:
Philadelphia, PA

Andrea DeLuca
Major:
Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown:
Pittsburgh, PA

Beautine Dempsey
Major:
Nursing
Hometown:
Philadelphia, PA

Dena Glazer
Major:
Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown:
Newtown Square, PA

Kate Gruber
Major:
Nursing
Hometown:
Coopersburg, PA

Emily Haworth
Major:
Nutrition
Hometown:
State College, PA

Michelle Kirsch
Major:
Nursing
Hometown:
Erie, PA

Sacha Memoli
Major:
Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown:
State College, PA

Breanna Miklos
Major:
Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown:
Erie, PA

Ann Miller
Major:
Health Policy and Administration
Hometown:
New Brighton, PA

Evonne Muoneke
Major:
Health Policy and Administration
Hometown:
Austin, TX

Brittany Speer
Major:
Health Policy and Administration
Hometown:
Collegeville, PA

Julie St-Merand
Major:
Nursing
Hometown:
Maplewood, NJ

Samantha Stalley
Major:
Health Policy and Administration
Hometown:
Vernon, CT

Allyson Stutzman
Major:
Communication Sciences and Disorders
Hometown:
Hegins, PA
Breanne Fagan
Major: Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown: Gibsonia, PA

Rachael Ference
Major: Recreation, Park and Tourism Management
Hometown: North Huntingdon, PA

Lauren Fischer
Major: Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown: Hartsdale, NY

Andrea Gerloff
Major: Health Policy and Administration
Hometown: Red Hill, PA

Sarah Laubach
Major: Nursing
Hometown: Media, PA

Kimloann Mai
Major: Biobehavioral Health
Hometown: Brandon, FL

Kim Malora
Major: Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown: Erdenheim, PA

Sunie McCallen
Major: Nursing
Hometown: Loyalhanna, PA

Caitlin O’Neill
Major: Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management
Hometown: Long Valley, NJ

Lauren Robinson
Major: Nursing
Hometown: Quakertown, PA

Meghan Schiffer
Major: Nutrition
Hometown: Floral Park, NY

Mackenzie Shields
Major: Nutrition
Hometown: Venetia, PA

Jamie Wheaton
Major: Kinesiology
Hometown: Moon Township, PA

Chelsie White
Major: Biobehavioral Health
Hometown: Maplewood, NJ

Elizabeth Zimmerman-Clayton
Major: Human Development and Family Studies
Hometown: New Providence, PA
Picture this—our instructor, Lori, carefully places a slender rope on the ground, nudging it into place with her foot. The finished circle measures fourteen feet in diameter. Orientation Day for the 2008-2009 Women’s Leadership Initiative class has begun. On a sunny August morning at Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center, thirty-one women from the College of Health and Human Development watch the hands-on team-building activity with lively anticipation. There are whispers of “what’s she up to?” and giggles about “bet I can hula-hop better than you!” Inside the wide rope circle, exactly in the middle, our instructor places three overlapping Hula-hoops; six or seven individuals can stand closely within the Hula-hoops, and all thirty-one can stand easily inside the rope circle. Lori, a team-building expert from Shaver’s Creek, places her feet solidly in the small Hula-hoop zone. “If you are standing here, you are telling us that you are in your comfort zone,” she says. She then points to the larger space between the Hula-hoop zone and the inside edge of the rope circle. “If you are standing here, you are telling us that you are in your challenge zone.” Finally, she gestures beyond the rope circle. “If you are standing outside the rope circle, you are telling us that you are in the panic zone.”

Lori then proceeds to ask three questions of the group, instructing us to move around the three zones according to our responses. First, she asks, “How would you feel in a country where you could not speak the language?” The response from the group is immediate: five or six move with determination to the Hula-hoops, signaling ease with the situation; many stay within the rope circle, demonstrating that they would be challenged; and a few walk well beyond the rope circle, signaling that the situation might cause panic. Lori then instructs us to look closely at where everyone is standing and proceeds to ask the second question. “How would you feel if you had to stand up in front of an audience of 500 to make a twenty-minute presentation?” A remarkable transformation occurs. Simply by changing the context and setting of the question, WLI class members are on the move! Some in the panic zone move to the Hula-hoops, signaling the switch to comfort, while others straddling the Hula-hoops move closer to the rope line, signaling that public presentations are more of a test than foreign travel.

As we proceed through this hands-on exercise, Lori instructs us to think about how the concept of leadership changes with context and setting, and poses the last question. “How can those of you in the comfort zone and those of you in the panic zone work together?” There is silence for a moment, and then an excited voice rings out. “I’ve got it—if I’m in the comfort zone, then I can reach back to assist someone in the panic zone!” Another yells out, “And if I’m panicking, I can reach out for help from someone in the comfort zone.” Lori responds with a beaming smile and the words, “precisely, well done.” She also adds, “As emerging leaders, the challenge zone is where you will grow and develop most.” As the day draws to a close, the first building block of the Women’s Leadership Initiative falls into place; students have begun to learn that leadership is a dynamic, ongoing process, a skill that can be acquired by all and shared with everyone.

Over two semesters, students completing the 2-credit, 400-level classes that comprise the core curriculum of the Women’s Leadership Initiative program will:

(a) learn about themselves and others. This segment of the course helps students think about their identity and self-image, it encourages students to consider the way others view and respond to the world, and it helps students to grasp that effective leadership combines knowledge of self and knowledge of others to advance personal and group goals

(b) understand how leadership is defined. Knowledge gained from this segment of the course helps students realize that leadership is a process rather than an event. It clarifies that as situations change, roles and behaviors of leaders and followers may also change; that leadership is not determined by age, gender, ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation; that these elements—individually or in combination—may influence an individual’s leadership style; and that respected leaders act ethically and model responsible behavior

(c) develop leadership skills and practice. This segment of the course helps students realize that effective leaders use personal skills that students can acquire, including developing a vision, motivating others, taking initiative, communicating effectively, setting goals, making decisions, managing resources, and facilitating the development of additional leaders

(d) practice leadership through service. This segment of the course helps students understand that leadership through service creates the opportunity to practice and to continue to develop leadership skills; it provides the opportunity to experience citizenship and to identify the responsibilities and roles of responsible citizens; and it encourages students to become altruistic leaders by providing opportunities for social engagement and continued self-development

When the 2008-2009 academic year is complete, the class members will have come full circle, and the final building block of the Women’s Leadership Initiative will be slotted into place. By reaching back to help others, and by reaching forward for help, leadership is a skill that can be acquired by all and shared with everyone—a process that continues across the life-span.
Fourteen Women’s Leadership Initiative students traveled to Pittsburgh to attend the annual Pennsylvania Governor’s Conference for Women, which took place October 1. The WLI students, in addition to Faculty Adviser Dr. Careen Yarnal and Assistant to the Director Pam Baier, traveled to the conference with members of Penn State’s Commission for Women.

The conference enabled students to learn about and practice leadership. Conference sessions addressed many of the topics that are incorporated into the WLI curriculum, including negotiation skills, managing stress, networking, financial management, women’s health, and the benefits of mentoring. Throughout the day, students were able to exercise leadership skills by networking with women at the conference.

The conference speakers were a cross-section of women leaders from the business, nonprofit, and government sectors—not to mention entrepreneurs, authors, activists, and many others. They included Nancy Brinker, founder of Susan G. Komen for the Cure and former ambassador to the Republic of Hungary; Nontombi Naomi Tute, a human rights activist; Arahdna Danda, president and CEO of Leadership Pittsburgh; Sara Davidson, author of Leap! What Will We Do with the Rest of Our Lives; Caitlin Friedman and Kimberly Yorio, co-authors of the Girl’s Guide series; Julia Hubbel, a professional speaker and prize-winning journalist; Rebecca Lucore, executive director of the Bayer USA Foundation; Kathleen McGinty, the first woman to head the State Department of Environmental Protection; and Renee Peterson Trudeau, a career/work-life balance coach and president of Career Strategists.

Many of the students enjoyed a session by Linda Babcock, author of Asking for It: How Women Can Use the Power of Negotiation to Get What They Really Want. Andrea DeLuca, a Human Development and Family Studies major, recalled an anecdote that Dr. Babcock shared with the audience: “One example that Dr. Babcock gave was of a woman who was promoted within her company who found out that employees in a lower position were paid more than her. When she confronted her supervisor, he told her, ‘You didn’t ask.’ A lot of times women will settle for less than they deserve.” Chelsie White, a Biobehavioral Health major, also benefited from the session. “One lesson I took away is that negotiation should not be feared,” says White. “Simply asking for what you deserve is not being contentious, but instead it is being an intelligent go-getter.”

Other students enjoyed a session titled “Women’s Health, Sexuality and Wellness” by Evelyn Resh, director of sexual health services at Canyon Ranch. Michelle Kirsch, a Nursing major, reflects, “As a nursing student, her seminar really gave me new insight into issues of sexuality for women.”

The following is a list of leadership-related books in the “WLI Library.” The collection contains some of the most well-known academic texts as well as other popular leadership books that have been suggested by alumni and friends. Students can check books out of the library for two weeks at a time. WLI mentors may wish to select a book with their mentee and read it together!

Good to Great by Jim Collins
The Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni
It’s Hard to Make a Difference When You Can’t Find Your Keys by Marilyn Paul
Hesselbein on Leadership by Frances Hesselbein
Leadership the Eleanor Roosevelt Way by Robin Gerber
Leadership Jazz by Max DePree
Leadership is an Art by Max DePree
Nice Girls Don’t Get the Corner Office by Lois P. Frankel
Mean Girls Grow Up by Cheryl Dellasega
It’s Not a Glass Ceiling, It’s a Sticky Floor by Rebecca Shambaugh
You Don’t Need a Title to Be a Leader by Mark Sanborn
Talking from 9-5: Men and Women at Work by Deborah Tannen
You’re Wearing That? Understanding Mothers and Daughters in Conversation by Deborah Tannen
Primal Leadership by Daniel Goleman

A Woman’s Guide to Investing by Virginia Morris
Nobel Prize Women in Science: Their Lives, Struggles, and Momentous Discoveries by Sharon Bertsch McGrayne
Going to the Top by Carol Gallagher
The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch
A Very Hungry Girl by Jessica Weiner
Who Moved My Cheese? by Spencer Johnson, M.D.
We are our Mother’s Daughter by Cokie Roberts
The Girls’ Guide to Being a Boss (Without Being a Bitch): Valuable Lessons, Smart Suggestions, and True Stories for Succeeding as the Chick-in-Charge by Kimberly Yorio and Caitlin Friedman
Women Don’t Ask by Linda Babcock and Sara Laschever
Ask For It: How Women Can Use the Power of Negotiation to Get What They Really Want by Linda Babcock, co-authored by Sara Laschever
The First 30 Days: Your Guide to Any Change by Ariane deBonvoisin
I Didn’t See It Coming by Nancy Widmann
Do I Look Fat in This? by Jessica Weiner
Closing the Leadership Gap: Why Women Can and Must Help Run the World by Marle C. Wilson, founder of the White House Project
Leadership and Self-Deception—Getting out of the Box by the Arbinger Institute
The Best Advice Ever for Leaders by Wes Roberts, Ph.D.
WLI Academic Year Kicks off with Retreat, Dinner
**Class Notes**

**WLI ’03–’04**

Kate Russell (married name Kate Mascho) is working as a dietitian at the Poe Center for Health Education in Raleigh, North Carolina. She developed and implemented a comprehensive nutrition and physical activity program called “Wholesome Routines,” for third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students throughout North Carolina. She also is conducting research related to the program.

Kate Nelson graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a master’s degree in public health, specializing in health behavior and health education. She is a certified health education specialist. She is currently working as a health communications specialist for the North Carolina Family Health Resource Line, part of the University of North Carolina’s Department of Maternal and Child Health.

Jodi Simmons was named the Johnson & Johnson District Representative of the Year in 2006 and 2007. She was promoted to professional sales representative and moved into phase II of the management division.

**WLI ’04–’05**

Michele Buck has been working on an RN Oncology/Bone Marrow Transplant floor since 2006. She began graduate school in fall 2008 to pursue a Nurse Practitioner degree.

Betsy Donaldson received a Master of Health Science degree in behavioral science from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. She accepted a position as research program manager at the Institute for Global Tobacco Control, a global tobacco control policy research institute within the School of Public Health.

**WLI ’05–’06**

Jennifer Regester is working as a diabetes educator/registered dietitian at the Friedman Diabetes Institute in New York City.

**WLI ’06–’07**

Alana Henry graduated from Penn State with a B.S. in Kinesiology (movement science option) with highest distinction. She is attending Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine to receive her D.O., class of 2012.

Triena M. Beisel is working at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Presbyterian Hospital in the Cardiac Progressive Care Unit in Pittsburgh.

**WLI ’07–’08**

April Judy is working as a meeting director at the Crowne Plaza in Rockville, Maryland.

Alison VanHorn is working as a health care consultant for McBee Associates, Inc. in Manhattan.

Cara Bell recently accepted a position with the Army working with the sports and fitness department in Virginia.
Spring 2009 Events
(all sessions are at the Bennett-Pierce Living Center, Henderson Building unless otherwise noted)

February 27- March 1, 2009
WLI Washington, DC trip
Ethical Leadership, Women in Politics, Politics in the Workplace

March 22, 2009
WLI Sunday Session
Diversity

April 5, 2009
WLI Sunday Session
Work/Life Balance, Wellness

April 18, 2009
WLI 2008-09 Celebration Luncheon
Ballroom C, The Nittany Lion Inn

Dear WLI Alumni:
Please keep us updated by sending us information about a new address, new job, special accomplishment, etc.

Name _______________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________
City _______________________  State ________  Zip _______________
Phone _____________________  Email ___________________________

New Job/Accomplishments: ___________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Mail to: Women’s Leadership Initiative
College of Health & Human Development • The Pennsylvania State University
201 Henderson Building • University Park, PA 16802
Or email the above information to: pab38@psu.edu

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