



Inspiring Women Among Us 2016: Women, Media, & Masks

Event Report

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November 2016 saw the second annual offering of the **Inspiring Women Among Us** event (IWAU), held November 17-30th (the 2016 theme: Women, Media, & Masks), leading up to UNBC's December 6th Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (held November 30th while classes were still in session). We are very pleased to write that the 2016 edition of IWAU expanded upon the 2015 event in scope and scale, and also received a Connection grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada. This grant was critical in affording us the freedom to carry out a second successful IWAU, particularly in terms of allowing us to welcome valued guests from near and far, and to compensate some hardworking students for their roles in supporting the organizing for, logistics of, and reporting on IWAU. **Dr. Meletis (Associate Professor, Geography) and Dr. Annie Booth (Professor, Ecosystem Science and Management Program, UNBC) were the primary organizers for the second year, and their Student Planning Assistant was Krystal Devauld—another invaluable contributor and promoter of IWAU. In 2016, IWAU surpassed the individual attendances of 2015 (over 800), to include over 1000 attendances (the approximate number of attendances was 1,120).**

This report offers an overview of the 2016 series of events, plans for IWAU 2017, and also acknowledges the many 2016 collaborators, partners and sponsors. We could not have run this event without such broad community support, well beyond the halls of UNBC. We also thank all of the IWAU participants that took the time to complete evaluation forms during/after IWAU events in 2016; we appreciate your input. Finally, we are deeply grateful for the sponsorship IWAU received that made it possible to host these events.

Events

IWAU hosted 36 activities between November 17-30th in addition to the UNBC Memorial ceremony for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, and the Montreal Massacre, which UNBC held on November 30th.

An original IWAU goal was to make this an inclusive community event extending beyond the UNBC Prince George campus. We succeeded in this regard in 2015, and built upon this in 2016. A film was hosted by Cinema CNC at the College of New Caledonia, several events took place in the Bob Harkins Branch of the Prince George Public Library, workshops and panels were held at the Two Rivers Gallery, at AWAC, and at Artspace, among other venues. At least two self-identified First Nations elders regularly attended and

participated in IWAW events, and sister events were held at both the UNBC-Terrace and UNBC-Quesnel campuses (outside of Prince George). We also received diverse media coverage including stories and interviews in the Prince George Citizen newspaper, the Community Radio Stations CFIS and CFUR, and commercial TV and radio stations CKPG, The River, and The Goat. All of this community involvement, support, and dissemination has extended the reach of IWAW over the past two years, and we hope to continue to grow this as it extends the opportunities and benefits associated with the events well beyond university walls.

Another original goal that we sought to improve upon in 2016 was to showcase ‘good work’ already been done in the community, as well as organizations in northern BC striving for improved gender relations and/or greater support for women and girls. We continue to be inspired by the degree of community buy-in, and the impressive array of related goings on in Prince George. In 2016, many student volunteers added to IWAW, and organizations such as the Northern Women’s Centre, the City of Prince George, UNBC’s First Nations Centre, and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia (APEG) were among the many who contributed to making IWAW an engaging success. Once again, people were extremely generous in organizing and offering activities—in both years we had to adjust our schedules multiple times to accommodate the many contributions being brought forward. In 2016, Inspiring Women Among Us attracted more than **1,120 individual attendances (in 2015 we counted 803)**.

We are grateful for all of our community sponsors and partners, and particularly appreciative of the funding we received from the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada (SSHRC Connection Grant), the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, the UNBC Office of the President, the UNBC College Deans and Vice Presidents, and APEG. The UNBC President, Dr. Daniel Weeks, has been an important champion of IWAW since its inception, and his support is emblematic of greater support for IWAW at UNBC. In order to make IWAW long lasting and self-sustaining, we hope to maintain and build upon this support in future years. We were also delighted that **the City of Prince George Mayor and Council were willing to support IWAW early on. Following on a proclamation in 2015, the City proclaimed November 17th-30th Inspiring Women Among Us Weeks** in Prince George, and allowed us to write the City Proclamation. The City provided IWAW with \$1,500 to support the event and added to its prior support by volunteering to organize a new event called Ms. Mayor. The event drew aspiring young women to City Council Chambers, and was greatly enjoyed by all in attendance. We look forward to building upon this with an “open doors” mentoring event to connect prospective future employees with female mentors working at the City in 2017.

An almost complete list of IWAW 2016 activities can be found on the IWAW website. In the following sections, we highlight details for a few events.

Pre-events for IWAW 2016

IWAW tabling at the Prince George Farmer’s Market

In order to generate awareness of IWAW and our upcoming 2016 events, as well as to begin fundraising ticket sales and T-shirt sales, we staffed tables at one of the local Farmer’s Markets, on the following dates: July 16 and 30; August 13 and 27. We found these days to be key for starting discussions on IWAW, and for gauging local reactions to IWAW materials such as our banner, brochures, logo, and shirts.

Wine, Women, & Song—a fundraiser for the IWAW award

The success of this pre-IWAW fundraiser falls mainly to our 2016 Student Planning Assistant Krystal Devauld, and to local volunteers and vendors who stepped up to help us address unexpected logistical challenges. Also, the event featured several powerhouses of the local music scene including strings player Barbara Wilmer, alternative solo artist Britt Meierhoffer, a vocal group called The Cantata Counterpoints, and opera singer Melanie Nicol. The event sold out a week before the date (an amazing feat for this city!) and raised \$1,400 for

the IWAU Award; it was enjoyed by approximately **70 attendees (including volunteers)**, and was held at our charming local Northern Lights Winery.

**Women's Health, Women's Bodies, Women's Rights:
Reflections on the 1970 Abortion Caravan (Oct 4th)**

About **65 – 70 students, faculty, staff and community members** attended the presentation and discussion that focused not only on the issue of abortion and the Caravan itself but, also, on the Caravan work's impact on the development of the women's liberation movement within Canada and its lasting impacts on the movement today. Dr. Dawn Hemingway (Chair and Associate Professor, School of Social Work, UNBC), an organizer of the Abortion Caravan and founding member of the Feminist Action League at SFU and the Vancouver Women's Caucus in the late 1960s, was the main speaker and event organizer. In addition to her talk, excellent discussion took place at the event. Further, there has been a great ongoing response from those attending; Dawn has heard back from many students, a young trade union woman who participated, and a CNC student as well. She has also been asked by Women's/Gender Studies to present again in the next academic year, and is excited at the prospect of keeping these conversations going. We hope that she will consider an additional related event for IWAU 2017.

Sassy Saturday Feminist Flash fundraiser with Handsome Cabin Boy Tattoo (Oct 29th)

Handsome Cabin Boy Tattoo is a very successful female-owned tattoo shop that employs two skilled female tattoo artists: Katy Zammit and Teresa Sapergia (an established Canadian visual artist). We were excited at the prospect of partnering with them for an IWAU fundraiser. They amazed us with their support and generosity; we hope to partner with them again in 2017. The unique flash (small) tattoos that they produced included witchy/Halloween themed ones, LGBTQ positive images, and pro-female/pro-empowerment designs. The busy artists squeezed **just under 40 tattoos** into this busy day, and enthusiastic recipients lined up from 5am and swapped fantastic stories about the images they had chosen and why they were getting tattooed at this event. **The event raised \$1,800 in operating funds for IWAU 2017.**

IWAU 2016 events (Nov 17-30th)

IWAU 2016 Opening Ceremony (Nov. 17)

We were delighted that for a second year in a row, the local First Nations drumming group the Khast'an Drummers, were able to join us to kick off IWAU. Elder Darlene MacIntosh and members of the UNBC Administration, as well as students, staff, and other community members attended; the ceremony's attendance jumped from a few dozen in 2015 to **55+** in 2016. In addition to Elder Darlene's participation in this event, and the opening of the Indigenous Women Land Defenders Panel by Elder Edie Frederick, The UNBC First Nations Centre hosted two Elders in Residence during IWAU: Murray and Louisa M. Smith.

Art & Coffee Night (Nov. 17)

For the second year in a row, IWAU was kicked off with a powerful and well attended (**approx. 80 attendees**) event: the 'Art & Coffee Night' run by Dr. Si Transken (Associate Professor, School of Social Work, UNBC), with sponsorship from the UNBC Community Arts Council. This event featured song, music, poetry, activist stories, and the sharing of intimate survival stories. It took place in the UNBC Rotunda Gallery, which was specially adorned with related art for the event—art create by Dr. Transken and many others during "artivism" and art therapy sessions both on and off campus. The Coffee Night also raised funds for the Northern Women's Centre—the only dedicated women's centre in northern BC, which is housed at UNBC, but serves a broad community. We are delighted that this event will be happening again in 2017.

The North American premiere of *With This Ring*, a film directed by Ameesha Joshi and Anna Sarkissian (Nov. 23)

This was the North American premier for this film made by two young female Canadian directors, about the national women's boxing team in India, including international boxing star Mary Kwan. The **20+** people in the audience enjoyed the film and the intimate Q&A session with Ameesha Joshi, who joined IWAW to speak to her film and the process behind it. She also spoke to her career development, and to her new projects. She attended several other IWAW events as a participant. Film trailer and other information can be found at: www.withthisring.film.com.

Showings of the films *She's Beautiful When She's Angry* (Mary Dore and Nancy Kennedy. 2014), and *Made in Dagenham* (Nigel Cole. 2010)

The first film was shown at UNBC to **10 people**, to offer a film-based foray into the history of the women's movement, focusing on the 1960s and 70s, and the rise of Women's Liberation Movement, as well as conflicts within it. The audience was small but included a group of First Nations youth. Many of the comments they left behind indicated their appreciation for the film and the facts that it brought to their attention to struggles to achieve women's rights, and the organizing efforts behind related gains. Information about the film can be found at www.shesbeautifulwhenshesangry.com/the-film.

The second film is based on a true story about a factory uprising in 1968. It is the story of the undervaluing of female labour in an historic Ford factory in Dagenham, UK, and resulting worker responses to it. The female machinists organize and strike, effectively shutting down Ford production when the ready supply of car seats runs out. It is a moving film about female leadership, male mentorship of women in male-dominated fields, friendships and relationships under strain, the politics of capitalist production and their reliance on worker exploitation, and an inspiring eventual female victory in the workplace. The film was attended by **approximately 35 people**.

Inspiring Women Who Ride – Motorcycle Display (Nov. 23)

This was a sight to be seen! **Six** women and their slick rides filled the UNBC Wintergarden (a very central space with heavy foot traffic). Local female riders were on hand with the bikes to talk gender and riding with interested parties. The event was a popular one for photos and selfies, and the bikers were very generous with their stories and their rides; it was **perused by dozens of people**. This was an idea hatched by Bev Isaac, Director of UNBC's First Nations Centre and proud Harley rider. It was a great visual display to get people thinking about gender stereotypes, hobbies, transportation, mechanics, and more. UNBC Facilities staff members were integral to the event's success since their skills and knowledge allowed the bikes to be safely moved into and displayed in the area.

Creativity Cabaret (Nov. 26)

Dr. Rob Budde (Professor, English Program, UNBC) organized this event which featured poetry, music, and song as ways of interacting with gender and gender relations. It was held at the upstairs community space Art Space at a local independent bookstore, Books and Company. It was attended by **35 people** and featured a lot of local talent across ages and genders.

DAH DEAHGE NODESIDĒ- We are speaking our own language again (Edosdi/Judy Thompson and Michael Bourquin. 2012) (Nov. 28)

This film showing and discussion (**30+** in attendance) is representative of the kind of unique event that is indicative of IWAW's nature and the funding it attracts (particularly our one year SSHRC Connection Grant in this case), which allow us to host events for our greater community. The film/discussion was organized by Dr.

Judy Thompson (Assistant Professor, First Nations Studies Program, UNBC). She has for years been involved in Tahltan language restoration, and produced and co-directed this film. This event was designed to invite people to watch the documentary in community and to have the opportunity to discuss it with some of the elders, teachers and learners featured in the film. Invited Tahltan members in attendance included: Angela Dennis; Louise Framst; Theresa Etzerza; Odelia Dennis; Patricia Louie; Tanya Louie; and Jodi Payne.

Mentoring Lunch- Athena in the Academy: Unmasking mentors (Nov. 29)

Organized by Drs Heather Smith (Director, Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology), Blanca Schorcht (Dean, College of Arts, Science and Health Sciences (CASHS)) and Si Transken (Assistant Professor, School of Social Work), and sponsored by the UNBC Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, and the Dean's Office of CASHS, this informal networking event was meant to connect mentors and mentees, and to get people thinking creatively about mentoring via a mask-making activity. It was a very well received event by the **36** who signed up for it, and a few additional attendees. Participation was capped due to the supplies needed (it required pre-registration but was free of charge thanks to its sponsorship).

The Dec 6th Commemorative Ceremony for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

One of the goals that pushed us to begin organizing IWAU was to increase and diversify the audience in attendance at this annual commemorative ceremony. In years prior to 2015, it was primarily attended by organizers and women from UNBC and the greater community. In the two years since we have started IWAU, the audience has included more men than previous years, and has grown in size. Last year, the estimated audience at peak attendance was approximately 80. This year, UNBC's Department of Communications estimated that over **100 people** were in attendance. It was also the most male audience that IWAU organizers had ever observed at this event. We are extremely proud of this achievement as this ceremony serves as important marker for ALL Canadians, especially those who work or study in educational environments as well as those working in conventionally male domains (like the physical sciences, engineering, and medicine). In 2017, our specific goal is to increase attendance among members of the Engineering and STEM programs at UNBC, including faculty, staff, and students. It is important for all to be reminded of the women lost that day in 1989, who might have been our colleagues today, and that we are ALL responsible for trying to keep universities safe and inviting for all genders.

In addition to specific events during the IWAU period, some participation was multi-day. For example, new posters were created by student from ENV5 309 Gender & Environment, and added to the **growing collection of posters of "women who stand out"** that line the hallways during IWAU. For the duration of IWAU, the halls of key traffic areas at UNBC were lined with detailed information and imagery of inspiring women.

T-shirt sales also occurred prior to IWAU and throughout its duration. This year's T-shirt was bright blue and included a definition for "northern feminist" on the back. We sold **80+** T-shirts in total, representing **\$914** towards IWAU costs and an equal amount for the IWAU Award.

Our Student Event Planning Assistant Krystal, organizers and supporters also worked hard to ensure that **social media was abuzz with IWAU-related event promotion and information sharing throughout the year**, especially in the lead up to and during the IWAU period itself. Our Facebook page and Twitter account have become community resources for sharing gender-related articles and events. Our Facebook page Inspiring Women Among Us has received 387 Likes (June 23rd, 2017), and our Twitter account @IWAU_2016 has 92 Followers and has received 308 Likes (June 23rd, 2017).

Speakers

IWAU was able to partner with two existing speaker series: the weekly NRESi Colloquium (Natural Resources and Environmental Studies Institute) and Global Fridays series, to bring in **4** outstanding IWAU speakers:

1) Pioneering female meteorologist and national media personality **Claire Martin** spoke candidly about cutting her teeth first in the military, and later as a meteorologist in northern Canada, back when the field was essentially entirely composed of men. Her talk was entitled ***Gender and Participation in COP21***, and she spoke about her recent participation in **the Conference of the Parties or COP21** as part of the Canadian Delegation on climate change, and raised interesting questions about the possible influences that the gender composition of delegations have at such meetings. Her talk was attended by approximately **65 people** (plus several people on-line), and was among the liveliest NRESi talks to date. A video of her talk is available here: <https://youtu.be/bnw6T5nQLx8>.

2 and 3) In collaboration with the Geography Program at UNBC, and to celebrate Geography Awareness Week, we hosted **Dr. Anne Godlewska and Laura Schaepli, of Queen's University**, who agreed to give three talks during their IWAU visit. First, based on her teaching experiences with large classes, Anne spoke about ***Active Learning: Is it possible in large classes?*** at an event co-sponsored by the UNBC Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology (Nov, 18th). This was attended by **approximately 10 people**. We also hosted a Global Fridays colloquium talk by Anne and Laura entitled: ***The of Indigenous Marginalization in Provincial Education in Canada***. They emphasized an ongoing study of theirs exploring the roots and impacts of the poor quality of education most Canadians receive about Canada's Indigenous and Métis cultures and peoples across the provinces and territories. They presented results from an ongoing study comparing such levels of knowledge and awareness "pre and post" university degree. The two scholars shared their disturbing results to date on our lack of sound knowledge about Canada's Indigenous and Métis peoples, and their past and current contributions to society. Their Global Fridays talk was attended by **approximately 29 people**, and generated a lively discussion about how such education should proceed and be improved. The Saturday morning talk (Nov. 19) by Laura in the First Nations 601 graduate class was attended by approximately **8 people** and was called ***Unsettling pedagogy: Co-designing research in place with Métis, First Nations, and Inuit educators***. It complemented the Global Fridays talk the day before. During their visit, they also made plans to return to UNBC to continue their study.

4) Renowned author and activist **Harsha Walia** accepted our invitation to present during IWAU. She gave her first, largely informal talk to a small audience of **approximately 10**, mostly composed of immigration service professionals and new immigrants, at Prince George's Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society, about ***The Making of Migrations***, on Nov. 24. Her passion for improving the ways in which Canada receives and welcomes immigrants, especially refugees was clear, and attendees were welcomed by IWAU and IMSS to enjoy tea and snacks with her afterwards. Her second talk, entitled ***Feminists Undoing Border Imperialism*** was primarily designed for an academic audience, and took place as part of the Global Friday's speaker series. The main thrust of her talk was to raise questions about how feminism might be used to reinforce or rationalize the exclusion of refugees, as well as other harsh policies and practices towards them. It was attended by **approximately 25 people** and discussion of related issues continued into a Global Fridays-hosted lunch with Harsha, faculty members, students and community members at the UNBC pub, afterwards.

Panels

Building equitable and just communities through leadership in the planning profession: Reflections, experiences and stories from the field (Nov. 17)

The event involved **4 female panelists** who spoke to their role in planning or community building. Speakers included **Dr. Theresa Healy (Northern Health Authority/UNBC), Hillary Morgan (City of Prince George), Joan Chess (Fraser Basin Council) and Alana Bartol (artist)**. Each panelist spoke to their role in creating inclusive communities or community spaces, including projects involving age-friendly community planning (Morgan), watershed governance (Chess), participatory art (Bartol), and community engagement with marginalized populations (Healy). The talk was **attended by 15-20 people**, most of whom were UNBC students; it was organized by Dr. Mark Groulx (Assistant Professor, School of Environmental Planning, UNBC).

Women & Media panel (Nov. 17)

This media panel was designed to showcase women with successful careers in media, and was later broadened to include women just starting out in media as well. Participants included: Claire Martin (media personality), Sarah Mirk (Bitch Media), Cheryl Jahn (CKPG television reporter; former print journalist), Meghan Murphy (freelance journalist and regular writer/founder at feministcurrent.com), and Krystal Devauld (starting up a podcast on “coloured girl” experiences). It inspired a lively discussion on media and gender, how to succeed in a male-dominated field, gender and race in the media, and ruminations on politics, media, and how to strategize about getting progressive and other much needed messages out. **Approximately 26 attended, including the panelists.**

The Indigenous Women Land Defenders- Panel (November 21)

Organized by Dr. Budde (Professor, English Program, UNBC), this was standing room only (**62+ attendees**), and one of the most powerful events to date at UNBC. A table of female Indigenous leaders (Freda Huson, Goot-Ges, Helen Knott, and Rheanna Robinson) spoke for two hours, addressing questions and stories from the audience, talking about what had pushed them to defend their land, and how they effectively apply their passion and cultural learnings in defending their territory. We were extremely proud and honoured to have sponsored this event, which allowed for unique learning and listening opportunities not easily found elsewhere. This event was also livestreamed to larger audiences via www.unbc.ca/livestream, extending the reach of the event.

Art, Activism & Feminism Panel (Nov. 24)

Organized by Dr. Annie Booth (Professor, Ecosystem Science and Management Program, UNBC), and featuring Prince George artists Dr. Si Transken, Betty Kovacic, Jennifer Pighin, and Dr. Indrani Margolin, this panel was held at the Two Rivers Art Gallery. It emphasized the intersections between gender, art, and activism. Zoë Meletis (Associate Professor, Geography Program, UNBC) moderated this panel, and after earlier discussions with panel participants, invited the artists/activists to comment on the following themes: *Art & moving from imagination to creation; Art & relationships; Art & the female voice; Art & release &/or healing; Art, activism, teaching, & learning; and Art & mentoring*. The panel engaged with a full audience at the Two Rivers Gallery, our local public art gallery. Panelist Indrani Margolin danced in the gallery space, among the audience members. The synergies that emerged during this event were powerful and memorable—they indeed represented stories of inspiring, and being inspired. **Approximately 30 people attended.**

Workshops

Speak Up, Make Change (with Sarah Mirk, writer and podcast producer/host, Bitch Media, Nov. 17)

Sarah Mirk led a fascinating talk on zines, zine culture, and using easy/cheap/accessible media forms and materials to take stands, resist, and attempt to “make change” in society, to an audience of **about 35 participants**. The workshop included a talk by Sarah that reviewed key media moments and some basic concepts to do with zines. Participants were then invited to peruse a zine she had made, and to make their own statement using words and/or art. Although the audience was not a large one, participants were very engaged and seemed to enjoy the hands-on approach.

As part of the IWAU 2015, we held **several mentoring-related events**. Feedback from these sessions suggested that, as indicated in the literature, the appetite for improved mentoring is strong. In 2016, we sought to provide a mix of more formal and less formal/more social mentoring events to support those seeking greater guidance and collegiality. An example of a more formal event held was the pair of workshops called **Make Possible – Mentoring Made Easy**, a dual set of workshops (one for general audiences; one for members of the UNBC Senior Administrators) run by SCWIST, the Society for Canadian Women in Science and Technology (Nov. 22). These workshops attracted **about 22 participants** in total. A very popular (full at 36 attendees) and meaningful activity, according to 2016 event evaluation sheets, was the aforementioned Mentoring Lunch organized by activist Dr. Si Transken, and Drs. Heather Smith and Blanca Schorcht, along with support from UNBC’s Teaching, Learning, and Technology Centre and the Dean of CASHS (Schorcht). Informal events such as the **Women Who Ride** activity also allowed for important casual conversations about gender and barriers to getting women and girls where they want to go, as well as strategizing about skills for survival and success, as well as work-life balance.

Self-esteem & Imposter Syndrome Mini Sessions (one for faculty; one for students) were hosted by the UNBC Wellness Centre (Nov. 24). These were meant to be short sessions introducing the concept of imposter syndrome, and providing some tools and strategies for combatting imposter syndrome in academia, particularly among women and girls. Both welcomed **7 attendees each**.

Moving into Wellness: Empowerment through Self-Expression (multiple workshops) (Nov. 25)

This event was organized and hosted by Drs. Indrani Margolin, Lela Zimmer, Claire Johnson, and Dawn Hemingway (School of Social Work, UNBC), and Dr. Jacqueline Holler (Associate Professor, Gender Studies Program, UNBC). **Approximately 20 participants** attended the workshops. One workshop was held at the AWAC (Association Advocating for Women and Children) Shelter to provide access to off-campus community members and especially to women who frequent the two main downtown shelters. The second workshop was held on the Prince George UNBC campus to afford students, faculty and staff an opportunity to participate. Activities included meditation, body movement, dance and bead-making (a new component this year). These workshops brought diverse demographics together to investigate their relationships with their own bodies, health, and wellness within their community. These are a good example of the types of non-academic offerings that we include in IWAU to extend its reach and range, engaging a diverse cross-section of our greater communities within northern BC.

Other events included in IWAU 2017

Find Yourself in a Mask mask-making activity (Nov. 17), and the **NBCGSS (UNBC graduate students) Mask-making workshop** (Nov. 23). Assisted by Dr. Si Transken and volunteers, an **approximate total of 30+ participants** made masks.

In Your Shoes (Nov. 22)

This event consisted of a First Nations Centre-organized activity which was “an interactive experience about the effects of the Residential Schools on women & families”. It was run by November 2017 Elder-in-Residence Louisa Smith. It seemed to be a powerful experience for the **20 or so participants** who attended.

Feminism 101: Fundamentals for Females (Nov. 18), and **Women & Environment** (Nov. 21)

These two talks were researched and hosted by Michelle Connolly (Research Manager, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions). The first was **attended by approximately 10 people and the second by 8**. They were meant to inform and generate discussion; lively audience participation occurred in both cases.

Ms. Mayor – If I were mayor, I would _____ (Nov. 19)

Hosted by Mayor Lynn Hall and the City of Prince George. This event was designed to welcome youth, particularly young women, into City Hall. They were welcomed into Council Chambers and encouraged to make the space their own, interacting with decision-makers and sharing their ideas for leadership and the City. **Over 10 young attendees and families participated.**

Job Chats for Teens, hosted by the PG Public Library, Bob Harkins branch (Nov. 19). This was attended by **10 participants**.

Body Positive Workshop (Nov. 19)

Hosted by Shannon Williams, the UNBC Northern Undergraduate Society’s (NUGSS) Women’s Representative. The event was designed to inspire body confidence and appreciation of diverse female body types in the face of unhealthy media messaging; **attended by 15**.

Activist Pro-Choice Rally, organized by Sarah Boyd, Executive Director of the Northern Women’s Centre (Nov. 22). This is a recurring event that occurs on the sidewalk near the local hospital, nearby where a “Pro-Life” activist routinely marches with his sign. This event presented “pro-choice” stances via standing with signs and cheering in community, **12-20 people participated** throughout the day.

Conduct, Consent, and Community, a discussion hosted by members of the Student Life and Wellness Centre staff (Nov 23). A discussion led by students was held with a group of **approximately 12 people**.

The Many Faces of CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees), hosted by IWAW and UNBC’s CUPE local (Nov. 28). This event was **attended by 15 people** or so; it was meant to showcase and speak to diversity within CUPE ranks, and efforts to support a diverse workforce.

A full day combination of panels, workshops, and events on LGBTQ issues honouring the Trans Day of Remembrance (Nov. 20)

This event was hosted by Stacey Hewlett (President, Prince George Pride Society), and Michelle Stephen (Graduate Programs, UNBC). This included an “**LGBTQ talk**” with Stacey, with some important reminders and refreshers about the differences between sex, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as a discussion of related community resources. The second activity was a refreshingly candid and **honest panel composed of local community members with a diverse set of connections to the transgendered community: Dr. Tracey Lotze (Salveo Medical Clinic); Bryn Hanks; Arkell Aislinn Wiley; and Kerry Williams**. It was moderated by Dr. Theresa Healy (Adjunct Professor, School of Environmental Planning, UNBC) and Stacey. The day ended with a somber and poignant **ceremony of remembrance** hosted by former President of The Northern Pride Centre, Krystal Vandenberg. All of these events were held in the Art Space portion of Books & Company, which donated the use of this space to this event. At peak attendance, this group of events **attracted about 30 participants**.

Events at Quesnel (South-Central) and Terrace Campuses

Titi Kunkel (Senior Laboratory Instructor, UNBC South-Central) was the lead on organizing an IWAU event at the UNBC Quesnel Campus. Events were organized in cooperation with the College of New Caledonia (CNC) Student Union in Quesnel. On Nov. 3 and 4, an Inspiring Women Among Us Bake Sale was held, raising \$186.75 for an IWAU Award for the Quesnel campus. The Nov. 19 event was called ‘Empowering Women, Inspiring Women’ and ran from noon until 4pm. It featured the film *She’s Beautiful When She’s Angry* and a discussion. The event invited several local inspirational women (**MC: Dean Blanca Schorcht; the Honourable Coralee Oakes; and Quesnel City Councillor Laurey-Anne Roodenburg, President of the Northern Communities Local Government Association**), to lead the audience into the film with presentations about themselves and their life/career paths. Refreshments were served and there were crafts sales tables as well. Local vendors included author **Linda McIntyre**, promoting her new series of fantasy books ‘Lies of Lesser Gods’. Attendance ranged from **40-70 attendees** throughout the day. The Quesnel Campus and CNC Quesnel IWAU efforts raised a total of \$365 towards an IWAU Award, which was then matched by IWAU. These efforts were greatly appreciated by community members in the region, both on and off campus.

Amy Klepetar (Assistant Professor, Nursing Program, UNBC-Terrace) reported that in Terrace, two Northwest Speaker series lectures were cross-listed as IWAU events (Oct. 16 and Nov. 9th—these are listed here and not as pre-events because of the regional campus emphasis in reporting). On Oct. 16th, **Dina van Hahn** (Instructor, Northwest Community College), presented *The politics of women’s history in Canada*. On Nov. 9th, **Joelle McKiernan** (Counsellor; UNBC Instructor) presented *The Impact of Generational Grief and Loss in First Nations Communities*. These drew 25-30 people per lecture (**for a total maximum of 60 people**). In addition, as of December 2016, videos of these talks posted to YouTube had attracted 94 views. Lastly, the local Terrace Women’s Resource Centre exhibited interest in IWAU 2016, and would like to be included in future years.

Memorial Ceremony for the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women, and in recognition of the Montreal Massacre (Dec. 6th, 1989) (UNBC hosted Nov 30th, 2016)

One of the key goals of beginning IWAU as a tradition at UNBC was to increase and diversify attendance at UNBC’s Dec. 6th-related Memorial Ceremony, which occurs every year before the end of the Fall Semester. We are pleased to say that we succeeded in this goal. It was wonderful to see an even larger peak attendance than any in recent memory (**100 people! We beat last year’s count of 80!**), and one that included more men, scientists, faculty members in general, and students than usual. We will include a goal of continuous improvement regarding this attendance and diversity in our yearly delivery of IWAU events. We also hope to count on the **Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists** of BC for their continued support in hosting this important event, along with UNBC’s Auxiliary Services, which provided funding as well. With their help, we were able to host a larger and more welcoming after-Ceremony reception than in past years. All of this contributed to greater awareness of gender-related issues (past and present), and of the valuable community services and resources provided by the **Northern Women’s Centre** housed at UNBC (the primary organizer of this event was its Executive Director, Sarah Boyd, with the assistance of the Northern Undergraduate Student Society’s (NUGSS) Women’s Representative, Shannon Williams). We were pleased to draw IWAU to a close, with a crowded room full of Ceremony attendees wearing their IWAU T-shirts, and we thank all of those who helped to make this possible.

The Inspiring Women Among Us Award

In 2015, we decided that it would be powerful to use IWAU to also raise funds to support students self-identifying as women, who have faced/are facing significant challenges in pursuing higher education. We collaborated with the UNBC Development Office and UNBC’s President, Dr. Daniel Weeks, to establish a new Inspiring Women Among Us Award. This award is ‘non-academic’ in nature and is available to any self-identified woman who has faced significant challenges in getting to UNBC. In September of 2016, we collected

\$1400 for the award, via ticket sales to *Wine, Women, & Song*. During the IWAU 2016 period, around November 30th, the IWAU award was one of the featured “employee challenge” donation possibilities on the UNBC Campus, thanks to cooperation from the UNBC Office of Development. IWAU intersected with the 2016 UNBC Employee Challenge fundraising period. The challenge generated an impressive \$72,000 in student award funding. IWAU was identified as a promoted award, and donations were promoted using a special matching timeframe. As a result, \$8,101 was raised for the IWAU Award. With the IWAU award now in good stead only two years after its creation, we are poised to offer our first IWAU awards in 2017-2018.

We are pleased with community support for this award and related fundraising so far. The IWAU Planning Committee will continue on-going fundraising activities on behalf of the Award, and future IWAU events.

Post-IWAU 2016 events of note, in 2017

PG Rally in Support of the Women’s March on Washington

On January 21st, 2017, around the world, approximately 5 million women marched in support of women’s rights and in protest against the inauguration of the new US President, a known advocate for sexual assault.

Beginning in December, Prince George residents began to ask IWAU organizer Dr. Zoë Meletis when/where the PG sister march would be. Eventually, she got the hint and decided to organize a local rally. With the help of Becky Dochstader, who designed the poster, and Dr. Annie Booth, who helped to run the rally, PG had its own sister event, standing in solidarity with women and allies around the world. UNBC students such as Sam Wall also spoke eloquently at the rally, in front of a diverse group of participants including Dr. Daniel Weeks (UNBC President) and his wife Fay Lawton, and many local children. The crowd had hand-crafted signs and sang and shouted with much enthusiasm. The rally was in the PG Civic Plaza and included some marching in circles and marching on the spot to symbolize risks to gender equity and legally protected women’s rights, especially reproductive rights, under the then incoming US Administration. That the community turned to IWAU organizers for this event is indicating of its emerging reputation as a rallying platform for gender equity and women’s rights. We were proud to stand in solidarity with our PG neighbours and people around the world that day. Thank you to the community members, especially Kim Menounos, who prompted us to take action. Local media reported a **crowd of 150 in attendance**.

February’s a Drag Show (joint fundraiser for the Prince George Pride Society and IWAU)

Thanks to the hard work of two key organizers: local PG Pride Society President Stacey Hewlett, and her partner, dedicated UNBC staff member Michelle Stephen, UNBC hosted its first drag show at the Thirsty Moose Pub, on February 24th, 2017. The show was called February’s a Drag, and benefitted both the PG Pride Society and Inspiring Women Among Us, raising \$1,100 for each organization. The show was about much more than that, however, it was about celebrating the diversity of gender and sexual orientation, and about playing on gender stereotypes in fun, healthy, and entertaining ways. The show began with pipe and drum music by UNBC’s own Dr. Daniel Weeks and Dr. Ian Hartley, and included some of the biggest drag names in the region, such as Foxy de Rossi. Ms. Fondle (a “close relative” of Wil Fundal, a popular local media personality) MC’d the show with much panache, and was joined by several other drag performers (kings and queens) and the talented Foxxie’s Follies burlesque troupe from Quesnel. Post-show, the floor was turned into a dance party, and organizers received a lot of positive feedback not only about the quality of the show, but also about the pro-LGBTQ+ atmosphere in the space throughout the night. Several attendees remarked that it was the safest feeling dance floor they had ever been on in PG. We were delighted to participate in this collaboration, and hope to renew this success in February 2018, with guidance from Stacey and Michelle. The event was greatly enjoyed by those who were there, and generated a great deal of positive feedback and enthusiasm for the 2018 drag show.

Women's Day, March 8th 2016

This year, IWAAU wanted to contribute something to March 8th at UNBC, which was largely marked by the Northern Women's Centre, and included NWC support for the World Travelling Film Festival gender-related film screenings at UNBC that day. Ecosystems, Science and Management at UNBC sponsored a reception for the release of two new batches of "women who stand out" posters produced by the Winter 2017 ENVIS 309 Gender & Environment class (Instructor: Dr. Zoë Meletis). Students, staff, and faculty were welcomed to enjoy coffee and cookies as they read the new additions, in the Teaching and Learning lobby at UNBC. During IWAAU 2017, these will join posters from prior years that will decorate the halls adjacent to the UNBC Wintergarden.

The IWAAU Planning Committee and other key organizers

IWAAU was fortunate enough to benefit from a very supportive and helpful Planning Committee that met regularly to discuss ideas and plan the events. When/if members could not attend, many stayed in good communication via emails and other reports back to the group. Thanks are owed to the following individuals who gave time, ideas and support:

Annie Booth (Professor, Ecosystem Science and Management Program, UNBC)

Sarah Boyd (Executive Director, Women's Centre, UNBC)

Robert Budde (Professor, English Program, UNBC)

Brenda Clotildes (TV Production Manager at the Jim Pattison Broadcast Group)

Michelle Connolly (Research Manager, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, UNBC)

Mark Groulx (Assistant Professor, School of Environmental Planning, UNBC)

Dawn Hemingway (Chair, Social Work Program, UNBC)

Stacey Hewlett (President, Prince George Pride Society)

Erik Jensen (Acting Dean, College of Science and Management, UNBC)

Amy Klepetar (Assistant Professor, Nursing, UNBC Terrace)

Albert Koehler (City Councillor, City of Prince George)

Titi Kunkle (Acting Regional Chair-UNBC South Central, and Senior Lab Instructor, UNBC Quesnel)

Peter Maides (Cinema CNC; College of New Caledonia)

Jillian Merrick (City Councillor, City of Prince George)

Britt Meierhoffer (CFUR Radio Station)

Zoë Meletis (Associate Professor, Geography Program, UNBC)

Stacey Pickering (Nursing, UNBC)

Blanca Schorcht (Dean, College of Arts, Social and Health Sciences, UNBC)

Anita Shaw (UNBC Graduate Student)

Heather Smith (Director of the UNBC Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology)

Michelle Stephen (UNBC staff member and CUPE representative)

Allan Wilson (Head Librarian, Geoffrey R. Weller Library, UNBC)

Melinda Worfolk (College of New Caledonia)

In addition, **the UNBC Office of the President and Canada Works funded our IWAW Student Planning Assistant, Krystal Devauld who was integral to the success of the Wine, Women, & Song event, and IWAW 2016.** IWAW owes Krystal and all of the student volunteers that she coordinated with the help of Alexandra Tutosi much appreciation—THANK YOU!

Suggestions for future iterations of IWAW

Having successfully carried out IWAW 2015 and 2016, we have collected the following suggestions for changes to IWAW, for consideration in IWAW 2017 and beyond. These are the result of conversations with IWAW committee members, volunteers, other organizers, and attendee feedback:

- Consider shortening the length of IWAW to one or one and a half weeks
- Adopt a greater system of ‘key organizers’ or volunteers so that more events are linked with key contacts other than Drs. Annie Booth and Zoë Meletis, or the Student Planning Assistant. This should be done to lighten service loads and to widen spheres of influence and inclusion.
- Continue to consider creative ways of including more men in the events, and to make it clear that all genders are welcome.
- Work towards greater integration of intersectionality and discussions of race and class alongside gender-related issues.
- Expand upon community group involvement from the greater Prince George community.
- Consider the development of a longer term budget/finances to support IWAW.
- Emphasize mentorship and networking events as part of IWAW.

Social Media Presence, and Media Coverage

The IWAW event benefitted from Krystal Devauld and many other students, staff members, faculty members, and community members at large who worked to maintain the platforms listed below, to promote and keep community members updated about IWAW events. These efforts benefitted from the assistance of members of the UNBC Office of Communications (Matt Wood; Peter James, Erica Hargreaves Emile Madill and Lindsay Haste):

- a webpage presence at <http://www.unbc.ca/iwaw> and <http://www.unbc.ca/iwaw/events>
- a Facebook page, Inspiring Women Among Us, which remains very active throughout the year, for sharing gender-related resources and stories of inspiring women
- a Twitter account @IWAW_Events (#inspiringwomen2016), which sent out regular tweets, and allowed for feedback from organizers and participants. Twitter account activity will resume as part of our ‘15 week social media countdown’ currently in development for IWAW 2017.

Community media coverage in Prince George was quite extensive thanks to coverage from CKPG News, the Prince George Citizen, 250news, myprincegeorgenow, CFUR Radio (93.1), The Goat (94.3), The River (101.3), and CFIS Community Radio (93.1). We particularly appreciate the efforts and involvement of Brenda Clotildes, who routinely attended Planning Committee meetings and provided valuable feedback from both the perspectives of an interested community member and a media professional. We also appreciate support and interest from Britt Meierhoffer, who conducted several interviews with IWAW 2016 guests, including Sarah

Mirk. CFUR also dedicated a whole day of programming as a “Feminist Friday”, to link to IWAAU and its events, and encourage greater related conversations.

Media Coverage

Sample local event mention for *Wine, Women, & Song*:

<http://ckpgfunchaser.com/events/58595>

Coverage of IWAAU activities and events:

<https://www.250news.com/2016/11/17/inspiring-women-among-us-underway/>

<http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/entertainment/local-a-e/art-space-celebrating-local-women-1.3227291>

<http://www.ckpg.com/2016/11/17/114471/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7s8Ji8quIo>

<http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/news/local-news/inspiring-women-among-us-bigger-this-year-1.2741369>

Radio interviews: CFIS (9:40am); the River interview (8:30am). Weds, Nov. 9th.

PG Rally in Support of the Women’s March on Washington:

<http://overtheadgenewspaper.ca/prince-george-womens-march/>

February’s a Drag:

<http://www.ckpg.com/2017/02/23/community-drag-show-ready-to-hit-the-stage/>

Sponsorship

We were deeply fortunate to have attracted a sufficient amount of sponsorship, in donations or in-kind, to allow us to undertake all activities in 2016; we hope that our sponsors will see the community benefits from IWAAU, and continue their financial support in future years. Our top financial sponsors were:

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)—Connections Grant

UNBC’s Office of the President

UNBC’s Office of the Provost

UNBC’s Office of Vice President - Research

UNBC’s Office of the Vice President - Finance and Business Operation

UNBC’s Office of the Vice President - Advancement and Communications

The Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (@UNBC)

The City of Prince George

UNBC’s Geoffrey R. Weller Library

The Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia

Additional sponsors and partners (in alphabetical order):

Artspace/Books & Company

Becky Dochstader (UNBC Ancillary Services)

Canada Council for the Arts

Cinema CNC

College of New Caledonia (Prince George Campus)

Fellas Addressing Masculinity (FAM)

First Nations Studies Program (UNBC)

Global Fridays speaker series (@UNBC)

Handsome Cabin Boy Tattoo

Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society (IMSS), Prince George

Natural Resources and Environmental Studies Institute (NRESi) (UNBC)

Northern Undergraduate Student Society (NUGSS) (UNBC)

Northern Women's Centre (@UNBC)

Prince George Public Library (Bob Harkins Branch)

Society for Canadian for Women in Science and Technology (SCWIST)

The Thirsty Moose Pub (NUGSS @ UNBC)

Two Rivers Gallery (Prince George, BC)

UNBC Auxiliary Services

UNBC Bookstore

UNBC First Nations Centre

UNBC Community Arts Council

UNBC Conference Services

UNBC CUPE local 3799

UNBC Dean of the College of Science and Management

UNBC Dean of the College of Arts, Social and Health Sciences

UNBC Dean of Regional Programs

UNBC Faculty Association

UNBC Student Life

UNBC Weller Library staff

Women North Network/Northern FIRE: The Centre for Women's Health Research at UNBC

Inspiring Women Among Us 2016 in Photos

1) Dr. Annie Booth speaking at the IWAU Opening Ceremony



2) Members of the IWAU organizational team, with Amelia Bearheart, the mascot of our local international airport (YXS). Amelia likes to promote gender equity and the success of women and girls in STEM fields)



3) Shannon Williams (L), The Women's Representative for the Northern Undergraduate Society (NUGSS), and IWAU Student Planning Assistant Krystal Devauld (R)



4) City of Prince George and IWAU supporter Councillor Susan Scott, speaking at the IWAU Opening Ceremony'



5) A photo of our powerful Women in Media panel. Members included; Claire Martin, Krystal Devauld, Sarah Mirk, Cheryl Jahn, Samantha Allen and Meghan Murphy.



7) Two photos from the activism-infused Art & Coffee night organized by Dr. Si Transken and her generous volunteers



8) Two photos from the Women Who Ride display in UNBC's Wintergarden. People could stop and interact with women who ride, to ask them about gender & bike culture.



9) Women's March in Prince George

