

The 2016 Annual Meeting brought together a diversity of Women's College Coalition members at Douglass Residential College at Rutgers University. Here's a snapshot of attendees:

- 51 people registered for the conference and 47 people attended
- 19 WCC member colleges and universities were represented
- 13 Presidents/Deans attended

OPENING

Jacquelyn Litt, Dean of Douglass Residential College at Rutgers University welcomed everyone to Douglass Residential College at Rutgers University. Rutgers is celebrating their 250 years since founded in 1766. In 1972, Rutgers became coed. Douglass College was founded in 1918 by the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs. In 2005, there was a consolidation of all the colleges and all became Rutgers University. Douglass retains its identity as a historic women's college with a strong commitment to women's leadership and scholarship.

Elizabeth Kiss, President of Agnes Scott College, welcomed on behalf of the Women's College Coalition board of directors. She announced two newly elected board members: Dr. Mary Hinton, President of Saint Benedict's College, and Dr. Carine Feyten, President of Texas Women's University. She also informed members of board members who are leaving this spring, Lynn Pasquerella, President of Mount Holyoke College and Alecia DeCoudreaux, President of Mills College. There will be a special election to fill their unfinished terms on the board.

Michele Ozumba, President, WCC thanked everyone for attending and expressed the desire to strengthen the Coalition community through shared learning and exchange. She outlined the Coalition's strategic goals as 1) increase member engagement; 2) enhance communication across all WCC platforms; and 3) increase WCC's capacity to more effectively serve all members.

The program featured panel discussions and presentations that addressed topics of current interest to the sector:

PRESIDENTS' PANEL:

Women's Higher Education in the 21st Century – Women's Colleges in Transition

Rhona Free, President of University of Saint Joseph, moderated this panel and led the discussion by asking each speaker to share their current status, identify what current trends are influencing how women's colleges are adapting, and what can Women's College Coalition do to help?

Helen Streubert, President of College of Saint Elizabeth. The College of Saint Elizabeth will become coed beginning in the fall of 2017. Dr. Streubert explained the decision did not come easy, but the reality of very low enrollment, as well as competition from two major nearby universities informed the decision. She stated that applications from women are up 70% this year.

Jacquelyn Litt, Dean, Douglass Residential College at Rutgers University, described the coordinate model as essential to Douglass being a sustainable campus as part of the University. The focus is on integrating Douglass into the university system so as not to be marginalized, but seen as a significant asset to the university.

Ann McAlaney-Johnson, President, Mount Saint Mary University. MSMU was founded to serve working class women who were left out of higher education opportunities. The university has become a major source of expertise on gender equity as a result of their research agenda that produces an annual report on the Status of Women in California. It has increased the university's standing in the community and increased institutional self-esteem.

Panelists identified current trends in higher education that are influencing women's colleges?

- Enrollment levels
- Diversity, important to get out in front of potential crises by communicating with and listening to students, show genuine interest in students' concerns. Be intentional.
- Location: small colleges under pressure from their current environments makes it important to stay focused on who you are and your mission. Important to collaborate with larger colleges in the same area;
- Alumnae relations – very important to retain their loyalty and engagement as women's colleges undergo change.

How can Women's College Coalition be helpful?

The panel suggested that WCC can help with getting more national visibility, more clarity about who we are, move away from defensive position to a position of strength; raise discussion among higher education colleagues about women's colleges, e.g. CIC, AAC&U; and engage in more advocacy.

PRESIDENTS' PANEL: Leadership and Career Development

Elizabeth Kiss, President, Agnes Scott College

Beth Dinndorf, President, Columbia College

Lisa Hetfield, Associate Director, Institute for Women's Leadership Consortium, Rutgers University

Moderator: Jacquelyn Litt, Dean, Douglass Residential College at Rutgers University

Elizabeth: Agnes Scott introduced SUMMIT, a new program that rebrands the Agnes Scott experience through global leadership and travel tours for every student. SUMMIT includes core curriculum with focus on several foundational skills including research, writing, speaking, and digital literacy.

Beth: Columbia College approaches leadership development through multidisciplinary courses that lead to a capstone project in senior year. Columbia College's Institute for Leadership & Professional Excellence embraces servant leadership philosophy.

Lisa: The Institute for Women's Leadership Consortium at Rutgers consists of 9 units of women's leadership programs for feminist leadership. It serves as an incubator for 38-40 student scholars that includes professional women mentors, a 2-year leadership certificate program, and summer programs for students and executive women.

Career Development

Panelists were asked to share how they approached career counseling and development:

Agnes Scott College: Every student has a 4-person advisory team of faculty, peer, and career mentor. This is especially needed to provide social capital to students who didn't have that support from families and community.

Columbia College: each student has a board of directors (advisors) including a professional mentor from the community in first year. 1/3 go to grad school; 1/3 go to work. Columbia College placed 93% of grads in school or jobs in 2015.

Women's Leadership Consortium: WAVES mentoring program assigns professional women mentors to each student

With the current focus on college as a significant financial investment, panelists were asked about how they view the expectations of Return on Investment?

Elizabeth: ROI is a problematic narrowing of a public understanding of the value of education. Colleges are expensive so we have to help students connect the dots between what they are learning and how it applies to their career.

Beth: It is imperative that we stay true to liberal arts education and also make the case for its value.

Lisa: What is the return? Who is investing? We must make the case connecting liberal arts education and problem solving of major societal issues: poverty, terrorism, hunger, peacemaking, etc.

Beth: We have the unfinished business of gender equity. We're not protecting our students from the world; we are preparing them for the world.

What can Women's College Coalition do to help?

- Landscape work force trends
- Discover the distinctive difference women's colleges can make
- How do we make the case for investing in women's education?
- Who is going to invest in women's education? Philanthropy is shifting away from liberal arts. Convene a meeting with WCC and philanthropic leaders.

KEYNOTE: Culture, Gender and Engineering

Beth Michaels, of Primer Michaels, Inc. led research for the Society of Women Engineers' national survey of 3,200 U.S. -based engineers to find out what factors are repelling women from the STEM sector. Research finds 56 percent of women in STEM sector leave within first 3 years. Women in STEM are 45 times more likely to leave their job than men. Leadership's charge is to define organization culture, defend and maintain culture. Among the findings, the survey revealed a gender values gap in which women surveyed identified accountability as their number one personal value. The lack of accountability for

- Differential negative treatment
- Judgements about intelligence
- Reactions to differences.
- Second generation bias or unconscious bias

These are the silent influences on women's departures from the sector. Women and men are experiencing the same culture but reacting differently.

PRESENTATION:

Rebranding Women's College Coalition for Greater Impact and Influence

Lisa Jordan and Jenny Brower of Mindpower, Inc. led an interactive session in a focus group style that invited WCC members to share their perspectives and ideas that will help reframe WCC's identity, and advance the organization's ability to more effectively represent the collective impact of Coalition members. Mindpower will take the input from this session and work with WCC over the next few months on creating new messaging ideas designed to refresh the brand.

Women's Higher Education in the 21st Century



We are enhancing our communications to better serve our members and community, so...

- Visit our website regularly: womenscolleges.org
 - Check your information on the website for accuracy
 - Make sure we have your e-mail address
 - Keep us up to date with your college news
 - Share inspirational stories from students and alumni
 - Send changes/information to: michele.ozumba@womenscolleges.org
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SAVE THE DATE!
**September 21-22, 2017 for the next
Women's College Coalition annual meeting.
We hope to see you next year!**