Statement of Commitment

At the heart of every affirmative action plan is the Statement of Commitment, which leads our work and provides an introduction to this document. It reflects on our discrimination policy in the workplace, our commitment to implementing an affirmative action program, and that we will actively take steps to remedy disparities. The president of our institutions is a signatory of this specific part of the affirmative action plan, and the following reflects this language and spirit of this commitment.

This statement reaffirms Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College are committed to Minnesota's statewide affirmative action efforts and

- We are committed to the implementation of the affirmative action policies, programs, and procedures included in this plan to ensure that employment practices are free from discrimination. Employment practices include, but are not limited to the following: hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff, disciplinary action, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. We will provide reasonable accommodation to employees and applicants with disabilities.
applicants in accordance with equal opportunity and affirmative action laws.

- No individual shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in programs, services, and activities, or subject to harassment, on the basis of race, sex (including pregnancy), color, creed, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, or membership or activity in a local human rights commission.

- The prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex precludes sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, and harassment based on pregnancy.

action, wherever females, racial/ethnic minorities, and individuals with disabilities are underrepresented in the workforce, and work to retain all qualified, talented employees, including protected group employees and veterans.

- This university-college will evaluate its efforts, including those of its directors, managers, and supervisors, in promoting equal opportunity and achieving affirmative action objectives contained herein. In addition, we will expect all employees to perform their job duties in a manner that promotes equal opportunity for all.

It is our policy to provide an employment environment free of any form of discriminatory harassment as prohibited by federal, state, and local human rights laws. We strongly encourage suggestions as to how we may improve. We strive to provide equal employment opportunities and the best possible service to all Minnesotans. Please contact the affirmative action office with any concerns you may have regarding discrimination in the workplace or search advisory committee process.

CENTER FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Women's Heritage and History Experience 2023
As the unsung and often unnoticed, women continue to show up in empowering and motivational ways. In Santa Rosa, California, a group of game changers gather in coordinating Women's History Week, later being picked up by the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission in 1978 (1). As the movement continues to

This year, we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Title IX, a federal civil rights act that states that no person in the United States can be excluded or denied based on sex under any educational program or activity receiving federal funding. Since 1972, this law has given the opportunity for women to continuously strive in education, sports and so much more. However, there is still work to do to
during that week in 1980, President Carter declared the week of March 8th, 1980, as National Women’s History Week, which aligned with International Women’s Day (2). Six years later, 14 states had taken the initiative to proclaim March as Women’s History Month with congress following a year later, 1987 (2). As we learn about how Women’s History became to be, it is important to acknowledge those leaders that have paved the way for where we are now.

The theme for Women’s Heritage and History Experience 2023 is “Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories.” Let’s continue to share powerful stories to uplift the generations to come.

Check out our upcoming events here!

CENTER FOR CIVIL RIGHTS - INVESTIGATIONS OFFICE

Patsy Mink: Intersecting the Women’s Movement and Law

Gwendolyn Mink, a feminist policy scholar and daughter of Patsy Mink stated, “I just hope that today’s generation of young girls will grow up to be the next generation of young women who fight as hard as young women have over the past 50 years.” (1) Patsy Mink, a Japanese American from Hawaii, was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1944. She was the first women of Asian ancestry, and the first non-white women to ever be elected to Congress.

Recognizing the intersections of oppression and drawing from her own experiences, her fight for education equity included and centered on disabled students, low-income students, and students of color. Her focus on educational equity was based on her belief that education was “the best route to equality and social justice.”

Shortly before her election, Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 became law. Discrimination based on sex in private employment and public accommodations was prohibited, but protections were not extended to federally funded institutions, such as

When the Higher Education Act came up for an extension in 1972, Patsy Mink co-authored and sponsored a critical addition, modeled after Title VI. “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

These 37 words became law, changing the landscape in the fight for sexual equality. Today, women earn 60 percent of undergraduate and master’s degrees, compared to eight percent in 1972. Over 3,000,000 women and girls now participate in high school and college athletic programs, compared to the 300,000 in 1972. Title IX is a tool for survivors of rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment, and provides protections for pregnant and parenting persons.

Known for its impact on athletics, Title IX was successfully used to advance women’s sports. In the early 1990’s the Supreme Court ruled that Title IX’s prohibition on discrimination applied to sports and sexual harassment.
discrimination based on sex continued. Congressional hearings on sex discrimination and employment resulted in suggestions to implement a measure, similar to what became Title IX.

This was one of the first times the women's movement organized in partnership and collaboration with congressional leaders. Women and advocates were given a seat at the table by Patsy Mink. Small groups of mostly women came together to make radical change in law, opening opportunities for others.

should be utilized to its fullest potential and not limited to narrow applications of the past. Today's Title IX is applicable in cases concerning gender identity and sexual orientation. It is an essential tool as we encounter discrimination and harassment of our LGBTQ+ community members.

"What you endure is who you are," Patsy Mink once declared. "I can't change the past. But I can certainly help somebody else in the future, so they don't have to go through what I did." We need to ensure this legacy continues.


**TITLE IX 50TH ANNIVERSARY AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

**Past and Present Female Athletes Share Effects of Title IX at Speaker Panel**

In one form or another, Abbie Disbrow, Emma Terres-Sobieck and Kristen McRae have all faced unfair uphill battles. But Title IX has helped level the playing fields that they've long excelled on.

The three women welcomed in a full crowd to the Beaver Pride Room on Wednesday, February 1 for a Title IX speaker panel. The event ran in conjunction with National Girls & Women in Sports Day and was hosted by the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, The Bemidji State Alumni & Foundation and Disbrow, a freshman on the BSU women's track and field team, has faced battles of her own. In addition to competing as a female athlete, she called the color of her skin another barrier that she faces. That, paired with a broken ankle that sidelined her for an extended period of time, caused her to grapple with her identity. Ultimately, Disbrow learned that she's more than an athlete and found purpose outside of her sport. While Title IX promises equal opportunity within the arena, Disbrow's desires to extend to wanting support off the field -- a support that's anything but performance-based.

For McRae, Bemidji High School's activities
Title IX, which was passed into law in 1972, prevent discrimination based on sex in federally funded programs and activities.

Terres-Sobieck starred for the Bemidji State women's hockey team from 2014-18 and now patrols the bench as an assistant for the program. Before she returned to coach at the Sanford Center, however, her playing career carried her overseas. Terres-Sobieck skated in Germany for the Dutsche Fruaeneishockeyliga, the country's top women's hockey league, yet she also departed from the promises of Title IX once she crossed the U.S. border. In Germany, Terres-Sobieck racked up 47 goals and 29 assists in 51 games. But despite her successes, and despite her male counterparts living off their earnings, Terres-Sobieck needed other employment to earn a living.

University of Nebraska, her team ate meals in the dorms, but the men's program ate in a specific dining center with extra nutritional resources to ensure peak performance. Finally, the NCAA swooped in and started questioning the imbalance. Shortly thereafter, the dining center opened up to female athletes to allow them better ability to form nutritional plans of their own -- a textbook example of how Title IX is supposed to look.

As the three shared their experiences throughout the panel -- with BSU athletic director and panel moderator Britt Lauritsen even chiming in with her own expertise from time to time -- attendees got a glimpse of the progress that's been made and the work that's still to be done. All three panelists strongly emphasized support -- going to girls and women's sporting events, sharing highlights on social media and encouraging athletes on a job well done -- as key components toward continued headway.

TIME FOR SELF CARE

NEED TO KNOW RESOURCES
JOIN AN EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP

Please click the button below for the group you are interested in joining, or reach out to affirmativeaction@bemidjistate.edu with any additional questions:

- 2SLGBTQIA+
- Employees of Color
- Employees with Disabilities
- Employees with Young Children

CONNECT WITH US

Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Important Emergency Contacts
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We recognize that mental health is just as important as physical health. Check out Therapy Assistance Online (TAO)!
Scan the code or click here
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Anti-racism – Resource Center: D2L
(Employee sign on required)

Scan the code or click here

Together we can! Together we will!

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