

Macomb Feminist Network Writing Women Into History

2013 Honorees

Dr. Josephine Johnson served WIU as a faculty member, counselor, Director of Enrollment Management, Special Assistant to the President, and Vice President for Advancement and Public Service from 1972 to 1990. She received the Western Organization for Women's Woman of Achievement Award in 1983; a WIU Distinguished Alumni Award in 1990; and was honored in 1996 with the University's highest honor, the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters degree. She was selected as one of 45 women who had made extraordinary contributions to WIU since 1899 who were honored in the Women of Western Centennial Photographic Exhibit. During her tenure at WIU, she supervised the establishment of the University Advising Center, mentored many Western colleagues, and shared much of what she learned with women colleagues. She was a member of the McDonough District Hospital Board of Directors, the Fulton and McDonough County Community Health Center Board, and the Bushnell Business and Professional Women's Club. She was an exceptionally strong advocate and role model for women in Greek life. She passed away in Dec. 1996, following an extended illness. Her friends and colleagues remember her as a strong, active, generous, supporting and caring mentor.

Dr. Elizabeth A. Kaspar came to Macomb in 1965 to teach Educational Psychology in the WIU College of Education. WIU President John Bernhard named her chair of the newly organized Committee on the Status of Women, a position which she held for eight years. Her work on women's issues led to her co-teaching the first Women's Studies course at WIU, the creation of the Western Organization for Women, and the establishment of the Women's Center. She was appointed by the Governor to serve as Vice President of the Illinois Commission on Women and was named as President of the Foundation for the National Association of State Commissions on Women. She received the Western Organization for Women's Woman of Achievement Award in 1991. She helped write the grant which resulted in the funding of the Fulton-McDonough Mental Health Center. She wrote a grant for the Western Illinois Historical Society and served for several years on the Board of Directors of the Western Illinois Museum. She has been a champion of women and recently endowed a lecture series at WIU to be held during Women's History Month. Nationally known artist, the late Connie Berg, dedicated one of her sculptures to Betty in honor of her work with and for women. It is located in the WIU Multicultural Center. Betty was selected as one of 45 women who had made extraordinary contributions to WIU since 1899 who were honored in the Women of Western Centennial Photographic Exhibit. She currently serves as the elected Regent of the Macomb Daughters of the American Revolution and is an elder in her church.

Dr. Janice Welsch joined the WIU Department of English and Journalism in the fall of 1975 and spent 30 years teaching film, women's studies, and cultural diversity courses. She helped write the proposal for WIU's Women's Center and served as Coordinator of the Women's Studies minor, Director of Faculty Development, and Co-Director of the Expanding Cultural Diversity Project funded by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. As part of that project she has co-directed the Dealing with Difference Institute for 20 years and helped organize numerous presentations and workshops on campus. In 2004 and 2009 she received Excellence in Multicultural Leadership and Education awards. She is a past-President of the Western Organization for Women and received its Woman of Achievement Award in 1986. She was selected as one of 45 women who had made extraordinary contributions to WIU since 1899 who were honored in the Women of Western Centennial Photographic Exhibit. She is one of the founding members of the Macomb Feminist Network (2001). She has been President of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies and in 2004 received the society's Award for Outstanding Service. She co-edited eight books and wrote two. She has written journal articles and participated in numerous workshops and panels. A mentor to students and faculty colleagues, she has devoted her career to social justice and the feminist movement.