

2026 Impact Report



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY
Flora Stone Mather
Center for Women

As the Flora Stone Mather Center for Women's first faculty director, I want to express my gratitude to our many friends and supporters. Your passion, commitment, and energy sustains and inspires our work to build a vibrant CWRU community. Every day, I see the positive impact that the Center has on our students, faculty, and staff: supporting their academic and professional goals, providing opportunities to build new connections and relationships; and sparking innovative research and creative projects.

During the 2025–26 academic year, the Flora Stone Mather Center for Women embarked on an exciting new phase in its 22-year history. Now under the Office of the Provost, the Center seeks to catalyze interdisciplinary scholarship across the university's academic units by supporting and elevating innovative research through a feminist lens. Retaining our commitment to enhancing undergraduate student life, the Mather Center is expanding opportunities for faculty, graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and staff to engage with its work.

This report showcases our many accomplishments during this year of growth and rebuilding. As we look ahead, the Mather Center strives to be a national leader in research around gender equity, while also supporting students, faculty, and staff on our campus through leadership and professional development opportunities, community building, and violence prevention.

Very best wishes,

Justine Howe
Faculty Director



Research and Scholarship



Department of Justice Grant Summary Brief

In the summer of 2025 the Center achieved the final goals of its Department of Justice Office for Violence Against Women Campus Program grant. This year, we published a research brief that shares the work we accomplished under that funding, and illustrates where we plan to go with our violence prevention and response work in the future.

Grants

Our grant program this year supported more than 15 students, faculty, and staff across CWRU to facilitate professional development and support a wide range of research projects in bioethics, art history, and social work, among others. With Mather Center support, students traveled to conferences such as the Eastern Sociological Society, the National Society of Black Engineers, and the International Congress of Medieval Studies.



Sociology PhD student Kate Freeman and psychology undergraduate student Cristiana Miele present at the Eastern Sociological Society on their research using TikTok.



Cognitive science undergraduate Kit Shiells presents at the Health Humanities consortium about frontline caregivers.

Conferences

Our staff traveled widely this year! In July 2025, advocate Emma Getz presented “Power, Control, and Choking: What Students Need to Know About Strangulation” at the National Organization for Victim Advocacy (NOVA) conference, while advocate Megan Sharp attended Two Days in May through the Ohio Attorney General’s office on a scholarship! In January 2026, Emma and Megan braved chilly Chicago for the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Strategies conference. In August 2025, associate director Hannah Regan presented at the American Sociological Association conference on gender and breadwinning, a project begun with a group of undergraduate researchers in the Mather Center.



Advocate Megan Sharp at Two Days in May

Violence Prevention & Response

Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Domestic Violence Awareness Month

We continued our annual programming for Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October and Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April. Our kickoff events highlighted campus and community resources, showcased educational offerings, and provided the opportunity for the CWRU community to meet our advocates and learn about their work.

Advocates Emma Getz and Megan Sharp at Domestic Violence Awareness Month kickoff with partners from across campus.



The 2025-2026 Peer Education team at Sexual Assault Awareness Month Kickoff

Peer Educators

Our Peer Education team continues to be a great campus resource, providing provide educational workshops to many of our student groups. They also created new tabling activities to engage students in community spaces and planned events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month around self-care and well-being.

Advocacy

Our two full-time advocates supported students, faculty and staff on campus. Awareness of their services continue to increase, thanks in part to close partnerships with the Office of Equity and CWRU Police, as well as through word of mouth about their excellent work. The advocates provide survivors with essential guidance on Title IX processes, as well as working with local justice systems and connecting campus members with community resources.

By The Numbers

RESEARCH

+\$25,000

in grant funding given to over 15 faculty, staff and students

VIOLENCE PREVENTION
AND RESPONSE

70 students, faculty and staff served this year by the advocates

Student Programs

The Women's Coalition

This year, 14 student organizations participated in the Women's Coalition. Together, the Coalition members planned 10 events for Women's History Month, ranging from Jeopardy nights to an escape room. Events showcased women's health issues, STEM programming and the arts, while bringing people across campus together for fun and educational experiences. We are grateful to our graduating executive board members, especially Coalition President Kianna Verdugo!



Graduating Coalition Executive Board Members

Graduate Student Programs

The Mather Center hosted two writing retreats for graduate students in the fall and spring, which brought in more than 20 attendees to make progress on their various writing projects. During Graduate Student Appreciation Week, we hosted the "Mather Cafe," featuring the Cleveland Espresso mobile coffee shop. Graduate students from many disciplines and departments were able to meet and support each other in their work.



MeTooCWRU hosted a 5K during Women's History Month to fundraise for the Journey Center for Safety and Healing and Cleveland Rape Crisis Center.

"This was a wonderful opportunity to be in a welcoming and productive space to work on my first-author paper. I enjoyed being around others, which helped with accountability. I also enjoyed the breakfast and lunch sessions because I met new people and learned about their research, goals and challenges. It was a space that radiated support and empathy."

Cassandra López, second-year PhD student in communication sciences, on the Graduate Writing Retreat

STUDENT PROGRAMS

14 organizations in the women's coalition planned 10 events for Women's History Month

FACULTY/STAFF PROGRAMS

6 graduates from the MSLDI program

50+ faculty attended our 2025-26 programs

Faculty and Staff Programs

Faculty Programs

This year, we continued to grow our relationship with faculty on campus. We welcomed faculty back with a wine and cheese reception in the fall, and celebrated the holidays by making garlands with the Upcycle Parts Shop, using all recycled supplies. In May, we hosted Scholars to Storytellers, which guided faculty members through the process of writing trade publications based on their academic work.



Faculty members
Jue Liang and Alanna Cooper
from the Department of Religious
Studies work on their garlands

Mather Staff Leadership Development Institute (MSLDI)

We graduated a new cohort of staff members from the Mather Staff Leadership Development Institute this year! Program participants came from Audit Services all the way up to the Office of Community and Government Relations, and everywhere in between. Staff members worked on their personal career plans while reflecting on leadership and supervisory styles, exploring higher education as an institution, and building relationships across the university.



MSLDI
Graduation

Writing Through The Dark

In the fall, we hosted Dr. Michele Berger, director of the Baker-Nord Institute for the Humanities. Her story collection, *Doll Seed*, was released in 2024.

Dr. Berger joined us for a book reading and discussion of themes of race and gender in speculative fiction.



Dr. Michele Berger

A New Vision

For 2026–27, the Mather Center will roll out several exciting initiatives and pilot programs, while enhancing our longstanding commitment to violence prevention on campus and in the wider community in Northeast Ohio:

- An expanded grants program with opportunities for students to contribute to faculty research projects;
- Professional development and writing support for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars;
- Reimagined workshops and programming for violence prevention;
- Thematic events for faculty to build interdisciplinary connections and collaborations;
- New community partnerships;
- And more!

We look forward to sharing our new programs (while keeping many aspects of the Center that are successful and beloved) in the coming months. Mather Center programs and opportunities are open to university community members regardless of sex or gender. To make sure you get all the latest updates, please be sure you're subscribed to our newsletter and connected with us on social media!

2026–27 Theme: Visibility

The Center's annual theme, Visibility, centers important questions about perception, presence, and power. Whose perspectives and experiences do we celebrate and amplify? Which stories do we remember—and which narratives have been rendered invisible? As we confront urgent social questions, which problems capture our attention and garner our resources? The Center will interrogate the political and social implications of visibility, from the knowledge that we create, to the validation that we all desire, and to practices of exposure and surveillance that have come to define our media environment. The theme will connect all areas of the Mather Center's work this year, exploring topics such as gender and big data; the (in)visibility of survivors and healing from trauma; the “hidden” curriculum of academia; health issues such as menopause and endometriosis; and more. We look forward to sharing our full slate of programs, including a keynote speaker, in early fall.





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Save the Date

Flora Awards 2026

October 23,
Luncheon and
Awards Ceremony

Looking to make an impact?

Consider making a donation to the Flora Stone Mather Center for Women. Your tax-deductible gift helps support our mission to catalyze innovative, interdisciplinary scholarship and encourage creative inquiry across a wide range of academic disciplines.



Scan the QR code
to learn more about
supporting the center.