Message from the Dean

I bring you greetings and best wishes from the College of Health and Human Development! More specifically, I write to announce exciting changes in the Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI).

Marja Verbeeten has done an outstanding job leading the WLI. Last fall, responding to the tug of the classroom, she decided that the 2007-08 academic year would be her last year leading the WLI because she missed teaching and participating in the exciting community of the School of Hospitality Management on a regular basis. She will return to the School of Hospitality Management effective July 1. I am so grateful to Marja for her dedication and leadership. She has led the WLI during a time of transition in the dean’s office and has done so with energy, enthusiasm, and commitment.

In contemplating this transition, it seemed the right time to pull the WLI fully into the fabric of the College. I have decided to do that by integrating it with Alumni and College Relations. As you may know, Abby Diehl, director of alumni and college relations, received her Ph.D. in December. Thinking about Abby’s many gifts, high energy level, and effectiveness, she struck me as a natural for the role of director of the WLI. Happily, she was excited about the idea! Effective July 1, Dr. Abigail Diehl will be promoted to assistant dean for alumni and college relations and leadership initiatives. We will fold the WLI into Abby’s office and add new staff so that she can delegate where needed. By having Abby in this role, we will be able to align WLI and alumni activities very naturally and effectively.

Abby and I met with Liz Mullens and had a wonderful conversation about the founding principles of the WLI and strategized about ways to integrate this new, major responsibility into Abby’s other roles.

Please join me in thanking Marja for her many contributions to the WLI and congratulating Abby on this exciting new step in her career.

Sincerely,

Nan
Introducing Beth Bates

Beth Bates is a member of the WLI Advisory Committee and has been a mentor to students participating in WLI. Beth is currently an instructor in community and family health nursing for the College of Health and Human Development at the Hershey Medical Center. Beth has also previously worked in health administration, marketing, and health education. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Individual and Family Studies (Mental Health option) at Penn State in 1977. She received her Doctor of Nursing in 1983 from the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, where she graduated with honors. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband and two children and is also involved in many community organizations.

Comments from Beth about WLI:
My experiences with WLI have been consistently wonderful! As a mentor, I have enjoyed seeing firsthand the terrific depth and growth of our students. I am very fond of my mentees and I believe they will always be an important part of my life. When they graduate and move on from Penn State to make their own marks on the world, I will still be cheering them on. As they grow and succeed outside of Penn State, they will use the tools they learned in WLI to represent Penn State and their professions well. Another pleasure has been the opportunity to meet the terrific parents of my mentees - how fortunate I am!

For me, serving as a WLI mentor is also a way for me to give back. Throughout my life, I have been privileged to have mentors and leaders who greatly influenced and supported me.

As an Advisory Board member, I have been inspired by caring and highly competent colleagues from all majors of the College of Health and Human Development who come together to work on the WLI program. I believe this collaboration across all majors is a reflection of the faith our college has in its students as future leaders.

Comments from Students:
Beth is very involved in the College of HHD (specifically, nursing in Hershey). Over the year we have done a lot of activities together. Back in the fall semester we walked together during the First Annual THON walk in Hershey. At the PA Farm Show 2008, I helped her do blood pressure and osteoporosis screenings with some of the medical students from the medical center. Beth has also attended one of our weekend workshops, and I have met her for lunch or coffee many times during the year. She has been a great mentor, and even with her busy schedule, she always finds time for me. Next year she will be my community health professor, and I am looking forward to that because I know that she will make sure we have some of the best experiences.

- Ashley Brawner (mentee 2007-08)

I received word that Beth was my WLI mentor at our first WLI weekend at Shaver’s Creek. It was her first year involved with the program and I was hesitant about how well we would hit it off. She was an instructor at Penn State-Hershey campus where I would be spending my junior year participating in my nursing clinical. Junior year was a rollercoaster ride, full of ups and downs, but Beth was there supporting me through it all. She was there when I was at my worst to give me advice and encouragement through my professional and personal obstacles. Beth was also there at my best, congratulating me on my accolades and being my #1 cheerleader telling me she knew the whole time I was going to do well! I could not have asked for a better role model to have as my mentor. I hear great things about Beth as a nursing instructor and a colleague. She is an active advocate in the community where she lives and has taken me to town meetings to observe her leadership skills and interaction with other community leaders. Beth was and still is my guiding force to succeed in my professional career. She was my “home away from home,” mom, colleague, mentor, and confidant. Beth is always willing to give a helping hand and deserves all the praise that people give to her.

- Lauren Thumm (mentee 2006-07)
“Service Learning” is part of the WLI curriculum now and this year’s class decided to join the national Go Red For Women campaign. It is a movement founded by the American Heart Association to help fight back against the number one killer of American women: heart disease. The students put in countless hours of red ribbon cutting, posting flyers, and distributing materials across the University Park campus to celebrate Go Red Day on February 1. Sporting their red attire, they handed out flyers to passersby entering the HUB on that cold and frigid February day. The second part of the project was a booth at Penn State’s Health Fair, held in the HUB on March 10. At their festive booth, decorated with red balloons and factual posters, they donned stethoscopes and performed blood pressure checks and BMI calculations to attendees. A big thank you goes to Dr. Donna Korzick who was the faculty adviser on this project.
Reflection on April Workshop

I thought the April workshop was one of our best! Both of our sessions (this weekend and last semester) with Dr. Clark were enjoyable and quite interesting. Also, the body image lecture by Toni Liechty was good and definitely an issue that many of the audience members have probably faced. The Interviewing Skills lecture by Nancy Gendimenico was informational, and I learned some pointers from it. Sunday was great! The panel on Balancing Life was very helpful and helps us all keep things in perspective. Also, the “Play” session by Dr. Careen Yarnal was fun and something new to think about. We are never told that we need to play, and I really think it is important for staying happy and healthy.

-Abigail Herrnberger

Reflection on February Workshop

Friday night was our etiquette dinner at the Nittany Lion Inn. We had learned some of this before but it was useful to be able to practice in a formal setting. Saturday started with some unexpected snow that continued through the weekend, but we all made it and had a very productive day. First, Stephanie Mazzeo-Caputo spoke to us about informational interviews, which I never knew existed and am excited to use! She said the statistics for people who receive job offers for just resumes was 1 in 200, but informational interviews were 1 in 12. WOW! Mary Good spoke to us about politics in the workplace. She was a great speaker and provided us with some valuable information. It is great that WLI is preparing us mentally for all of these issues that other women will have to find out later when they are experiencing them. Next, we had Dr. LaToya Carson and Anne K. Ard speak to us about philanthropy. The speakers were very inspiring and it showed us how fulfilling it is to get involved and give back. Finally, we had the men’s panel. They seemed to be a little intimidated to speak in front of all of us women but the presentation was filled with humor. Sunday was more of an informal meeting. We all enjoyed a cozy breakfast before getting back to work. Dr. Korzick finished her talk about health issues and we moved onto our service project. We made some important decisions that led to our success at the Public Health Fair on campus.

-Erika Mabus
WLI Students and THON

Penn State’s Dance Marathon, better known as THON, was another huge success this year. THON, the largest student-run philanthropy, raised $6,615,318 for the Four Diamonds Fund at the Hershey Medical Center. It was another record setting year for Penn State students! Many current WLI students were involved as captains, committee members, and dancers.

Also many students of the 2006-07 class participated. Michelle Laboda served as Communications Chairperson, Becky Ferguson was part of the Hospitality Committee and Alicia Hooper was the Family Relations Captain.

April Judy and Dr. Verbeeten’s son, David, serving breakfast for the families

Sara Ross (Morale), Abby Olin (Morale) and Sarah Smith (dancer)

Karen Skiles (Morale) and Sarah Smith (dancer)

Ashley Akright (dancer) and Four Diamonds family member
I hope everything is going well for all of you! It has been a while since I have been in touch, so I decided it was time to give a little update on my life!

This was my last semester at Clemson — my time here has really flown by and I have absolutely loved my experience! I have grown very close to the people in my cohort — when you work, take classes, and socialize with the same group of about twenty people, it’s pretty hard not to get to know each other very well! My assistantship in the Career Center has been incredible — the professionals in my office have been great in looking out for my professional development. There will actually be a position open in the Career Center before my graduation. I am being encouraged to apply for the position, and I plan to do so.

I had the opportunity to create Clemson’s first general women’s leadership program through our Leadership Education office on campus. In our women’s leadership program, we started Food for Thought and are currently planning a Women’s Leadership Conference that will occur on campus. Food for Thought is a luncheon that occurs the first Tuesday of every month for Clemson students, faculty, and staff. During Food for Thought, a woman keynote speaker discusses her accomplishments, obstacles, professional endeavors, and the development of life skills such as balance, ethical decision making, and civic engagement. So far we have had the President of United Way in Pickens County, a life coach, a lawyer located in Greenville, and a professor of engineering. We typically have around thirty-five women and men attend each month — so it is fairly well-received so far for its first year, and hopefully it will get even more popular!

We’re still in the beginning stages of planning the conference, but currently I am co-advising four women who were selected to be chairs for marketing, workshop planning, registration, and fundraising for our program. The theme is going to be “Stepping Out as Leaders.” I am really excited about being a part of Clemson’s first women and leadership programming!

- Erica Walbert
2006-07

**Genie Cheng - HDFS '07**
Worked for a year as a counselor with high-risk children and is now coaching swimming for kids

**April Judy - HRIM '08**
Working as the meeting director at the Crown Plaza in Rockville, Maryland

**Krishna Mandavia - HDFS '07**
Working at Towers Perrin as an associate health and welfare benefits consultant

**Michelle Laboda - KINES '08**
Attending University of Massachusetts to earn a master’s in Biomechanics

**Robin Bang - RPTM '08**
Working on her master’s in Museum Studies at University of Kansas

**Kelly Kraemer - KINES ‘08**
Attending Medical University of South Carolina for physician’s assistant school

**Nicole DeMarco - NuRS ‘08**
Nicole was chosen as the College Marshall for spring commencement

**Krishna Mandavia - HDFS ‘07**
Working at Towers Perrin as an associate health and welfare benefits consultant

**Rythda Destime - HRIM ’08**
Working for Sodexho, Long Island, in the HR department

**Jennifer Pope - NuRS ’08**
Working at UPMC Presbyterian Hospital in the Surgical/Trauma Intensive Care Unit in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**Beth Hahn - HDFS ’08**
Attending University of Southern Florida to earn a doctoral degree in Aging Studies

**Leigh Silkunas - HRIM ’08**
Working as a revenue management trainee at Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers

**Jill Heck - KINES ’08**
Working in a health clinic in Ecuador

**Lauren Thumm - NuRS ’08**
Working in Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown, Pennsylvania, as a Registered Nurse in the Open Heart Intensive Care Unit

**Amy Way - NUTR ’08**
Working as a dietetic intern for the University of Pittsburgh’s Medical Center to earn her Registered Dietitian certification
FALL SEMESTER WORKSHOPS:

Kickoff Dinner:
• September 12

Sunday Sessions:
• September 14
• September 28
• November 9
• December 7

Weekend Workshop:
• October 24-26

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: ___________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
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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