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Connecting Researchers, Advancing Scholarship

WFRN Fall Update 2014

The days since the June conference have been busy ones behind the scenes at WFRN. There is lots of news to share: 1) the reorganization and relocation of WFRN's Executive Office; 2) the addition of Community, Work & Family as part of WFRN membership; 3) the selection of a new slate of candidates for WFRN leadership positions; 4) the introduction of a new "Research Spotlight" series, and 5) news from WFRN's active committees.

1. WFRN is undergoing a major staff transition. As you know, Judi Casey, WFRN's Director since its inception, has stepped down. And now Patricia Miller, who has been our key administrative staff person, is retiring after many dedicated years of service at Penn. The loss of both Judi and Patricia clearly represents a major change and a major challenge for WFRN.

I am pleased to report that a solution to this challenge has presented itself that will enable WFRN to continue to thrive and grow. WFRN is moving its administrative base to the Center for Human Resources at the Wharton School (located here at the University of Pennsylvania), pending final administrative approval. WFRN will retain its connection with Penn's Population Studies Center as well. This cross-school arrangement is fully consistent with the interdisciplinary nature of WFRN. Penn will continue to host the Work and Family Commons and WFRN's website, although we are transitioning to an e-commerce system outside of Penn's firewall intended to provide members with a more user-friendly interface.

WFRN will be sharing staff with the Center for Human Resources. We are fortunate to have the services of two excellent staff members, Kay Dowgun and Nancy Permsap. Kay

and Nancy have considerable experience maintaining membership groups and organizing conferences for the Center. A brief bio for each can be found [here](#).

Our email address is remaining the same. Please direct all questions and correspondence to: workandfamily@sas.upenn.edu

2. Another major development this fall has been the addition of the journal ***Community Work and Family (CW&F)*** as part of the WFRN membership package. An electronic subscription to CW&F will become a benefit of membership as we enter the 2015 membership cycle. More details on how members will be able to access CW&F on WFRN's home page will be posted when this is all set up.

3. The Nominations Committee has selected an excellent set of candidates for WFRN leadership positions (election to be held in January). As you know, WFRN is based on a model of rotating leadership that will keep bringing in fresh energy and ideas while building on our accomplishments to date. The candidates for WFRN positions are:

President: Jeff Hill, Phyllis Moen

Vice President: Suzan Lewis, Anisa Zvonkovic

Executive Committee: Orfeu Buxton, Wendy Casper, Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Russell Matthews

Thanks to the Nominations Committee members: Jeff Hill, Chair; Naomi Gerstel, Jeffrey Greenhaus, Gail Kinman, and Susan McHale

4. News from WFRN's Committees:

WFRN's Committee to Connect Research, Policy and Practice is launching a new "Research Spotlight" series. The first entry, Creating the Sustainable Workplace: An Interview with Ellen Kossek, by Emily Zuckerman and Lisa Stewart, can be found [here](#). It can also be accessed via the WFRN website under "Resources."

WFRN's Communications Committee will be exploring the possibility of developing special interest groups (SIGs). A survey regarding the formation of WFRN special interest groups will be circulated next week. Interest groups will provide a means for members who share an interest in a particular focus area to connect and collaborate. If you are interested in learning more about these interest groups, please participate in the survey when it arrives. You can also contact Kathryn Fonner, Chair, WFRN Communications Committee, fonner@uwm.edu.

WFRN's Membership Committee thanks you for your 2014 membership in WFRN! Your membership is crucial to maintaining the vibrancy of the WFRN by giving voice to multiple stakeholders and advancing work and family scholarship and advocacy. The Membership Committee was invigorated by the success of the conference in June.

* Over 30 people participated in the Networking Dinners designed to create connections and community among WFRN members, especially those new to the network.

* Hundreds of people participated in the conference receptions and coffee breaks, designed to build new connections and facilitate conversations among members.

We are currently working on a project to enhance recruitment to the network. If you have any ideas about how to broaden our membership, we want to hear from you!

Please contact the chair of the committee, Krista Lynn Minnotte, at

krista.minnotte@und.edu

Members of WFRN's International Committee are putting together brief reports on new developments in policy, research and good practices over the past year in each of their countries. This will include lists of publications, websites, and other resources. The reports will be available at the Community, Work and Family conference in Tampere by May 2015 and on the WFRN website. If anybody else would like to contribute such reports from countries not represented on the committee, please contact Sue Lewis at

s.lewis@mdx.ac.uk

Recent news on international projects includes the following:

(a) A new cross-national European research project, Investments in a Sustainable Workforce in Europe: Causes and Consequences in Comparative Perspective, was launched with a kick-off meeting in Utrecht in October. The project, led by Tanja van der Lippe from the Netherlands working with a multinational team, features a multi-level design and is funded by the European Research Council (ERC). It will examine the role of organizations and their investments in a sustainable workforce, including investments in work-life policies, work flexibility, long-term employability of older workers, and flexicurity, in relation to performance at the levels of employees, the organization, and the country. For further information, please see

<http://www.sustainableworkforce.eu/>.

(b) The Gender Work and Family Network (Network C) of the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics is getting ready to plan the sessions at the 2015 conference to be held at the London School of Economics and Political Science from July 2-4. Check the website: www.sase.org, and you can also write to Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay

(dgtrembl@teluq.ca) for more information on this network. Please note that all proposals have to be uploaded online on the website.

(c) An international review of research on maternity protection in SMEs, published by the ILO in October, is available via the WFRN [Newsfeed](#). The review identified many positive outcomes for SMEs of effective maternity protection practices, which are usually informal in these contexts and often involve little or no costs. However, this topic is very under-researched and there is no research at all on maternity protection outcomes in developing countries. Two of the authors of this international review (Suzan Lewis and Bianca Stumbitz) along with colleagues from London and Ghana are now involved in a new study examining the feasibility of effective maternity protection for women in small businesses and the informal economy in Ghana, commissioned by the ILO.

Update from The Repository Committee

Earlier this fall, our committee agreed on two initiatives. One goal was to connect to the activities around Open Access month in October. Hopefully many of you read the [blog post](#) that Matthew Weinschenker authored on the Open Access movement. We've also connected Matthew's post to one national Open Access website and many of our committee members have been using their social networks to tweet or link to the post. We encourage you all to do the same!

Our second big initiative is aimed at creating awareness of member-submitted content in the Work Family Commons (WFC). To that end, we plan to have members of our committee (and perhaps later on members outside the committee) put together curated lists of content around a particular sub-topic in work-family studies. This follows a model we have seen used successfully in the Social Science Research Network (SSRN) research repository. The first curated list is being overseen by Shirley Porterfield (also a member of the disability and work/family interest group) and will target content that taps issues in disability, work, and family. Several other Repository Committee members have also agreed to curate lists around other topics. Shirley is committed to creating her list by the end of this semester. We hope that this will be an engaging way to showcase the breadth and depth of our repository materials and increase member involvement in continuing to contribute content to the repository.

We have plans for a spring conference call to continue our efforts to publicize and grow the WFC. Please contact Noelle Chesley (chesley@uwm.edu) if you have ideas to share!

Many thanks to all of you who are contributing in diverse ways to the work and family area and to moving WFRN forward as an organization.

– Jerry A. Jacobs, Executive Officer

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