

WOMEN OF ISENBERG NEWSLETTER

Happy 2021 everyone! The Women of Isenberg (Wol) Planning Committee is excited to share the January issue of our monthly Wol newsletter with you all.

WOI MISSION

The Women of Isenberg Conference was founded in 2014 to connect current UMass Amherst students with alumni, faculty, and corporate sponsors in a full-day professional development event. The Wol Conference creates a welcoming community for attendees from diverse backgrounds and industries to share experiences, foster confidence, and discuss the challenges we face as students in the classroom and women in the workplace.

This newsletter features:

- A recap of our winter programming
- A list of recommended items to use for online school
- A sneak peek at our virtual photography
- A "Meet the Wol Team" section

STAY
CONNECTED!



WINTER PROGRAMMING RECAP

Although December and January were the months of winter break for most UMass students, the Women of Isenberg Planning Committee was busy at work! Our **Virtual Speaker Series Kickoff Event** was held in December, and our **Countdown Event** and **Wol Week** were held in early January.

UMass Amherst alumna **Susan Callender** opened our programming with **"you have to believe you are a big deal or no one else will"** during our Kickoff Event and helped set the tone for future conversations and connections earlier this winter.



At our **Countdown Event**, we heard from various alumni and sponsors on the topics of **Sending the Right Message, Defining Success, and Adapting to Change in the Workplace**. We held conversations on using social media to stand up for what we believe in, transforming unexpected challenges into opportunities, and how our definition of success will grow, adapt and differ from others.

During **Wol Week**, attendees heard UMass Alum and Olympian **Briana Scurry** share her inspirational story about resilience. She explained how she went from a collegiate soccer player to an Olympian and overnight celebrity, but then lost it all. Describing her struggle with mental health and her self-worth, Briana provided a light at the end of the tunnel for those who may feel in the same boat - especially after a year like 2020. *"I understand. I understand how you feel, but hang on for one more day. Then the next day, and then the next day. If you keep hanging in there, you will find your way out."*

"A lot of times when you have pressure and expectation on you, you have one of two choices you can make in regards to that pressure: you can either let it crush you, or you can take that pressure and allow it to turn you into a diamond."

BRIANA SCURRY

"We all deserve to feel good in our body, feel safe, and to feel like we can be in a place where we can fully express ourselves."

TARA WHITNEY

In her Q&A session, Briana was just as transparent and open as she had been throughout her keynote; sharing her thoughts on being a Black woman in America and her ways of staying motivated even in the darkest of times.

During the next day, attendees also had the chance to attend the panels **Creating Value Through Mentorship, Embracing Obstacles, and Mental Health**.

With equal numbers across the board, every panel was well received and engaging. In **Creating Value Through Mentorship**, attendees learned what it meant to be a mentor, to be a mentee, and how to develop, foster, and leverage that relationship. The **Embracing Obstacles** panel taught attendees how to look at challenges as opportunities for growth and how to motivate yourself when you feel overwhelmed. Participants engaged in a conversation about prioritizing yourself and your daily routines in our **Mental Health** panel.

On the last day of Wol Week, Isenberg Diversity Officer **Alaina Macaulay** moderated a panel on **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Workplace and Beyond** then Wol attendees participated in a live guided networking session. Although the panelists were answering pre-planned questions, it felt as if the audience was watching a private conversation between a group of friends. These women shared their personal experiences struggling with stereotypes and discrimination, but provided hope and insight on how we can create a more inclusive future.

"This is the importance of conversation: You telling your story gives me power to tell my story."

SHANTEL PALACIO

Our team is still overwhelmed with gratitude for the enthusiasm and the community fostered throughout our winter programming. Navigating our first ever virtual conference could not have been possible without the support and help from our UMass Amherst peers, faculty, and staff members who cheered us on, believed in our mission, and collaborated with us as we adapted and successfully brought our beloved conference to the virtual space! **Although we were not able to see everyone in person this year, we could still feel the UMass community through the screen.**

"You should have self expression in the workplace. Creating spaces that are inclusive and offer folks to show up as who they are and speak from their personal experiences is freeing."

KATHY LOPES

If you were unable to attend some or any of our events this winter, don't worry! We recorded each event and they are available for viewing on our [website](#).

And... don't forget to check out our **virtual photography!**

We were able to work with

the Wol photographer, Stephanie Berenson Photography, LLC, to figure out a way to capture the Wol experience even in this virtual environment. Take a sneak peek at some of the photos below and check out the whole gallery on our [website](#).





Briana Scurry



Maggie Mulligan - Wol President



TANGIBLE ITEMS FOR ONLINE SCHOOL



PLANNER

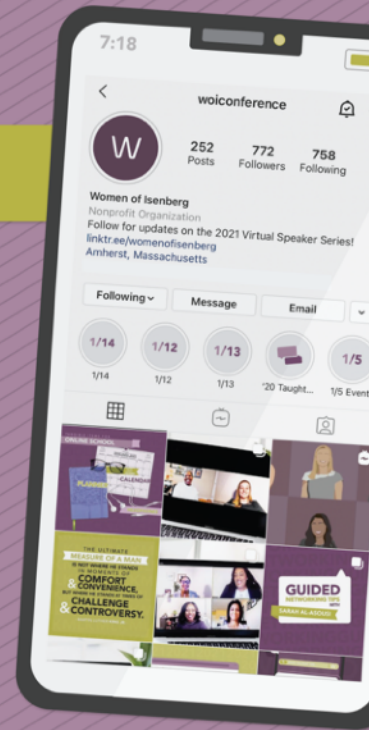
**BLUE
LIGHT
GLASSES**

CALENDAR

HEADPHONES



@WOICONFERENCE



MEET THE WOI TEAM

WHAT ELSE DID WOI DO OVER WINTER BREAK?

"This break, I spent a lot of time watching Christmas movies with my family, playing the piano, and reading the newspaper. I celebrated New Years at home with my grandparents where we bought festive decorations and watched the ball drop."

RANIYA MAHDI



"I interned for Fidelity Investments as a Payroll Operations intern over the winter break. I was able to work with my same managers and coworkers from the summer which was great. It was completely virtual, but I have been able to make so many strong connections with my team. I binge-watched too many Netflix shows and made new dishes to try with family!"

KATE GAFFEY



"During my winter break, I worked on a campaign in Maine to stop a powerline from being built through the state forest. It was difficult due to Covid guidelines within the community, but we reached our goal! I made sure to stay in touch with friends and family over FaceTime and watched lots of movies."

ELIZA HAWTHORNE





WOMEN OF ISENBURG
VIRTUAL SPEAKER
SERIES

We hope you enjoyed the January issue of the Women of Isenberg newsletter! Stay connected with us on social media and our website to learn more about our upcoming spring events.



@WOI_CONFERENCE



@WOICONFERENCE



**WOMEN OF ISENBURG
CONFERENCE**



**WOMENOFISENBURG
@ISENBURG.UMASS.EDU**



WOMENOFISENBURG.COM

