

UMass Dartmouth Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality celebrates 50th anniversary

Celebration includes a dinner with keynote address by former Planned Parenthood president Faye Wattleton

The Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality at UMass Dartmouth, the second-oldest women's collegiate center in the country, celebrates its 50th anniversary on Wednesday, March 18 at 6 p.m. in Woodland Commons. The event will feature a keynote address by Faye Wattleton, activist and former Planned Parenthood president and CEO, on "Preserving the Legacy of Women's Health and Liberty." Tickets are \$100 per person or \$750 for a table of eight and are available at alumni2.umassd.edu/cwgs50.

Wattleton's distinguished career spans more than four decades, amassing an extraordinary track record of national and international leadership and advocacy for women's sexual and reproductive rights and health. She was the youngest and longest-tenured president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the nation's oldest and largest reproductive services provider. Wattleton was also the first woman and first African American, after the organization's founder, Margaret Sanger. Currently, Wattleton serves on boards of directors of public and private corporations, academic institutions, and high-impact philanthropic organizations.

"Our 50th anniversary is a celebration of our roots as a radical referral center at a time when access to even birth control was limited to only married women," said Juli Parker, Ph.D., director of the Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality and assistant dean of students. "We are excited to welcome Faye Wattleton, who has played such a critical role in

advancing women's and reproductive rights and shares our mission for social change."

The Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality was founded in 1970 as the Women's Referral Center, offering contraceptive and abortion rights advocacy and education before the 1973 decision of Roe vs. Wade. Inspired by its strong activist roots, the Women's Referral Center expanded its mission and services over the next five decades to provide progressive inclusive services and resources to students.

Today, the Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality is a voice for women and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered community, with the purpose of eliminating barriers, diminishing prejudices, and creating a supportive climate and space for all. Its mission is to offer resources and support on LGBTQ and women's issues. In addition, the Center coordinates campus initiatives to prevent sexual assault and intimate partner violence.

Proceeds from the event will support the Center for Women, Gender & Sexuality at UMassD and its annual high school LGBTQ Youth Symposium. Individual tickets and tables are available. To purchase, please visit alumni2.umassd.edu/cwgs50. If you have questions about the event, please contact Mitch Berube at 508.910.6567 or mberube@umassd.edu.