

Letter from the Director

Dear Friends of 4W,

Fall of 2018 marks the fourth year of the 4W Women and Wellbeing Initiative. We are pleased to have developed a program that fosters leadership, brings research to practice to improve wellbeing, and establishes UW-Madison as a leading voice for women and wellbeing.

Our 4W leaders come from a broad array of schools and colleges with nearly all units represented. The 4W Leadership Circle is a generative space for faculty to work across disciplinary boundaries, support each other, and bring research to practice in ways that complement and go beyond what is possible in an academic department. A 2017 evaluation of 4W included interviews with program leaders and faculty. “I would not be doing this without my colleagues from the 4W Circle,” was the common refrain. It is our strategic priority to continue to support this Circle and increase our small grants program and other opportunities for collaboration for faculty and scholars, and to focus our outreach on new faculty. Providing resources and a welcoming network can offset institutional biases related to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, and ability, and will enable UW-Madison to lead the way in higher education efforts to foster equity and inclusion.



Lori DiPrete Brown, 4W Initiative Director

We have launched a number of new 4W Projects. Our STREETS program, which addresses exploitation related to human trafficking for sex, is working on advocacy and policy both in Wisconsin and around the world. Our Global Artisans Initiative is now working in five countries. Our MORE project is fostering financial skills that support wellbeing and fulfillment. In partnership with the Rotary Club of Madison, we are helping thousands of girls stay in school with an intervention that includes feminine menstrual hygiene, reproductive health education, and microenterprise. We continue to develop new programs in areas where there is an important need, the potential for impact at scale, and expertise to lead the effort among UW faculty and staff.

The 4W Summit, offered in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin Women’s & Gender Studies Consortium, and with the sponsorship of many campus units, brings leading global voices to UW-Madison and brings scholars together from Wisconsin and beyond. This event inspires, challenges, and nourishes all who attend. We aim to develop this program over time as a place where emerging leaders from Wisconsin and around the world are recognized and given a voice, and we hope to increase accessibility through scholarships and free sessions.

The opportunities for women in our world today are as great as the challenges. We who are involved with 4W—faculty, staff, students, supporters, and community partners—find hope, joy, and purpose in this shared work. We proceed with the awareness that we ourselves are a work in progress. We aim to grow in our ability to place the lived experiences of women and historically marginalized people at the center of our concerns. It is by directing the assets of UW-Madison toward these concerns that we make life better for women, make the world better for all, and provide an example of the ways in which higher education can engage in transformative societal change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori DiPrete Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lori DiPrete Brown
Director, 4W Initiative