



Women's Staff Network Newsletter Spring 2023



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

WELCOME

We are kicking off this newsletter with a round up from International Women's Day (IWD). Every year, the 8th March is IWD which is a celebration of women globally as well as a platform for consciousness raising in respect of issues affecting women and to help drive positive change. The theme for this year's IWD was Equity.

One of the sentiments that came out of the discussions was that not everyone had a positive view or expectation of what it would mean to be part of a Women's Staff Network before joining. We would therefore like to encourage you to get in touch and join us. By building networks across the organisation we can build working relationships with people we may never have otherwise had contact with. This is such a great opportunity to take up on.

Best wishes from your network co-chairs Nikki, Maria and Carole



Being involved in Women's Networks by Ruth Thompson

Ruth shared her experience of being involved in Women's Networks and why she values such a space within the working environment:

I have always enjoyed being part of a Women's Network - in the power of the collective - women supporting women as peers, mentors, role models and sponsors together through our career journeys but also positively enhancing my sense of wellbeing at work.

Ruth read this wonderful poem by January Gill O'Neil called 'In the Company of Women'.

In the Company of Women

Make me laugh over coffee,
make it a double, make it frothy
so it seethes in our delight.
Make my cup overflow
with your small happiness.
I want to hoot and snort and cackle and chuckle.
Let your laughter fill me like a bell.
Let me listen to your ringing and singing
as Billie Holiday croons above our heads.
Sorry, the blues are nowhere to be found.
Not tonight. Not here.
No makeup. No tears.
Only contours. Only curves.
Each sip takes back a pound,
each dry-roasted swirl takes our soul.
Can I have a refill, just one more?
Let the bitterness sink to the bottom of our lives.
Let us take this joy to go.



International Women's Day 2023

I AM All Woman



Val Craft

Embracing Equity

Student Val Craft gave a talk on embracing equity for all women. Val has a PGCert. in Strength & Conditioning from SMU and is currently studying an MSc in Applied Sport & Exercise Physiology. Val previously studied a PGDip. in Women's Studies at Ruskin College in Oxford and has a keen desire to support women within sports and sports science. To view a recorded version of this talk [click here](#).



Closing Remarks by Sam Goober

The Women's Staff Network would like to wish Sam all the best with her future endeavours as she leaves SMU for pastures new. Sam has been involved in some fantastic work within Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and she will be sadly missed.

This is an excerpt of Sam's closing speech from the IWD event.

Before we can embrace equity, we have to recognise where our own privilege exists – privileges not all other women have.

We have to recognise when others have experienced greater challenges than we have, even though we ourselves have experienced challenges.

We have to recognise and seize opportunities to use our privilege to champion and advocate for those who do not have that same privilege.

We have to be active allies.

On International Women's Day, we come together to celebrate and share the triumphs and challenges of our shared experience – that of being a woman.

It's not just about supporting and uplifting other women, it's about being intentional about how we uplift one another, and how often, and whom we choose to uplift.

Because we don't all come from a level playing field.

It is with this understanding that we can start to embrace equity.

And when I say embrace, what I really mean is, try.

When we try to understand and embrace equity, we know we will make mistakes, but we will own them and try again. So I am asking you right now to try, and to keep trying.

When we embrace equity, we seek to be here for each other as women, but also as women with different intersecting identities who need different things to achieve the same aim – equal opportunity for success.

We all deserve that opportunity, and it's up to each of us to help support each other in receiving it.

So thank you for joining us today, tomorrow, and every day of the year, as we embrace equity, and keep trying, together.

If you would like to join the network or find out more about our next meeting please get in touch

Email: womensnetwork@stmarys.ac.uk

Upcoming Meetings: Thursday 27th April 10-11am and Friday 2nd June 2-3pm in Dolce Vita

Women's Staff Network Co-Chairs: Nikki Brown, Maria Mellins & Carole Murphy