

Surpassing Limits: A History of the Women’s Plaza of Honor

Part One: 1998-2005

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Overview

The Women’s Plaza of Honor at the University of Arizona celebrates the lives and accomplishments of women in Arizona and throughout the world. Set in a garden walkway on the UA campus, the names of honorees are inscribed on sweeping arches, detailed benches, handmade tiles, and wide brick paths. Each honoree’s life story is included in a computer kiosk located in the garden, accessible also on line. The campaign for the Plaza seeks to record the vital roles women have played in history, and to raise funds to support the Department of Gender and Women’s Studies. By 2011 the Plaza has recognized over 700 women, established a sizeable endowment and looks toward continued growth in the future. Few, if any, Women’s Studies programs in the nation have successfully achieved such ambitious goals.

The Plaza is a result of the vision, cooperation, and hard work of a dynamic group of individuals and organizations under the direction of the Plaza Executive Committee. In the ten-year period from the inception of the Plaza idea in 1999 to the unveiling of the kiosk in 2009, approximately 45 volunteers from the community and from various UA departments, including the Department of Women’s Studies and the Women’s Studies Advisory Council (WOSAC), contributed over 8,000 hours to bring the project to fruition. They set the goals, created the design, cultivated university and community support, and raised the funds necessary for construction.

Actual building began in 2004 and on September 30, 2005 the Plaza was dedicated in the presence of 400 attendees, including donors and women honored in the Plaza. Governor Janet Napolitano spoke at the ceremony, as did representatives from Women’s Studies, the University, and the Plaza’s Executive Committee. Poetry, Mariachi music and traditional Tohono O’odham drumming filled the air as we stood in the presence of memories and history.

With construction complete, the Women's Plaza of Honor moved into its second phase: creating a database of honorees' life stories that could be used as a resource on women's history by the university, the community and local schools. This required solving the technical issues of maintaining the database on line and of building an on-site computer kiosk that could withstand the Arizona summers. At the same time, the Plaza Executive Committee continued to actively publicize the remaining naming opportunities to extend the reach of the Plaza, and grow the Gender and Women's Studies endowment.

Over 250 people attended the celebration unveiling the kiosk in April 2009. Speeches by university leaders, local historians and journalists, plus music and dance highlighted the tremendous achievement of the Plaza. Community volunteers and Women's Studies faculty and students thanked all those who have helped in the building and publicizing of the project, and presented the Plaza to the university community. This joyful event marked the beginning of the third phase of the Plaza, moving the campaign into the future. With construction complete all attention focuses on honoring women and building the endowment for Women's Studies.

1998-2000: Starting the Project and Setting Goals

In June 1998, Dr. Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy heard about the Plaza of Heroines at Wichita State University during a panel at the National Women's Studies Association. The Wichita State Plaza had raised \$500,000; half of these funds went towards construction costs and the remainder went to an endowment for the university's Women's Studies department.

As head of the Department of Women's Studies at the University of Arizona, Kennedy was intrigued by the idea of creating a similar monument to women at the UA. In the fall of 1998, she presented information about the Wichita State Plaza of Heroines to the Women's Studies Advisory Council (WOSAC), a community advisory board that supported Women's studies by raising funds and networking. The WOSAC members liked the idea immediately. In February 1999 WOSAC met with Dorothy Miller from Wichita State to learn about the development of the Wichita Plaza. From that point on WOSAC members began to imagine their own version of a plaza at the UA, with a unique design and on a larger scale. They set a substantial fundraising goal in keeping with Tucson's long tradition of supporting the UA Women's Studies program.

Under the leadership of WOSAC President Cathy Mendelsohn, and with the help of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences' (SBS) development officer Steve Harvath, WOSAC worked for over a year to identify the right women to spearhead a campaign to build a monument to Arizona's women. Initially WOSAC envisioned the project being headed by a single person; however, the women interested in the project proposed a co-chair structure for the project leadership. They suggested that such a structure offered a less hierarchical model of work and would allow the women to share tasks and keep the work-load manageable.

In time the project had six co-chairs who agreed to rotate the position of chair every six months. The co-chairs consisted of distinguished Tucson citizens Jennifer Aviles, Betsy Bolding, Sally Drachman Salvatore, Margy McGonagill, Patricia Taylor, and Laurel Wilkening. This group was later joined by Anna Jolivet, and all remained with the project for five years until the dedication. More than half of the original co-chairs continued to work on the Plaza through the dedication of the computer kiosk with honoree's life histories in 2009. Because this kind of steady commitment is rare in a group of volunteers, it is a testament to their love of the project.

The co-chairs had to work on a variety of fronts to launch the project, and they moved forward with the support of Steve Harvath; Pat Hnilo, the Program Coordinator of Women's Studies; Jo-Ann Troutman, Business Manager of Women's Studies; and Dr. Kennedy. One of the first steps was identifying a physical site for the Plaza. From the beginning, UA Facilities Design and Construction was immensely supportive. The co-chairs viewed several possible sites offered by Ed Galda of Facilities Design and Construction, and the site west of Centennial Hall was the unanimous choice. This site offered substantial space and visibility; furthermore, the co-chairs were delighted by the idea of transforming an underutilized and untidy area of the University into a monument to women's accomplishments.

Shortly after the site was selected, the project team learned that a memorial stone to Frances Willard, a brilliant nineteenth-century leader of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, had been placed in one corner of the lot in 1926. The chance to refurbish her overgrown memorial offered extra assurance that the team had chosen the right spot. After completing paper work to officially obtain the site, the project was underway.

The co-chairs met with Ken Foster, head of UA Presents, and John Olsen, head of the Department of Anthropology. Since their facilities bordered the site of the Plaza, it was important to ascertain ways that they and the Plaza could support each other's missions and goals. In time a representative from both of these neighboring units joined the Plaza's Design and Construction Committee.

Simultaneously, Women's Studies and the co-chairs sought to identify landscape architects to design the project. A competition for the design was initially considered; however, WOSAC suggested contacting Margaret West, a local landscape designer. West agreed to do the design pro bono on the condition that she could put together a team of women to work with her. West's commitment to cooperative work models made her an ideal choice for the job. Her team consisted of Libba Wheat, Karen Novak, and Lori Woods. All of these women were part of thriving businesses in Tucson and all had been born and raised in Tucson, giving them deep roots in the community.

The landscape architects met with a subgroup of the co-chairs in July 2000. The subgroup conveyed their hope that the Plaza space would have its own integrity; they wanted the Plaza to provide a place for peaceful contemplation and to convey a sense of sanctuary. They also wanted the space to be highly visible to visitors and the public. The

landscape architects were excited by the creative possibilities of the job. Two months later they presented the co-chairs with an inspiring vision. Working with the distinct features of the site—the vegetation and historical features that needed to be preserved, and the utilities and drainage that needed to be maintained—they envisioned the space as having three distinct plazas: North, Center and South. Drawing on the writing of psychologist Jean Shinoda Bolen, these plazas would symbolize the phases of a woman's life: The north side of the project would denote Maid (youth); the center would denote Matron (maturity); and the south side would denote Crone (seniority). Each stage would be represented by different design elements. The design was received with spontaneous applause and a sense that the plan had greatly surpassed expectations.

At the same time, the design gave the co-chairs their first insight into the complexities of coordinating this multi-faceted project. The project was not intended to be simply an art piece; it was a fundraising endeavor as well. Those on the project with experience in fundraising expressed a concern that culturally negative attitudes about aging women would inhibit sales of something that used the word "crone." They also were concerned about specifically naming each plaza after a stage in life as the number of people willing to honor someone in the Crone or elder section might be limited. The co-chairs asked the landscape architects to rethink their language.

With the project's fundraising component, the expense of the proposed design was also a concern. These issues were the first of many situations that honed the co-chairs' abilities to listen to one another and work towards mutually satisfactory solutions. Articulating their concerns, the co-chairs gave the landscape architects the approval to keep developing their plans. Two months later the landscape architects made a second presentation in which they offered a refined version of the initial ideas—now with the three life phases labeled Entry, Gathering and Reflection—and a further developed plan for the architectural elements of each area. They also created a beautiful colored conceptual design for the space that went on to represent the Plaza for the next five years and which still appears on promotional brochures.

Before plans were finalized, the amount of money the co-chairs aimed to raise for building the Plaza and endowing Women's Studies changed frequently; however, the amount was never less than \$750,000. This amount was substantially more than Women's Studies had ever raised before, and was perhaps the biggest fundraising attempt ever by a women's studies program nationally. Furthermore, this amount increased dramatically once the cost of building the Plaza was settled. The needed fundraising catapulted Women's Studies into the mainstream of the university as a department that all major donors should seriously consider, thereby marking a historic moment for the department and the field of women's studies. Similarly, the subject matter of Women's Studies -- discussions of equality for women, of the literary and historical contributions of women, of the construction of social hierarchies, and of multiple and fluid identities— took a big step toward becoming a legitimate part of the UA curriculum. This is important to note because only a year earlier in March 1999 a number of state legislators had proposed cutting completely the funding for all four women's studies programs statewide.

All the co-chairs and UA Women's Studies faculty and staff were aware of these challenges, but they rarely discussed the obstacles for building and marketing the Plaza. Instead, with consummate tact and creativity the project team worked to find common ground with potential major donors through the idea of honoring women. As accomplished women—successful executives, administrators, managers, and fundraisers—they had extensive experience with such endeavors in their personal and professional lives, and they were now committed to obtaining similar results for a larger cause. Fortuitously, the year 2000 saw the launching of Campaign Arizona, which welcomed all fundraising, giving the project the opportunity to slowly gain the active support of the UA Foundation.

In doing this early work, the co-chairs, Women's Studies faculty and staff, and WOSAC board members spread the word about the Plaza and identified people who might be interested in working on the project. They understood that making the Plaza a reality would require the help and contributions of people beyond the core team. A number of people stepped forward to attend Plaza meetings and became part of an expanded leadership team. This expanded team included Edie Auslander, who later joined the Executive Committee, Ann Boice, Esther Capin, Kathleen Escalada, Marilyn Heins, John Huerta, Sharon Kha, and Jamalle Karam Simon. Their input was essential in guiding the co-chairs.

Early on the Plaza received a lead gift from Laurel Wilkening of over \$100,000. Each co-chair contributed as generously as possible, as did other members of the leadership team and Women's Studies faculty and staff. These funds served as the base from which to approach other donors. The leadership team began generating lists of potential donors; it also looked at possible grants, with the first one coming from the Amazon Foundation. By the end of 2000 the Plaza had raised \$150,000.

To be effective in fundraising, the project needed a name, a mission statement, and publicity materials. The mission statement was a logical genesis from the three goals for the Plaza: to honor women in perpetuity; to beautify the campus; and to raise an endowment for Women's Studies. The co-chairs took direction from the Department of Women's Studies as to the priorities of what the money would be used for: scholarships and research stipends; staff for the Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW) community projects; and funding for visiting scholars.

Finding an appropriate name for the project proved more challenging. The leadership team did not want to use the name employed by Wichita State—Plaza of Heroines—and after experimenting, they decided on the Women's Plaza of Honor. However, when the landscape architects presented the plan with three plazas, the leadership team decided to change the name to the Women's Path of Honor to express a woman's movement through the phases of life. However, by the end of 2000 the leadership team voted to return to the name of Women's Plaza of Honor as it best fit the goals and mission of the project.

By October 2000 there were enough publicity materials for the Plaza to have a presence

at UA's homecoming celebration. As a visual image for the Plaza was not yet available, Pat Hnilo placed some mock columns from the theater department on the Mall to create public awareness.

Although the Plaza aims to honor all women, the co-chairs wanted to ensure that women of Arizona—from the most celebrated to the most humble—were fully represented. By the end of 2000 the co-chairs were identifying women who they felt should be included in the Plaza, with the aim of encouraging members of the women's families or other supportive donors to honor them. Wilkening had modeled this process by honoring the women who came to Arizona in the 1540 Cibola Expedition.

The committee structure grew organically from all these initial tasks. The leadership team designated sub-committees for Design and Construction, Fundraising, Publicity, and History; each sub-committee was led by one of the co-chairs. Meanwhile the leadership team was in the process of transitioning into the Executive Committee. This committee included the initial co-chairs and key university employees, and was responsible for the final decision making about the Plaza. Members of the amorphous leadership team were welcome to be Executive Committee members, but also were encouraged to join and contribute to sub-committees. Taylor, a retired executive at Raytheon Missile Systems, provided charts throughout the process that mapped the leadership structure. These charts helped identify workflow and needs, allowing for an easy division of labor and the recruitment of new members to the sub-committees. The Executive Committee met approximately every three weeks to oversee the direction of the project and to coordinate the work of the sub-committees, which also met about every three weeks. This structure developed and managed all aspects of the Plaza project. Through this cooperative model the project team was able to pay attention to every detail while also moving steadily towards the larger goals.

2001–2004: Deciding Plaza Policy

With the initial planning accomplished by January 2001, the Executive Committee pushed to move all the elements of the project forward towards the groundbreaking. The original hope was to break ground by 2002, but this timetable proved to be unrealistic given the scope of the project and its base of volunteer labor. In addition, the recession following September 11 made fundraising extremely challenging in 2002 and 2003 as potential donors had less money to donate. Furthermore, the cost of concrete was rising sharply due to an international shortage, causing increases in the price of construction.

A number of important personnel additions occurred in 2002 that helped the project to move forward despite these setbacks. As part of Campaign Arizona, Women's Studies received funds to pay for a part-time support position for the Plaza. Molly Holleran was selected for this position; she went on to become a mainstay of the project and eventually became a full administrative assistant in Women's Studies after years of a patchwork salary. In addition, in 2002 Social and Behavioral Sciences hired Ginny Healy as its new development officer. Healy started attending most meetings for the Plaza and her

consistent wisdom about fundraising was invaluable. In fall 2002 Ed Donnerstein came on board as dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences. He was very supportive of fundraising in general and wanted to expand the SBS development office; the Plaza fit with this goal and he offered continual affirmation of the project. (Click here to see the members of the Development Office who have been involved with the Women's Plaza of Honor.) In addition, Libba Wheat asked Caryl Clements, one of the landscape architects from her office, to work with her on developing the details of the design, thereby adding yet another creative resource to the Plaza team. (Click here to learn the members of the Landscape Architects Design Team.)

During this period the Executive Committee made many of the decisions that defined how the Plaza would meet its mission. Committee members had to find a balance between the desire to build an artistic and visually appealing monument and the desire to maximize funds raised for UA Women's Studies. They also had to fulfill the Plaza's commitment to honoring all women. The Executive Committee did not shrink from these challenges and the end result of these decisions was the Plaza's aura of formal elegance combined with democratic openness.

In 2001 as the landscape architects finalized their design with an estimated cost of over \$1 million. This proposal made it imperative for members of the Executive Committee to consider how much could be spent to build the Plaza. Members of the committee held diverse opinions. Some people felt that the proposed cost was not too high because the beauty of the Plaza would attract more donors. Others felt that the cost needed to be controlled, so that Women's Studies could begin to see some endowment within five years. Once again members exhibited the exceptional ability to listen to each other, and find an acceptable resolution. The compromise was to cut some design elements completely and postpone others. Thus the Plaza's initial construction was viewed only as an early phase, with the potential for later phases to add elements like a tile mural and entrance columns in the south plaza, or a maze dome mounted on art columns in the central plaza. Trimming the initial design brought the basic construction costs down to under \$1 million while keeping the main design elements of the Plaza intact.

The Executive Committee also faced the need to resolve the tension between attracting major donors to fund the Plaza and ensuring all women could be honored in the Plaza regardless of the financial resources of their families and friends. After much debate, and taking into consideration the views of the Design and Construction, Fundraising, and Publicity Sub-committees, the project team decided that there should be a range of naming opportunities. A portion of the larger design elements--arches, fountains, and gardens-- were priced at \$25,000 and above; the benches were priced for \$10,000 and \$15,000; and the light posts and trees were priced at \$5000. Once a substantial portion of these items were sold, the Executive Committee agreed to open up more than 2000 opportunities for under \$1000, including pavers and leaves for \$100, \$200, \$500 and \$750. This donation structure was designed to encourage major donors to buy the bigger items because of their special features, while still giving a large number of people the opportunity to honor an influential woman and add to the Plaza's historical record.

In turn this range of opportunities raised questions about how many people a donor could honor when buying a larger item. A limit was necessary due to the space available for engraving as well as potential constraints on the size of the Web site. The project leadership determined that for large donations space would be reserved for one honoree for each \$1000 or fraction thereof given. The discussions about space led to questions about how much space honorees could have on the Web site. With the help of technical consultants, the project team learned that one advantage of the Web over printed matter was that increasing the numbers of honorees would not necessarily lead to a higher cost for operating the database. Once this determination was made the project team felt comfortable allotting every honoree the same amount of space for her life story and picture.

By 2003 the Executive Committee was faced with another major decision about whether to take out a loan against the pledges and future sales in order start construction. Again the members were divided on this matter. Those who were more fiscally conservative, some of whom were experienced fundraisers, urged caution. They felt taking out a loan would diminish the possibilities of fundraising for Women's Studies as money would need to be raised to pay off the loan. But others felt that construction needed to begin, particularly since building costs were continuing to rise. Furthermore, those in favor of the loan believed that the physical presence of the Plaza would attract many more donors. Dean Donnerstein, the person who would negotiate the loan, advocated this position. After thorough discussion, the Executive Committee decided the project needed to begin construction to maintain momentum and moved forward with the loan. However, they were fiscally conservative in their approach. Members of the Executive Committee helped to identify a low interest loan that would not take effect until the building actually started and the money was needed.

Sub-Committees

While the Executive Committee made all of the policy decisions and facilitated communication among sub-committees, the work on the many dimension of the Plaza progressed with each sub-committee taking primary responsibility for its area. The co-chairs were always generous with their time and opinions, helping out other sub-committees whenever needed.

Design and Construction Sub-Committee

From the beginning until the dedication, Jennifer Aviles headed the Design and Construction Sub-Committee; its charge was to make sure that the goals and mission of the Plaza, as defined by the Executive Committee, were implemented in all stages of the design and construction process. The original committee consisted of: Kathleen Escalada, a community volunteer; Pat Hnilo of Women's Studies; Ed Galda of Facilities Design and Construction, Tom Ellis from Facilities Management, Assistant Director of Operations Services; and Cathy Mendelsohn of WOSAC, and was also soon to be joined by Ed Brown of UA Presents. Their first step was to understand the scope of the assignment by meeting with people who had experience with construction on the

University campus. The repeated voiced comment was that coordination of a construction project was very demanding and it was recommended that coordination should be handled by a paid staff member. Such a paid position was not possible; the Plaza was a WOSAC project that relied primarily on volunteer labor. Instead, Aviles's exceptional self-initiative, persistence, and ability to multi-task in response to multiple demands and timetables allowed her to rise to the occasion and provide the oversight of the Plaza.

During the first stage of enumerating the design concept, Aviles and her committee met regularly with the landscape architects to maintain open communication between them and the Executive Committee. She also was in regular communication with Facilities Design and Construction to insure that the process was meeting university rules and regulations. During this stage the biggest concerns were overall cost, number of donor opportunities, and getting to know the potentials and limitations of the site.

By the end of 2001 the project moved in to the second stage—design development—which focused on developing working plans from the design concept. This stage involved the university selecting a landscape architect through a formally established application process. To accomplish this and to continue to move the project forward, Facilities Design and Construction became actively involved and appointed Rodney Mackey as project manager for planning. Libba Wheat, from the landscape architect team, who had an open ended contract with the UA, was eligible for consideration and was selected at the end of November 2001. As noted in official documents, prior to gaining this contract the landscape architect team had donated 450 hours of volunteer labor.

The planning stage lasted for more than a year, with Libba Wheat submitting the detailed design document in spring 2003. Once the design was accepted another year of work was required to develop an even more detailed plan for construction bids. Understanding the work ahead, Aviles expanded her committee throughout 2002 to include new members whose knowledge and experience would enhance the committee's work. Rodney Mackey joined as Project Manager; Norma Maynard from Anthropology, Libby Davison from the College of Agriculture and Arboretum Project, and Sharon Kha, from the Office of Communications also joined the committee. During this period Facilities Design and Construction, the landscape architects, and the Executive Committee had to come to agreement about the details of the design by finalizing the design elements, such as plant selections, lighting and power, sculpture, bricks, and benches. The number of decisions for this process was reflected in Aviles's bi-weekly reports during 2003, which often covered as many as seventeen items.

To facilitate decision making, Aviles and her committee met and followed up regularly with the landscape architects and with representatives of Facilities Design and Construction to keep the channels of communication open and to report progress back to the Executive Committee. By keeping the Executive Committee informed Aviles made it possible for them to give input in all levels of decisions. Once the Executive Committee made a decision Aviles communicated it to the landscape architects and to Rodney MacKay, and later his replacement, Colleen Morgan, and then brought their responses back to the project leadership. This often required a great deal of sensitivity and tact,

particularly when the Executive Committee wanted changes in plans. Also, Aviles and her committee had to be proactive by not just communicating the Executive Committee's requests, but also conducting research to show that alternatives were indeed feasible. Thus Aviles actively sought out manufacturers for the benches and engaged other Executive Committee members in the process.

The beautiful accent features of the Plaza, such as the tile work or the open design metal work, were the result of careful consideration. Under the leadership of Aviles and her committee, many talented people considered the possibilities and identified what they thought was best suited for the site. Aviles and her committee also alerted the Executive Committee to more philosophical issues, such as the question of whether the Plaza could use artwork by male artists. The Executive Committee was able to answer this question "yes"; however other questions, such as how the Plaza can best include the diversity of women artists and how to open the process by which artists are considered while still giving the designers final say were on-going considerations.

Love and care for the university and the desire to improve women's lives pervaded the building of the Plaza. This is exemplified in Aviles memories of one of the highlights of her work. She recalled "persuading—I think it was in either 2002 or 2003—about 20 people to get together, including Laurel Wilkening and the head of the Department of Astronomy, to talk about the lighting of the Plaza and to reach an agreement that indeed we could have upward shining lighting. The conclusion also served as an important building block for other similar campus projects needing lighting on campus." This gave more attention to women while not interfering with the work of astronomers.

In early 2004 Facilities Design and Construction appointed Colleen Morgan as the Project Manager, in preparation for the upcoming third stage of bid for construction and actual construction. Morgan was immediately enthusiastic about the Plaza, doing everything she could to move it forward and maintain quality while keeping costs down. The bidding process started in spring 2004; by summer 2004 Sletten Construction had been chosen as the contractor. The Plaza was a complex project requiring many different skills; all parties concerned decided it would be better to involve a few small contractors in addition to Sletten for elements like the tile work and engraving. Thus, starting with summer 2004 Aviles and her committee had to interface both with Sletten and the small independent contractors. (Please click here to see all the independent contractors involved.) As construction approached, the Design and Construction Sub-Committee's work kept expanding to meet the exigencies of construction, the limitations of budget, the practicalities of fundraising and the demands for high quality.

Fundraising Sub-Committee

From the inception until the Plaza dedication, the Fundraising Sub-Committee had three simultaneous co-chairs: Betsy Bolding, Sally Drachman Salvatore, and Patricia Taylor. The need for three co-chairs signified the breadth of the contacts the Executive committee deemed necessary to achieve the 2001 goal of raising \$1.5 million. Of this amount, half was intended for construction and half for the Women's Studies

endowment. This goal was later increased to \$2 million to reflect the number of naming opportunities available in the Plaza design. Women's Studies had a long history of fundraising; WOSAC regularly raised about \$20,000 a year to help support Women's Studies and had once raised an endowment for a lecture series of \$65,000. However, the Plaza project was of a totally different scale. And yet remarkably, most involved in the project didn't doubt that the goal could be realized. While Dr. Kennedy, as head of Women's Studies, expressed concerns that the costs might be too high to sustain both construction and the endowment, the project leadership convinced her that the mission of the Plaza was powerful and would lead to success.

The three fundraising co-chairs proved to be a highly powerful combination. Drachman Salvatore is a renowned professional fundraiser at the UA and throughout southern Arizona, whose skills and knowledge are prized by those who have the pleasure of working with her. Bolding has extensive contacts throughout the Arizona political and charitable communities, with a long time commitment to WOSAC, Women's Studies and women's rights. As a business executive, Taylor has experience in pulling together large multi-faceted projects, and is well respected throughout the business and Tucson community.

Cognizant of the enormity of the task ahead and knowing how crucial their contacts would be to the project, all members of the Executive Committee attended the fundraising meetings whenever possible. In addition, the fundraising committee had two other regular members, Ann Boice and Lynne Wood, both respected members of the community with a long history of charitable work. Indeed, Lynne Wood became a member of the Executive Committee and the Chair of the Fundraising Sub-Committee in the second phase of the Plaza campaign. Furthermore, Beverly Goodwin from the UA Foundation, Healy, Hnilo and Kennedy also regularly attended and were all deeply involved in the process. Hnilo on her own time took a series of fundraising workshops to become more effective at the task. The committee also had a number of supporters, such as Auslander and Capin, who could not attend regular meetings but offered themselves as resources.

The Plaza's successful fundraising is due to many factors. First, project members with fundraising experience explicitly shared their knowledge with the entire team. For example, Drachman Salvatore gave a lecture to the Executive Committee highlighting important fundraising strategies. Second, the fundraising committee was diligent about its work, meeting every three weeks, identifying prospects, researching them in order to make the best case to a particular donor, and then soliciting donations. The project team was extraordinarily persistent in approaching people.

Third, the fundraisers tried to implement varied strategies; thus they not only approached women to honor other women, but tried to develop ways to interest men in honoring the important women in their lives. Playing on a popular jewelry campaign, "The Plaza is forever," became a favorite slogan. In addition, the fundraisers also looked to generate interest outside of Tucson, specifically in Phoenix and Nogales. Fourth, the committee cultivated the support of key people on campus with the hope that these people would

interest others. The campaign received a boost when the project team approached then UA President Likins, who decided to support the Plaza by honoring his wife, Pat Likins. He also went on to honor several other women and initiated a fund to honor Cheryl McGaffic, Barbara Monroe, and Robin Rogers, the three nursing professors who were shot and killed by a student in 2002. The committee also approached college deans to encourage them to honor women in their lives, and they worked to develop strategies to increase the interest and participation of the UA Foundation.

Fifth, the fundraising committee worked with the publicity sub-committee to develop donor cultivation events. Sixth, it also looked to foundations as a source of money. As important as these tactics and strategies were, they only worked because of the contacts of the leadership team and their commitment to cultivating them. Every single member successfully solicited donations. By June 2004 the project team raised \$721,055.49, including pledges, which was enough to consider beginning the construction of the Plaza.

Publicity Sub-Committee

Until the Plaza's dedication the Publicity Sub-committee was headed by Margy McGonagill. Over the years its members included Sharon Kha from the Office of Communication, Judith Carrington in Federal Relations, Dottie Larson in the Advancement Office, and Jo Ann Troutman (until her untimely death in 2003). The committee's work was key for building public awareness of the Plaza and cultivating potential donors. It developed the early handouts on the Plaza, wrote the wording for the first mission statement, and made the first Plaza brochure, the basic design for which is still used. In 2001 the committee initiated the first Plaza video. They outlined what the video should cover and worked closely with director Nancy Montoya. Members of the committee also wrote articles on the Plaza for local publications. Although it definitely succeeded in drawing attention to the Plaza in both the university and the community, the committee was not able to launch a comprehensive marketing campaign. The Executive Committee could not yet allocate significant funds to a massive marketing campaign until the Plaza was built and the funds for its construction raised.

The committee's most important and original contribution was organizing the annual Extraordinary Women lunches to bring together potential donors to listen to life stories of women. Between 2001 and 2005 the publicity committee held five luncheons, each presenting noted Arizona women: "Remembering Early Arizona" with Dorothy Finley, Polly Rosenbaum, Rose Mofford; "Culture in Early Tucson" with Cele Peterson and Ofelia Zepeda; "The Life of Isabella Greenway King" presented by her biographer, Kristie Miller; "Women Regents" with Edith Auslander, Judy Cignac And Esther Capin;" and "A Conversation with an Extraordinary Woman: Sandra Day O'Connor." This last event was held in Phoenix, with Dede Areghini and Karen Pacheco serving as co-chairs. More than 100 women attended each luncheon.

Under the leadership of Margy McGonagill, the lunches were beautifully orchestrated so that every detail of the event—from the invitations, to the food and decor, to the talks—achieved the desired goal of respecting women's contributions to society. The emcee

introduced the goals of the Plaza, of Women's Studies and of WOSAC and showed the Plaza video, presenting the Executive Committee's hopes and dreams for the Plaza. The life histories tangibly demonstrated the importance of honoring the accomplishments of women. After hearing the moving stories of women's lives, attendees had a better appreciation for the Plaza's goal to create a lasting archive of women's stories. Attendees began to imagine honoring someone themselves and encouraging others to do the same. Every attendee left with a memento of the Plaza such as a pin with the Plaza symbol, or a brick that concretized the Plaza's goals.

As part of the effort to broaden the base of support for the Plaza, in 2001 the publicity committee worked with the Fundraising Sub-Committee and the Executive Committee to identify honorary members of the Plaza. These honorary members were distinguished people who would lend their names in support; they included Laura Banks, Ora DeConcini-Martin, Myra Dinnerstein, Katie Dusenberry, Martha Elias, Dorothy Finley, Marilyn Heins, Anna Jolivet, Patricia Likins, Rose Mofford, Cele Peterson, Julieta Portillo, Polly Rosenbaum, Helen Schaefer, Esther Don Tang, and Ofelia Zepeda. These women were listed on Plaza stationery and constituted a network for spreading news about the Plaza and for giving helpful feedback about its direction. The original hope was to have quarterly meetings of the honorary members and all people working on the Plaza, but that goal proved to be too ambitious. The project team then decided to keep in contact with supporters of the Plaza through a quarterly newsletter; however, other demands postponed the newsletter until the second phase.

History Sub-Committee

To realize the Plaza's mission to become a valuable resource on women's lives in Arizona, the History Sub-Committee generated a list of over 250 names of women who should be honored in the Plaza and provided brief biographies for approximately seventy-five of them. The committee paid attention to identifying African-American, Asian-American, Latina, American Indian, and working-class women to counter past patterns of exclusion. These lists were provided to the Fundraising Committee for use in contacting donors to provide suggestions for potential honoree, and for the Publicity Sub-Committee for use in advertising the value of the Plaza.

The committee was chaired by Laurel Wilkening until December 2002; Anna Jolivet took over as chair when Wilkening stepped down. Both women had a long term interest in Arizona history and a commitment to educating others on the subject. Other members of the committee were Kathy Howard, librarian Ruth Dickstein, Women's Studies faculty member Judy Temple. During the 2001-2002 academic year they were joined by an enthusiastic graduate student from the School of Information and Library Sciences, Sonya Smith Wong. Over the years, Adela Allen, Cathy Miller, Esther Tang, and Penny Waterstone attended meetings and helped the committee identify possible honorees.

In addition to conducting research, the committee worked to develop an honoree information form that would ensure comparable information was collected on honorees. A slightly modified version of this form is still used. They went on to encourage the

development of a Web site to display the information on honorees, and they investigated the possibilities for building a kiosk at the Plaza to allow visitors to retrieve information about honorees. The proposed kiosk was eventually incorporated into Plaza plan in 2005 when the needed funds were raised, and was finally realized with its dedication in spring 2009. The committee kept the seriousness of documenting women's history in the foreground through all the challenges of construction and fundraising. The history committee never wavered from the understanding that to honor women meant recognizing their contribution to society.

2004-2005: Building and Dedicating the Plaza

By December 2004, all the pieces were in place for the groundbreaking. For the many university staff and community volunteers who had been involved in the project for more than five years, this was an emotional moment: this ambitious project, led by the dreams of women, was going to become a reality. Working with Sletten Construction, Colleen Morgan fanned enthusiasm by providing hard hats and spades for all members of the Executive Committee, as well as seats and a reception for the almost 100 people who attended the ceremony. A reporter in attendance was heard saying, "This must be something important, because I have never seen so many people at a university groundbreaking." President Likins, Dean Donnerstein and members of the Executive Committee addressed the crowd, thanking all of those who had made the project possible and reflecting on what the Women's Plaza of Honor augured for the future. Four of the five past heads of Women's Studies dug their shovels into the earth. When Yolanda Broyles Gonzalez, the new head of Women's Studies and the newest member of the Executive Committee, spoke, she graciously assumed the responsibility of moving the project forward, building on what had been done and adding new dreams.

In the capable hands of Sletton Construction, and under the management of Morgan and the oversight of Aviles, construction on the Plaza—from the groundbreaking to the dedication—moved along incredibly smoothly. Many details needed to be finalized; Aviles was in touch with the executive committee weekly, and sometimes daily, to report progress, raise questions, and guide decisions. Slowly the columns went up, the gardens were planted, the tiles were set, and the benches installed. A few minor issues arose, such as the misspelling of a famous honoree's name; but overall construction progressed as planned, due to the quality of the preparatory work. In the meantime, the Executive committee and all the Sub-committees continued the work they had been doing for the last five years. By this time it came "naturally."

On May 6, 2005, Taylor sent a message to Aviles, copied to the executive committee, thanking her for her wonderful work. The message captured what many on the executive committee were thinking: "We are living an awesome experience and have created a bond between the 'Plaza Sisters/Leadership Team' in the sense of connection to our collective efforts. What great memories of caring about an idea that became reality with the hardscape and collection of stories to honor the importance of women from all walks of life. I know that I will treasure the experience of being a member of this team and knowing that collectively we accomplished more than we thought possible."

Meanwhile the fundraising committee continued to contact and follow-up with donors. Drachman Salvatore brought in a substantial donation just before the dedication and modeled the importance of persistence. She insisted that that when a potential donor says, “no,” it is important to clarify with the person that it is no for the moment, leaving the pathway open to return. In this case the donor, who had declined to give in the past, became more familiar with the Plaza through the publicity and through general university support; she now felt comfortable supporting the Plaza. Her donation symbolized all the project had accomplished over five years and was a perfect prelude to the dedication.

The shape of the dedication ceremony was hammered out in the executive committee. The presence that Betsy Bolding and Margy McGonagill had in the southern Arizona political communities made it possible for the Plaza leadership to ask Governor Janet Napolitano to be the featured speaker at the dedication ceremony. The governor’s calendar played a role in determining the September 30 date for the dedication. Unfortunately, UA President Likins could not attend, but he was represented at the ceremony by the Vice President for Campus Life, Saunie Taylor, and his wife, Pat Likins, was in the audience as well.

The most significant challenge for the dedication was to recognize everyone who had helped create the Plaza without making the program too long. The leadership team wanted the dedication to be as inspiring as the Plaza itself. Towards this end the program contained only what was necessary and aimed for the speakers to take no more than thirty minutes total. The actual ceremony came very close to achieving this.

As with other public Plaza events, the detailed planning of the dedication was given to the Publicity Sub-committee. Because the dedication was an on-campus event, the committee worked closely with Women’s Studies staff, as well as Broyles-Gonzalez and Kennedy. By this time Hnilo had retired and the new program coordinator for development was Alison Greene. Greene and Holleran developed and executed the plan to have more than 300 people comfortably enjoy the dedication ceremony at the Plaza. They were helped by staff in the Women’s Studies office and the SBS Development Office, and by a number of student volunteers who ushered people to their seats and gave honorees flowers and certificates. (Click here to see the list of those who worked at the dedication.) Holleran also designed the program and the certificates. With this support, the Publicity Sub-committee once again orchestrated a beautiful and memorable event. (Click here to see the list of sponsors for the Dedication.) The Publicity Sub-committee’s accomplishment was particularly amazing given that its members were simultaneously organizing the fifth Extraordinary Woman Luncheon in Phoenix, which was held only two weeks before the dedication.

The dedication was declared an unequivocal success by all who attended. Bolding served as the emcee, welcoming the overflow crowd. Regina and Megan Siquieros opened the program with traditional Tohono O’odham songs. Broyles-Gonzalez brought greetings from Women’s Studies, familiarizing the audience with the goals of Women’s Studies and of WOSAC and reflecting on the Plaza’s promise for the future. Governor

Napolitano spoke of women's notable contributions to Arizona state history and encouraged all attendees to excel in their chosen vocations. She also initiated a fund to reserve a place in the Plaza to honor Shawntinice Polk, the young UA basketball player who died the week of the dedication. Saunie Taylor commented on the Plaza's contribution to university life. Pat Taylor and Anna Jolivet represented the executive committee and told stories of the women they had honored in their families, making women's humor, strength and accomplishments central to the day. Dean Donnerstein offered closing thoughts, followed by Ofelia Zepeda reading her poem, "Hot Tortillas." The celebration was energized by the music of the Tucson High Rayos Del Sol Mariachi. (Click here to see the video on the dedication.)

The Women's Plaza of Honor was now an integral part of the UA campus. The Executive committee discussed how the space should be used and decided that its scheduling would be handled by the UA Mall Scheduling Committee following the rules the Executive committee designed. Women's Studies would have first access to the Plaza provided requests were submitted three months in advance. Centennial Hall would have access to the Plaza for all performances; for non-performance related activities, Centennial Hall, as well as Anthropology would have secondary rights. Aside from those considerations, the space was open to the entire UA community.

Appendices

List of SBS Staff who have worked on the WPOH:

Holly Smith, former Dean, College of SBS
Dean Ed Donnerstein, former Dean, College of SBS
Ginny Healy, Sr. Director of Development, College of SBS
Gail Godbey, Associate Director of Development, College of SBS
Lori Harwood, Director of External Relationships, College of SBS
Christine Scheer, Creative Services Manager, College of SBS
Steve Harvath, Director of Development, College of SBS

Members of the Landscape Architects Design Team

Margaret West
Libba Wheat
Karen Cesare
Lori Woods
Caryl Clements

Independent Contractors

Karen Cesare
Margaret West
Lori Woods
Burns and Wald-Hopkins Architects

Novak Environmental
Proios Sandblasting & Painting
R.A. Alcala & Associates
Santa Theresa Tile Works
Slate Sculpture Ltd.
Sletten Construction
TA Caid Industries Inc.
Tuller Trophy & Awards
Wheat Scharf Associates

Volunteers at the Dedication

Network of Feminist Student Activists

Alisha
Tiffany
Georgia
Becca
Ana
Gabe
Melissa
Alyssa Garcia
Grace

Grad student volunteers

Yurika Tamura
Dylan Simosko
Sarah

Staff Volunteers

Dorana Lopez
Lauren Johnson
Molly Holleran
Desiree Bernal
Alison Greene
Kathy Powell
Gail Godbey
Lori Harwood
Kelly

Sponsors of the Dedication

Dean's Office, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Office of the President
Office of the Provost
Senior Vice President for Business Affairs
Senior Vice President for Campus Life
UA Commission on the Status of Women
University of Arizona Foundation

Vice President for Enrollment Management
Vice President for Research, Graduate Studies and Economic Development
Vice President and Senior Associate to the President
Vice President for University Advancement
Women's Studies Department

Video of the Plaza Dedication, Sept. 30, 2005

<http://womensplaza.arizona.edu/experience/video.php?top=1>