



TRANSFORMING LIVES – Documentary Films of Women Leading Change

Project Overview

Transforming Lives is an interview and documentary film project which focuses on women's leadership contributions, with a special emphasis on women who are redefining success and taking on new challenges, both locally and globally.

The purpose of Transforming Lives project is to inspire and empower women of all ages to make positive change in their own lives, in their communities, in our state, nation and the world. This educational initiative is a significant opportunity for Rutgers undergraduate students in the IWL Leadership Scholars Certificate Program to learn about leadership from women who are working to make social change and to gain an understanding of the use of media as a vital tool for making social change in the 21st century.

Through the compelling vehicle of documentary storytelling, the Transforming Lives Project addresses women's leadership issues such as: What does women's leadership look like? How are women changing our state, our country, and our world? How can we prepare future generations of women leaders to take responsibility for social change? How do choices made along women's life paths affect their potential for success and the capacity of our state to benefit from their talents? How can women empower one another to strive for leadership? How and why should women connect across differences to work for better communities, schools, and workplaces?

The Transforming Lives project represents a variety of fields and interests. The project considers women's leadership achievements in health, science, business, sports, social and community services, philanthropy, education, media, the arts, human rights, law and government. The project includes women in formal positional leadership, as well as in informal community or grassroots leadership.

A Conversation with Alison: An interview with former IWL Director

Olivia Cruzar

Sasha Taner

Sasha interviewed IWL Director, Alison R. Bernstein, at the Rutgers Gardens at the start of her tenure at Rutgers. Bernstein elucidates on her past successes, family, and future vision for Rutgers and the Institute for Women's Leadership. This film was made as a special tribute to Alison in memoriam.

Changing Social Relations: An interview with Sandra Harding

Maggy Fread, Krystina Matos, Olivia Crusier

Maggy and Krystina interviewed American philosopher and senior scholar in feminist theory, Sandra Harding to help commemorate Douglass Residential College's centennial. Harding, a Rutgers alum, has changed the way we think about how knowledge is produced. This film brings to light issues around women's education, social justice, as well as sharing candid reflections on Harding's college years at Rutgers.

From The Inside, Out: A Lifetime of Activism, Bonnie Kerness

Beth Breslaw

Beth interviewed Bonnie Kerness, founder and coordinator of the Prison Watch Project at the American Friends Service Committee. She then edited the interview into an eight-minute documentary that provides an outlet for education on the criminal justice system in the US and engages the viewer by problematizing notions of imprisonment, human rights and activism.

Christine Todd Whitman: the Politics of Femininity

Justine Del Gaudio

Justine conducted an interview with former New Jersey Governor, Christine Todd Whitman, and her eight-minute documentary focuses on women's leadership in politics and elective office. The film highlights Whitman's consideration of the challenges that women face in politics, as well as the unique insights and value they bring to the political arena.

Answering the Call, Billie Jean King

Rebecca Granet

Rebecca interviewed Billie Jean King, professional women's tennis legend, found of the Women's Tennis Association, the Women's Sports Foundation, and owner of World Team Tennis. Being a tennis player herself, Rebecca received an opportunity of a lifetime to interview her idol Billie Jean King. Rebecca then produced a touching short film which reflects on King's life, fight for equal rights for women, and the perseverance of the human spirit.

Leading Through the Hoops: Coach C. Vivian Stringer

Vanity Jenkins

Vanity conducted an interview with Rutgers women's basketball coach C. Vivian Stringer. From her interview with the Basketball Hall of Fame member, she created an eight-minute documentary that focuses on women's leadership in sports and other arenas. Their dialogue includes reflections on ways that women of all ages lead.

Why Women Take the Streets: An Interview with Adrienne Germaine

Nadia Khan

Nadia interviewed Adrienne Germain, Senior advisor and former President of the International Women's Health Coalition. Germain frames the importance of reproductive and sexual health as a human rights issue and offers an insightful and moving look at the lives of the women she has had a part in changing.

Iran, the Women's Voice: An Interview with Mahnaz Afkami

Hera Mir

Hera interviewed Mahnaz Afkhami, former Minister of Women's Affairs in Iran and founder and director of Women's Learning Partnership. Hera edited the filmed interview into a seven-minute documentary about Afkhami's life and career as a woman leader working for women's rights.

Leadership through Environmental Artwork: The Re-greening Project

Alexandra Pacia

Alex conducted an interview with the New Jersey environmentalist artist, Patricia Bretano. She then created an eight-minute documentary that presents Patricia Bretano's unique views and experiences as an artist and a woman leader who promotes environmentalism.

Pa' Lante Siempre Pa' Lante: An Interview with Marien Casillas Pabellon

Lesley Pairol

Lesley interviewed Marien Casillas Pabellon, the leader of the New Labor organization in New Brunswick. Lesley turned the raw footage into a four minute documentary that brings to light Casillas Pabellon's vision and achievements as well as some of issues faced by the immigrant workers from New Brunswick.

Cheryl Clarke: The Project of Transformation

Nicholas Salazar

Mariah Eppes

Cheryl Clarke was a Dean of Students at Rutgers University and is a renowned Black, lesbian poet. Cheryl Clarke was the founder of the Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities at Rutgers University. Her life and work resonates with social justice advocates through her unabashed examination of the intersections of race, sexuality and gender.

Believing in Change: The Charlotte Bunch Project

Suzan Sanal

As part of the *Transforming Lives* documentary film project, Suzan conducted an interview with women's rights activist and Founding Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers, Charlotte Bunch. She then edited the interview to create an eight-minute documentary. Ms.

Sanal's inspiring film tells the story of this important human rights activist, through the eyes of a young woman leader who is an activist herself.

Continuum of Leadership: Mary S. Hartman

Nancy Santucci

Nancy conducted an interview with Mary S. Hartman, historian, founding director of the Institute for Women's Leadership, and former Dean of Douglass College. Her film explores Hartman's views on women's leadership, women's education, and her own career path and life choices. This stirring documentary highlights intergenerational transmission of leadership, and considers the history of U.S. feminism and its relevance to women's leadership.

Desi Feministing: Blogs and Politics, Samhita Mukhopadhyay

Arabelle Sicardi

Arabelle interviewed Samhita Mukhopadhyay, Executive Editor of Feministing.com and author of *Outdated: Why Dating is Ruining Your Love Life*. Arabelle is a blogger herself and close follower of Samhita's work. After traveling to Brooklyn to interview Samhita, Arabelle edited the footage into a documentary short, which highlights new age feminist movements.

An Interview with Dr. Gloria Bachmann

Fariha Siddiqui

Fariha interviewed Dr. Gloria Bachmann, M.D., Director and Associate Dean of Women's Health institute at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Dr. Bachmann is an incredibly-influential researcher in the field of maternity and reproductive services as well as a pioneer in the area of sexual health.

Taking Flight: The Story of Faith Ringgold

Karin Zahavi

Karin conducted an interview with artist, activist, and storyteller Faith Ringgold. Karin edited the footage to create an eight-minute documentary piece profiling the centrality of narrative and life experience in Ringgold's artwork. Karin's film will serve to inspire and empower women of all ages to make positive changes in their own lives and communities, and to create.

A Journey Woman, Cathy Stanford

Anna Zailik,

Anna conducted an interview with Catherine Stanford, union staff member, cultural anthropologist, Vice-President of the nonprofit Who is My Neighbor Inc, and board member of New Jersey Citizen Action, Cathy Stanford. Anna turned the raw footage into an eight-minute documentary film that demonstrates Cathy Stanford's passion for social justice, anti-racism, and feminist peace.

A Documentary Interview with Alison Bechdel

Mimi Zander

Mimi conducted an interview with Alison Bechdel, a cartoonist and celebrated author who redefined what it means to produce comics. Mimi turned the raw footage into an eight-minute documentary film that serves as an historical record of the quiet, contemplative leadership that resides within artists such as Bechdel.