

studies

college of arts and sciences • university of south carolina

Beverly Guy-Sheftall to Deliver 2005 Freeman Lecture

Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Anna Julia Cooper Professor of English and Women's Studies and founding director of the Women's Research and Resource Center, Spelman College, Atlanta, Ga., will deliver the 2005 Adrenée Glover Freeman lecture in African American Women's Studies on Thursday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m., in Gambrell Hall Auditorium. The title of her lecture is "Feminisms in the African Diaspora."

Guy-Sheftall, who is also an adjunct professor at Emory University's Institute for Women's Studies, has published many texts in African-American and Women's Studies. They include the first anthology on Black women's literature, *Sturdy Black Bridges: Visions of Black Women in Literature* (Doubleday, 1979), which she coedited with Roseann P. Bell and Bettye Parker Smith; her dissertation, *Daughters of Sorrow: Attitudes Toward Black Women, 1880-1920* (Carlson, 1991); and *Words of Fire: An Anthology of African American Feminist Thought* (New Press, 1995). More recently she coedited a volume with Rudolph P. Byrd titled *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sexuality* (Indi-

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WOST Makes Joint Hires with Departments of Psychology and Religious Studies



Stephanie Mitchem



Tawanda Greer

This fall Women's Studies welcomes Drs. Stephanie Mitchem and Tawanda Greer to our faculty. They have joint appointments with the Departments of Religious Studies and Psychology, respectively. They will have 50 percent appointments in Women's Studies and 50 percent in their respective departments.

Mitchem received her Ph.D. in 1998 from the joint program at Northwestern University-Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, with concentrations in theology, ethics, ethnography, and American history. Dr. Mitchem is an expert in African-American feminism, womanist theology, liberation theology, and the connections between spirituality and health, particularly in African-American women's lives. Her first book, *African American Women Tapping Power and Spiritu-*

al Wellness, was published by Pilgrim Press in 2004, and her second book, *African American Folk Healing*, is in press with New York University Press. Her current research projects focus on theologies of prosperity in black religions and gender and class in the black religious experience.

Dr. Mitchem brings a wealth of teaching and administrative experience from her 12 years at the University of Detroit Mercy, where she served as director of student development, director of the Women's Studies and African American Studies Programs, and most recently as associate professor and chair of the Department of Religious Studies. Dr. Mitchem is also very active profession-

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Director's Comments: A Time of Change—Facing the Uncertain



Dr. Lynn Weber, WOST director

Change ... we all face it every day in our personal lives; in the institutions where we live, work, and play; in our society; and across the globe. Change can be painful or exhilarating, it can be nominal or life shattering, it can bring new and exciting opportunities or challenges and threats to our very existence. And it can be all of these at once. Yet one thing that is certain about change is *uncertainty*. Uncertainty is often troubling—and sometimes devastating, but rarely comfortable. It is surely this discomfort that moves so many people in the United States and across the globe to embrace fundamentalist movements—from the fundamentalist Christianity that grips our country to the fundamentalisms in the Middle East, South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. They each provide simple, clear, and certain answers to the complex, confusing, and difficult challenges of modern life. From stem cell research to the war in Iraq, from abortion to the death penalty, from global capitalism to women's place in society—clear, simple, and certain answers bring comfort.

If there is a primary strength of women's studies as a field of study and an institutional location, it is precisely the goal of approaching complex problems in com-

plex ways. Our strength in confronting change lies in our intellectual, personal, and institutional flexibility that emerges from our tradition of seeking to make change to better the lives of the less powerful. Our intersectional approach opens our eyes to see those oppressed by race, class, gender, sexuality, region, and nation. Our interdisciplinarity brings the power of diverse methods, theories, and languages to bear on the problems that confront us. It is not certainty—right and wrong, black and white—that we seek, but comfort with the uncertainty that characterizes modern life. We seek a comfort that comes with knowing that we have a process, not simple answers, that can get us through—a process that is inclusive, that engages complexities, that seeks and is tested by the larger goal of challenging gender and intersecting social inequalities.

During the 30th anniversary of Women's Studies at USC in 2004–2005, while we were celebrating our past, we were simultaneously entering one of the biggest periods of change that Women's Studies has encountered in a while. As a consequence, we enter the 2005–2006 academic year with new faculty and new leadership in WOST. The program now sits in the larger bureaucracy of the College of Arts and Sciences, which is itself a new creation with new leadership, a new governance structure, new budgetary practices, and a new dean who reports to our new provost. USC hasn't seen this much change in a year during my nine-year tenure here—and likely much longer than that.

In Women's Studies, we welcome Drs. Stephanie Mitchem and Tawanda Greer, two new faculty members who have joint appointments with Women's Studies and religious studies and psychology, respectively. (See article on page 1.) They each represent firsts for our program. Dr. Mitchem will be our first core faculty

member affiliated with the Department of Religious Studies, and Dr. Greer will be our first core faculty member in counseling. Dr. DeAnne Messias, who received tenure last spring, will become the new graduate director in Women's Studies, replacing Dr. Wanda Hendricks, who moves to the Department of History after a successful term of leadership in our program. Dr. Ingrid Reneau has decided to leave the University to pursue her goals of writing and social justice outside an academic setting, and we wish her well.

With these new faculty and the strong group of faculty affiliates and students, Women's Studies faces the challenges of our new bureaucratic location—the College of Arts and Sciences. Like all changes, it brings opportunities and threats. The larger structure that is the new college makes uniform policies and practices more desirable—for ease of management. At the same time, the complex units that make up the college—from the smaller interdisciplinary programs like Women's Studies and African American Studies to the larger departments like Biology and English—have different needs and vulnerabilities in this new environment. We look forward to working with our dean, Dr. Mary Anne Fitzpatrick, and provost, Dr. Mark Becker, to ensure that women's studies and the younger, interdisciplinary programs thrive.

The new environment also provides many opportunities, particularly for forging new coalitions with units from the former College of Science and Mathematics that can broaden our intellectual reach and strengthen our curriculum and research base. We see potential for new collaborations that can take our Women's Well-Being Initiative in new directions, for example, in growing women's health

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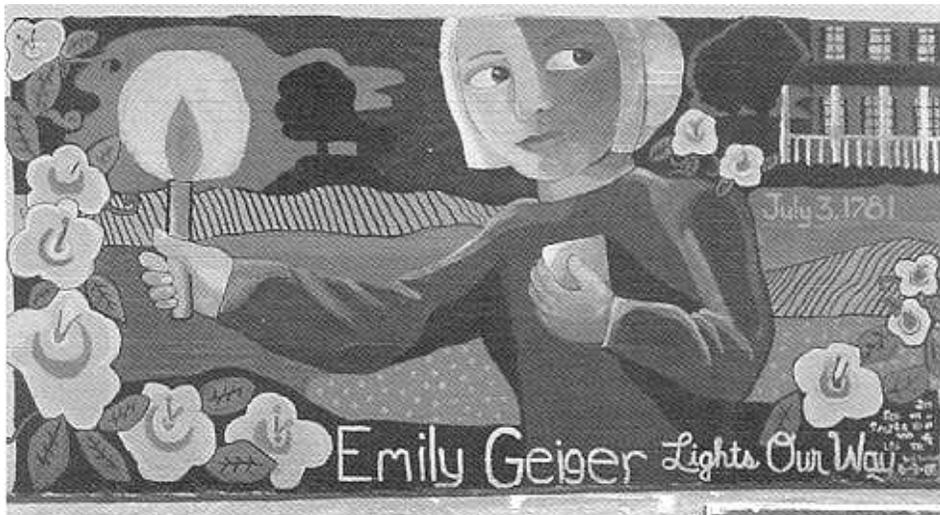
Introducing the West Columbia Mural Project

In the summer of 2005, Women's Studies faculty and graduate students joined with young women in West Columbia to produce what will be a series of public murals honoring women from the area. The mural is one activity in the West Columbia Project of the Women's Well-Being Initiative in Women's Studies. The initiative was created to promote interdisciplinary and community-based research, action, and teaching that enhances the well-being of women and children in South Carolina and the region—across race, class, sexuality, age, and other dimensions of inequality.

West Columbia was selected as the first locale for the initiative. There we seek to establish new and support existing initiatives in the community to empower girls and women and to forge connections among the diverse groups working toward these ends. Located within the Columbia metropolitan area in eastern Lexington County along the Congaree and Saluda rivers, West Columbia is a growing community of over 13,000 people, more than half of who are women and girls.

Faculty and students in the West Columbia Project have worked with Sandy Nieves of the Community Empowerment Center to identify constituencies and community needs, strengths, and opportunities. The mural project was the first effort to collaborate with young women and girls in an activity designed to share skills and knowledge, to build relationships and esteem, and to enhance the community's physical environment.

During the first week of June, 12 young women ages 11 to 16 under the direction of Julie Jacobson, a graduate student in both Women's Studies and fine arts, painted a mural on a dilapidated building in West Columbia. The girls were



The mural is located in West Columbia on 13th Street between B Avenue and C Avenue.

part of an adjudication program and were involved in the mural project to fulfill their community service requirements.

In addition to enhancing the environment, the mural project was intended to empower the young women involved in the painting through learning new skills in a creative atmosphere in which everyone could excel. As Jacobson stated, "Everyone learned something new and also found something in the painting process that they were good at, whether it was mixing the exact shade of paint or painting a specific portion of the mural, such as flowers. Each of the girls found pride in their accomplishments. And they did take great pride. For example, one girl had her grandmother drive by at the end of the first day so that she could show her the mural."

Kristen Hudgins, a graduate student in anthropology and Women's Studies who participated in the project, observed the young women's work, and asked them about the experience. First, the girls enjoyed the project. They saw themselves as having no artistic ability and yet they learned to work together with others to complete a large art project—even making new friends. That they made friends

was especially striking since 11 of the 12 girls had been assigned to the project for being in a fight with one another. Second, when asked which women they might like to see painted on future murals, contemporary musicians were top choices. These girls were largely unaware of historical or contemporary women leaders and relied on movies, television, music, and family lore—not school or written texts for information. For example, even her knowledge of Rosa Parks, whom one girl strongly asserted should be memorialized, derived from a TV movie she had seen. Third, they appreciated learning the skills associated with painting.

Finally, the mural project taught the girls about an important woman historical figure from their community. The mural features Emily Geiger, a Revolutionary War heroine from West Columbia who was instrumental in delivering important information to General Thomas Sumter. Enroute to Sumter's camp, she was detained by the British but did not reveal the information she was entrusted with. Upon release, she rode to Orangeburg to deliver the message to Sumter, who in turn ordered his troops to take part in the Battle of Orangeburg. ■

2005 Faculty Research Award Winners Announced



Dr. Susan Courtney



Dr. Elaine Lacy



Dr. Suzanne Swan



Ann Bartow, JD

The Women's Studies Program has awarded two \$5,000 Josephine Abney Research Awards to **Dr. Susan Courtney**, associate professor of English and film studies; **Dr. Elaine Lacy**, director of the Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies; and **Dr. Suzanne Swan**, assistant professor of psychology and Women's Studies.

Professor Courtney used the Abney award last summer to work on her cur-

rent book-in-progress, titled "Regional Projections: The Cultural Work of Cinema in Mapping the U.S.A." This book works from the premise that popular conceptions of "region" and "nation" are themselves profoundly shaped by intersections of gender, race, sexuality, and class. More specifically, it juxtaposes two exceptionally mythic locations in popular film culture—the West and the South—to consider how cinema

has helped to shape persistent conceptions not only of regional identity, but also of a larger, imagined "America" comprised of such filmic parts. With the support of the Abney award, Courtney will undertake the research and writing of one of the most gender-focused of the book's chapters, tentatively titled "The Long, Hot Melodramas: Gender and Other Southern Disorders in the Tennessee Williams' Films of the 1950s and 1960s."

Professors Lacy and Swan will use their Abney award to conduct a study of Latino women immigrants to South Carolina, examining the ways in which these women navigate the settlement process and engage in community building in this new immigrant settlement area. Through participant observation, in-depth open-ended interviews, and informal conversations, Lacy and Swan will also assess the manner in which Latina immigrant women respond to the various gender roles they encounter in South Carolina. They plan to examine how gender roles shift after settlement and the relationship between those changes and relationship conflict and relationship violence.

The Women's Studies Program also awarded the \$1,000 Carol Jones Carlisle Research Award to **Ann Bartow, JD**, an assistant professor of law. She will conduct research on the accessibility of legal information important to women in the age of electronic databases and the Internet. This project explores the cultural and social implications for women of policies that encourage or dissuade governments, lawyers, law schools, legal publishers, public-interest organizations, and other groups to make free legal information accessible on the Internet. ■

Call for Applications

2005 Freeman Lecture

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Women's Studies seeks applications and/or nominations for the following awards:

The Josephine Abney and Carol Jones Carlisle Research Awards

Women's Studies seeks applications for the Josephine Abney Fellowship for Research and the Carol Jones Carlisle Research Award. These awards encourage cutting-edge, women-centered research. Proposals should be consistent with the research mission of Women's Studies to reconceptualize existing knowledge and to create knowledge about women and their experiences through the lens of gender and the prism of diversity. The research should be interdisciplinary or have interdisciplinary implications and should reflect a commitment to improving the status of women. Both awards are open to any full-time, permanent faculty or professional staff member. The Abney Award is \$5,000 and the Carlisle Award is \$1,000. Applications deadline: Jan. 30, 2006. Application forms are available at www.cas.sc.edu/WOST and/or the WOST office.

Women's Studies Teaching Awards

Women's Studies seeks nominations for two awards—one for excellence in teaching by a faculty member and one for outstanding teaching by a graduate student. Award criteria include having taught at least one Women's Studies course within one semester of the time of nomination; demonstration of effective and sustained integration of race, class, gender, and sexuality issues into course materials and requirements; evidence of providing guidance and inspiration to students beyond the classroom; and positive student and peer teaching evaluations. The faculty award is \$1,000, and the graduate student award is \$250. Nominations deadline: Jan. 31, 2006.

The Harriott Hampton Faucette Award

Women's Studies seeks applications for the Harriott Hampton Faucette Award, which is designed to assist Women's Studies graduate certificate students with research and professional development. The award is for a maximum of \$500. Applications must be made in the form of a one-page proposal. Fall application deadline: Oct. 3, 2005; spring application deadline: Jan. 31, 2006. Send proposals to Dr. DeAnne Hilfinger Messias, Graduate Director, Women's Studies Program, 201 Flinn Hall, USC, Columbia, SC 29208.

The Emily Thompson Graduate Student Award

Women's Studies seeks applications from graduate students for the best research paper or project focusing on women's health. A project may be by an individual or a group. Applicants must submit one original and three copies of their research paper or a description of their research project (including a paragraph demonstrating its significance to women's health) to Dr. DeAnne Hilfinger Messias, Graduate Director, Women's Studies Program, 201 Flinn Hall, Columbia, SC 29208. Projects may have originated at any time in the 2005–2006 academic year, and the student must be currently enrolled at USC at the time of submission. Award amount: \$250. Proposal deadline: Feb. 13, 2006.

The Arney Robinson Childs Memorial Undergraduate Award

Women's Studies seeks nominations from faculty for the Arney Robinson Childs Memorial Award. Nominees should preferably be seniors with a major or minor in Women's Studies, a record of extraordinary achievement and contributions to Women's Studies classes, and exemplary commitment to women's issues on campus or in the community. Award amount: \$250. Nominations deadline: Feb. 13, 2006.



Beverly Guy-Sheftall

ana University Press, 2001) and a monograph with Johnnetta Betsch Cole, *Gender Talk: The Struggle for*

Equality in African American Communities (Random House, 2003). In 1983 she was the founding editor of *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women*, which was the first journal devoted exclusively to the experiences of women of African descent.

Guy-Sheftall is the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including a national Kellogg Fellowship, a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship for dissertations in Women's Studies, and Spelman's Presidential Faculty Award for outstanding scholarship. She is also a member of the Board of Trustees of Dillard University in New Orleans, La. She has been involved with the national women's studies movement since its inception and has provided leadership for the establishment of the first women's studies major at a historically black college. Beyond the academy, she has been active in many national advocacy organizations including the National Black Women's Health Project, the National Council for Research on Women, and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, on whose boards she serves. She teaches women's studies courses, including feminist theory and global Black feminisms.

The Freeman Lecture was established in 1993 in memory of Adrenée Glover Freeman, a Columbia attorney who was active in civic affairs and served on the Community Advisory Board of the Women's Studies Program. The Freeman Lecture is cosponsored by the College of Arts and Sciences and the African American Studies Program. The lecture is free and open to the public. Contributions to the Freeman lecture fund may be made to the Women's Studies Endowment Fund, USC Educational Foundation, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208. ■

WOST Undergraduate Program



Dr. Laura R. Woliver

The undergraduates in Women's Studies continue to exemplify high achievement, academic excellence, and community leadership. Six students graduated

last spring in the Women's Studies BA program, bringing our total alumnae to 43.

During the spring, ten Women's Studies students made major contributions to the community through their WOST 499 Community Service Internship. Andrea Breland, Janna Britts, and Ashley Paige interned at the Hannah House, a shelter for homeless women and their children; Alyson Bullock at Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands; Claire Ginocchio at the Columbia World Affairs Council; Janet Henderson at the South Carolina Assembly; Sherry Kennedy at the South Carolina Department of Probation, Pardon, and Parole Services; Erica Robinson Nelson at Children's Chance, an organization helping families of children with cancer; All excia Thuss at the Salvation Army; and Miranda Vallentine at the Anderson, S.C., Literacy Council. The first recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Rising Senior Award was Wanda Collier, a Women's Studies major who will intern this fall at the Cooperative Ministry in Columbia.

The Women's Students Association continues to play a leadership role in the annual production of Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues*. This fund-raising and consciousness-raising event is one of the most successful on the campus. The 2005 performance netted more than \$3,000 in proceeds that were donated to antiviolence programs on campus and off campus in the city of Columbia. The next production is scheduled for February 2006. ■

Mark Your Calendars

Fall 2005 Pedagogy Brownbag Teaching Series: Teaching for Social Justice

If you would like to schedule a brownbag, please call DeAnne Messias at 803-777-4009.

2005-2006 Research Series Lectures Lectures will be held in Gambrell Hall, by a reception.

**"One Sex, Two Sex, Three Sex
(and more): Feminism's Rhetorical
Configurations of Sexual Difference"**

Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2005, 3:30 p.m.

Speaker: Kristan Poirot, Ph.D.
Department of English

**"Sisters, Lovers, and Mamas:
Black Women and Wellness"**

Wednesday, Oct. 19, 2005, 3:30 p.m.

Speaker: Stephanie Mitchem, Ph.D.
Women's Studies Program and
Department of Religious Studies

**"Women's Rights and Family Values:
Gender and America's Right Turn"**

Thurs., Nov. 17, 2005, 3:30 p.m.

Speaker: Marjorie Spruill, Ph.D.
Department of History

**"Rethinking Trauma: Chronic
Oppression and Health"**

Thursday, Jan. 19, 2006, 3:30 p.m.

Speaker: Tawanda Greer, Ph.D.
Women's Studies Program and
Department of Psychology

"Students Creating New Knowledge"

Wednesday, March 15, 2006, 3:30 p.m.

Women's Studies Graduate
Students' Panel

**"The Long, Hot Melodramas: Gen-
der and Other Southern Disorders in
Films of the Fifties and Sixties"**

Wednesday, March 29, 2006, 3:30 p.m.

Speaker: Susan Courtney, Ph.D.
Department of English and
Film Studies Program

Call for Proposals

2006 WOST Conference "Transnational Feminisms"

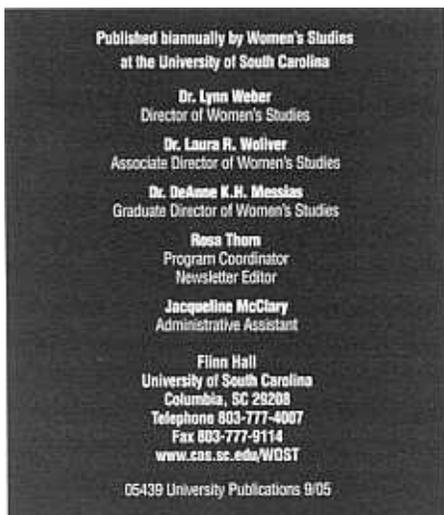
The 19th Annual Women's Studies Conference will be held Thursday, Feb. 23, and Friday, Feb. 24, 2006, at the Daniel Management Center, Moore School of Business. The conference theme is "Transnational Feminisms." The keynote lecture and concluding event will be held in conjunction with the Irish Studies Conference being held at USC at that time and will feature an Irish feminist author and poet. You are invited to submit abstracts (300 word maximum) for individual presentations or proposals for a panel and/or session relevant to the conference theme. Fifteen minutes will be allotted for individual papers and 45 minutes for presentations. Abstracts and proposals must contain a cover sheet with the name of the presenter, address, work phone, home phone, fax number, e-mail address, and biographical information. Information must be provided for all individuals included in the proposal. The deadline for abstracts or proposals is Friday, Dec. 16, 2005. All presenters must register for the conference: General registration: \$40, students: \$20. The nonrefundable registration fee includes a packet of conference materials, lunch, and a reception. ■

Director's Comments

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research or research on women in science and engineering.

Whatever the outcome, Women's Studies will continue to pursue change in our own environment and in the world around us by embracing a process for change that is interdisciplinary and inter-sectional and that reinforces our commitment to social justice. ■



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ally and currently serves as a member of the Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, for the American Academy of Religion, on the editorial board of the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, and as a contributing editor to *Cross Currents*. In the fall semester, she will teach African-American Feminist Theory, which is required for majors and cross-listed with the African-American Studies Program.

Greer received her Ph.D. in 2003 in counseling psychology from Southern Illinois University, one of the top five programs in the country, and spent the last two years as a clinician in the Psychological Services Center at Wright State University. The primary focus of her research is on the impact of race and gender oppression on physical and mental health outcomes for racial and ethnic minorities. Her specific area of expertise is the provision of psychological services to African-American populations. Her dissertation uses qualitative methods to examine the experiences of Afri-

can-American students at a predominantly white university and a historically black university. Her current research is aimed at creating clinically useful psychological assessment measures to tap the biopsychosocial factors (e.g., general health status, social support, perceived racism, and sexism) that are known to affect the overall functioning of African Americans. The specific aim is to provide a tool that will enable clinicians to improve treatment planning, intervention and the overall quality of services provided to African-American clients. In the fall, Dr. Greer will teach WOST 304 Seminar in Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality, a required course for the undergraduate major in women's studies.

Women's Studies is pleased to have these two outstanding faculty members joining our ranks. They will make important contributions to our teaching mission as well as our Women's Well-Being Initiative. ■

Ashley Paige Receives Arney Robinson Childs Award



Ashley Paige

Ashley Paige has received the 2005 Arney Robinson Childs Award. She graduated cum laude with honors in May 2005 with a double major in women's studies and English. During the spring semester she was a Women's Studies intern at Columbia's Hannah House, a shelter for homeless women and their children. In 2004 she was awarded the Maximilian LaBorde Junior Scholarship in the Department of English for her essay that dealt with modes of representation of and the use of technology in representing women in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and in Almereyda's 2000 adaptation of *Hamlet*.

During her sophomore year, Ashley joined the South Carolina Student Legislature, a statewide and (partially) state-

funded organization that gives students from schools across South Carolina the opportunity to research policy and law, present bills, and debate. In her junior year she was selected vice chair of the USC delegation to the South Carolina Student Legislature (SCSL), and she became chair in 2004-2005. During her tenure in the SCSL she presented bills arguing for civil unions and a more effective no-fault divorce policy in South Carolina, as well as a resolution showing South Carolina's disapproval of President Bush's policies regarding the war in Iraq. For the past two summers she has volunteered and provided keyboard instructions at the Southern Girls' Rock and Roll Camp at Middle Tennessee State University, which is a day camp for the empowerment of girls ages 12 to 18 who are interested in the music industry. Ashley plans to move to Boston to work with nonprofit organizations and

politics. Later, she will pursue a Ph.D. or attend law school.

The Childs Award is in memory of Arney Robinson Childs, an educator and one of the first women principals in South Carolina (Logan Grammar School in 1928). Childs joined USC as dean of women in 1935 and held that position until 1958. Dr. Childs was active in issues of social justice and women's rights. After retiring from USC, she continued to teach and develop her interests in South Carolina history. She died in April 1987 at the age of 96.

Each year, an outstanding Women's Studies student is recognized to further our commitment to build and to spread knowledge about women in every discipline and walk of life. Ashley Paige continues the work and legacy of Arney Robinson Childs. ■



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Support USC Women's Studies and the Initiative for Women's Well-Being

The Women's Studies Program is growing. We invite you to join our efforts to promote the understanding essential to improving the lives of women and girls by becoming a Friend of Women's Studies.

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other \$ _____

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- Send information about the Women's Studies Program
- Add my name to the mailing list
- Remove my name from the mailing list
- Correct my address

Make checks payable to *USC Educational Foundation* and mail to:
Women's Studies Program, 201 Flinn Hall, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208.