



# Our Voices

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## Celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of International Women's Day

By Aasa Marshall – WRC Volunteer

MARCH 8, ON THE 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY of International Women's Day, it is vital to not only celebrate the advancements that have been made by women over the past century, but also to reflect on how we can continue to make progress worldwide.

The idea for International Women's Day was tabled in Copenhagen in 1910, at the International Conference of Working Women. In 1911, more than a million people attended rallies in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland to campaign for women's rights: the right to work, vote, hold public office, and to end underlying discrimination. Since that time the celebration has spread around the world, and is an official holiday in 15 countries where men honour the women in their lives.

In the 100 years since that first celebration women have achieved much, and International Women's Day is a time

to reflect on the progress that has been made. It is also, however, a time to think about the ways that inequality still exists. In 2011 there is a tendency to assume equality has been achieved in Canada, and that there is no longer a need for a feminist movement. We only need to look as far as our government to see the divide, where less than a quarter of our representatives in the House of Commons are women. In our own university, according to Advisor to the President on Women's Issues Adrienne Kertzer, only 17 per cent of full professors are women, compared to 22 per cent Canada-wide. Women are still generally not paid the equivalent as men. We need to continue to recognize that in every sector, the glass ceiling is still in place.

This year's IWD theme is "Equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women." It is important, as

we reflect on this topic, to remember that it is International Women's Day. Women in the Western world have made giant strides in 100 years, and though in Canada we still face challenges, we must acknowledge that many women in developing countries face innumerable barriers. Women's work in and outside the home remains undervalued, and in many countries women are restricted in their access to basic rights. Women in the developing world may be unable to own property, to gain an education, or to participate in political structures that create policies that affect them.

By educating ourselves about women's issues globally, we can



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## ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

### Dr. Adrienne Kertzer



WHEN ADRIENNE KERTZER WAS ASKED to take on the role of Advisor to the President on Women's Issues at the University of Calgary, she asked herself and a few past advisors the same question: Do we still need a position dedicated to women's issues? The position had been vacant for over a year, and she wondered at first if, in 2011, it was still necessary.

Having taken on the position as of January 18th, its clear Kertzer decided the answer was "Yes."

"It's still not a level playing field," she said, noting that the university faces issues like faculty salary inequality and inadequate day care spaces that were identified in a 1976

report, and again when the advisory position was created in 1990. She has spent her initial time as advisor collecting information before deciding on which issues she would like to focus, and said ultimately her job is to remind people of institutional commitments to equality.

Kertzer believes she was approached by university president Elizabeth Cannon to fill the position because she has a reputation for getting things done. She began teaching in the Department of English in 1976, and has also held a number of administrative positions in her time at U of C; most recently as Associate Dean in the Faculty of Graduate Studies from 2005 to 2009. She has also served as head of the English department, Associate Dean for the Faculty of Humanities and Administrative Officer, also for the Department of English.

In her scholarly work, Kertzer focuses on Holocaust Literature as well as children's literature and women's writing, and representations of trauma. She received the Canadian Jewish Book Award in 2003 and Children's Literature Association Honor Book Award in 2004 for her book *My Mother's Voice: Children, Literature, and the Holocaust*. The book was also a finalist for the Alberta Book Publishers' Scholarly Book of the Year. Her most recent journal article, *Fidelity, Felicity, and Playing Around in Wes Anderson's Fantastic Mr. Fox* will soon appear in *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*.

by Aasa Marshall - WRC Volunteer



understand better how far we have come, and what still needs to be done. Listening, learning, and understanding: these are important tools for creating change.

At the Women's Resource Centre (WRC) we celebrate International Women's Day by taking part in creative projects, emphasizing diversity with an international potluck and guest speakers, and honouring exceptional women with our excellence awards. The second week in March is a time for both men and women to think about the changes that have been made and the direction we still need to go. The WRC is an excellent space to discuss, explore, and promote the empowerment of women around the world.

For more information on the International Women's Day Celebration at the WRC, please visit:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/women/IWD>

The WRC Awards 2011 Presentation Ceremony was held on March 8 at the University of Calgary. The ceremony is supported by the U of C Alumni Association and the Students' Union.



2010 International Women's Day Celebration at WRC

# WRC Awards

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S WISDOM, RESILIENCE AND COMPASSION

## Distinguished Alumna

### RITA EGIZII



RITA EGIZII HOLDS A BCOMM (HONOURS) '96 and nine academic awards including the University of Calgary's Board of Governors Silver Medallion for Academic Achievement. She is a member of the exclusive Business Honours Society, Beta Gamma Sigma, a Prairie Regional Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year, a Global TV/YWCA Woman of Vision and the recipient of the Calgary Stampede Western Legacy Award (Innovation). She is an expert in nonprofit board governance, and a volunteer certified

facilitator for the Alberta Government. Her 35-year career has taken her from animal laboratory research assistant to company owner, community builder, consultant and part of the senior management team at the Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary.

Rita has survived two separate primary breast cancer diagnoses, five major surgeries and chemotherapy treatments which have resulted in ongoing physical challenges. A common thread in Rita's story is 'defying the odds.' She has a long history of initiating and completing major, community projects including introducing a new industry sector to the province of Alberta, co-founding the Chickwagon! -- breaking onto the traditional male turf of chuckwagon racing; co-founding Complementary Cancer Choices when the traditional medical establishment couldn't offer all the support she needed as someone living with cancer; and co-founding Wellspring Calgary, the first and only community cancer support centre in Southern Alberta.

Engaging, welcoming and empathetic, Rita is genuinely interested in people. Throughout her professional and personal career, she has maintained her values and stayed committed to community. She is a woman of vision who shares her wisdom freely—with students, colleagues, friends and acquaintances, on topics ranging from relationship-management to project implementation. Rita is not afraid to try new things or take on new challenges. She brings creativity, professionalism and excellence to her work, volunteering countless hours for the good of the whole community. Her legacy includes playing a founding role in establishing strongly grounded organizations which focus on women's health, women in business and the mentorship of young women.

## Distinguished Student

### LAUREN WEBBER



LAUREN WEBBER IS A BORN AND RAISED Calgarian currently completing her final semester of a BA in International Relations. She hopes to work towards a vastly improved global awareness of communicable and non-communicable disease prevention, with a focus on educating young women in developing nations.

Lauren learned she was elected as the new student body president the day after she lost her mother to a long, painful battle with breast cancer. On March 3, 2010, Heather Webber died at the young age of 47, after her third battle with cancer, leaving her three daughters and husband behind to mourn her loss along with hundreds of friends and supporters. Before she died, she told her loved ones she didn't want an obituary that said she had "lost" her battle: the word lost wasn't in her vocabulary. She was the kind of person who motivated others to be their best, to stay positive no matter what and she stayed motivated and upbeat right up until her last days. Just as her mother had shown the world so resiliently, Lauren remained positive, energetic and motivated. She dedicates all her successes to her mother, sisters, father and peers who have lifted her along the path to success at university.

Lauren transferred from the University of Alberta in 2007, and in 2008 was elected to the SU Operations and Finance Commission. In 2009 she was once again elected, this time as an External Commissioner where she served for the 2008-2009 academic year, before being elected as President in 2010. She has been actively involved in numerous lobbying campaigns to promote high quality and affordable education system on campus, throughout the province of Alberta and Canada.

Aside from her experience with the Students' Union, Lauren has spent time volunteering as both a Spring and Fall Orientation Leader for the Student Success Center, and in 2009 acted as a Fall Orientation Team Lead, where she assisted in planning and implementing all Orientation Week Programs. Lauren has also actively involved with WUSC at the University of Calgary chapter which is responsible for selecting refugee candidates, placing them at a Canadian post-secondary institution, and providing training and guidance to the sponsored students and Local Committees throughout the sponsoring process.

**THE SHEILA O'BRIEN AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP 2011**

*Kim Grimwade*



KIM GRIMWADE IS completing her final semester of BA in Psychology (Honours). Kim has been an active volunteer at the Women's Resource Centre since 2008 when she joined our Peer Support program. In this capacity Kim became involved with the knitting circle. It was here that Kim welcomed many new

visitors to the centre while passing along handcrafting skills in knitting, crochet and needlepoint. The friendly informal atmosphere created by Kim helped visitors to feel comfortable, return to the centre, and many eventually become volunteers themselves. Kim's friendly and open demeanor, joined with her willingness to listen non-judgmentally, made her an asset to the centre in assisting those who came in for peer support.

In 2009 Kim took on a leadership role with the Peer Support team and worked with a team of over 20 volunteers. In this capacity Kim encouraged the growth in other volunteers by assisting them with the creation of such projects as lunch and learns, crafty Tuesdays, and service of the week posters. In 2010 Kim remained active with the WRC, this time in the capacity as Leadership Mentor where she was available to support new team leaders and volunteers. She continued to help organize several events at the WRC.

Kim has been a dedicated member of our volunteer team, always striving to create a warm atmosphere in the centre and welcoming new and returning visitors. She has become passionate in raising awareness and addressing issues of inequality; which have been reflected in her psychology honors project Sexual Prejudice affecting Attributions of Blame. Kim Grimwade was selected by her WRC volunteer peers to be recognized for her outstanding contributions to the WRC.

For more information on the award, please visit: [http://www.ucalgary.ca/women/volunteer\\_award](http://www.ucalgary.ca/women/volunteer_award)



**I support the Women's Resource Centre.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

- I would like to volunteer.
- I would like to be notified of events & information.
- I would like to have a copy of the WRC newsletter.
- I would like to donate to the WRC

*There are several ways to donate to the Women's Resource Centre including online donations by credit card. We also accept donations by cash, cheques, and new books for our growing Women's Resource Library. A tax creditable receipt is provided with each monetary donation.*

**Enclosed is my donation of:**

- \$50     \$75     \$100     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Send donations to:**

Women's Resource Centre, MH318, 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, Alberta, T2N 1N4

**Online Donation:** [www.ucalgary.ca/giving](http://www.ucalgary.ca/giving)

*How can you support the WRC?*

**BY VOLUNTEERING**

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the WRC. All of our programs are led by volunteers representing different sectors of the community campus including students, staff, faculty and members of the Calgary community. The WRC team works to facilitate the projects, ideas and creative initiatives of our volunteers and the centre is defined by and for the women who volunteer with us and enjoy our space. Volunteering is an excellent way to take advantage of our beautiful space, interact with women from diverse backgrounds, and learn through dialogue and research.

**THROUGH SPONSORSHIP**

Sponsorship is an excellent way to see tangible growth and success at the WRC. Our yearly outcome-based assessments include important consultations with the users of the centre as well as key community stakeholders. When you support our centre you will receive a yearly package highlighting our activities, challenges and successes as well as newsletters describing upcoming events and including feature articles.

**GET INVOLVED!** If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, mentor or a sponsor, drop by our centre, visit our website at [www.ucalgary.ca/women](http://www.ucalgary.ca/women), call us at 403-220-8551 or email us at [women@ucalgary.ca](mailto:women@ucalgary.ca)

