

2018

2018 Year in Review: Letter from the Director

Leonard and Shirley Goldstein Center for Human Rights - University of Nebraska at Omaha

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2018 – YEAR IN REVIEW

Letter from the Director:

With corks popping, the end of 2018 will mark the first birthday of the new Leonard and Shirley Goldstein Center for Human Rights at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The Goldstein Center officially opened on January 1, 2018. This Center housed in the UNO College of Arts and Sciences, was several years in the making. Growing out of a longstanding relationship between the Goldstein family and the Religious Studies department at UNO led by Dr. Paul Williams, faculty from six different University Colleges came together to create a non-partisan, non-sectarian organization that promotes the understanding of human rights issues through community engagement, teaching, research, and creative activity.

Thanks to an extraordinarily active and hard-working Executive Committee whose members are drawn from diverse academic units at UNO (see list below), the new Goldstein Center was immediately able to link up with human rights studies already underway on campus and in the greater local, national, and international communities. Focused on harnessing the strengths of over three dozen affiliated faculty members, the Goldstein Center hit the ground running and has not slowed down. Amongst our first moves, some of which were enacted prior to our initial opening, we supported a new minor in Human Rights and aligned ourselves with the UNO based academic journal *ID: International Dialogue*. We also moved quickly to provide funding for human rights related keynotes at the UNO European Studies Conference (Dr. Mehnaz Afridi), the *No Limits* student research conference (Dr. Beverly Guy-Sheftall) sponsored by , and the John Trudell Lecture in Native American Studies (Adam Beach). In conjunction with the Goldstein Family Community Chair in Human Rights, the Executive Committee co-sponsored the first Human Rights Week at UNO. In 2019, we will coordinate a teacher workshop and symposium on art and human rights with the UNO Sam and Frances Fried Academy for Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

In order to kindle and promote faculty-driven human rights initiatives, the Executive Committee established three Standing Committees composed of affiliated faculty members to focus specifically on areas related to Community Engagement, Curriculum, and Research. These Standing Committees established funding priorities and guidelines for eligibility. They then reviewed multiple applications. The following projects are being funded by the Goldstein Center for Human Rights in 2018 and 2019: :

Community Engagement

Ramazan Kilinc, “Bridging Academy to the Public: Spreading the Knowledge on Human Rights Issues in the Middle East and Beyond”

Kelly MacArthur, “Nor Any Drop to Drink”

Jody Neathery-Castro, “American Women Rebuilding France, 1917-1924”

Laura Alexander, "Immigration, Racial and Religious Discrimination, and Human Rights"
Lana Obradovic, "Refugee Simulation Project"

Curriculum

Mark Celinscak, Teacher Workshop: "Holocaust By Bullets"
Alecia Anderson, Student Workshop: "Black and Pink"
Daniel Wuebben, Course Development: "Reading and Writing the American Prison"
Cristián Dona-Reveco, Course Development: "International Migration, Mobility, and Human Rights"

Research

Brett Kyle, "The Role of the Military in Human Rights"
Eugenio DiStefano, "Indexicality, Art, and Human Rights"
Cristián Dona-Reveco, "Violence and the Venezuelan Exodus"

To honor the Human Rights legacy of the Goldstein family, the new Center will be underwriting two defining projects directed by Jeannette Gabriel. First, in August 2019, the exhibition "Shirley Goldstein's Immigrant Rights Legacy: Operation Exodus in Omaha" will open at the UNO Criss Library. At the same time, Jeannette Gabriel in conjunction with the Criss Library will be working to permanently establish the Goldstein Archives at UNO.

Last but certainly not least, in December 2019 the Goldstein Center and Fried Academy will be hosting the first bi-annual meeting of The National Consortium of Higher Education Centers of Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Studies. This new Consortium, founded at the United States Holocaust Museum in 2019 by the directors of parallel academic institutions in the United States, will work to cultivate exchange and collaboration between over two hundred sister Centers. The Goldstein Center is thrilled to bring these Center directors together in Omaha as this will provide us with a unique opportunity to connect up with and learn from our peers across the country.

None of the work described above would have been possible without the generosity of our donors from the Goldstein family, the Dean of the UNO College of Arts and Science, and the labor of our Goldstein Center Executive Committee. Many thanks to Don, Gail, and Kathy for their energetic support, Dean David Boocker, and the following members of the Executive Committee – Paul Williams, Lana Obradovic, Troy Romero, Michele Desmarais, Jay Irwin, Martina Saltamacchia, Alecia Anderson, Brett Kyle, Rory Conces, Mark Celinscak, and Laura Alexander.

May 2019 be as full of success as 2018. Cheers!

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