

Women's Leadership Center advisory board to meet with faculty, staff and students

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The Alfred University Women's Leadership Center Advisory Board will be seeking comments from students, faculty and staff on the Women's Leadership Center, which is scheduled to open this fall. Christine Kulp, a 1971 alumna and president of the Alumni Council, is chair of the University Collaborations subcommittee of the Women's Leadership Center Advisory Board and will be presiding at the sessions. Women's Studies faculty will be meeting with the advisory board at 9 a.m. Tuesday in the Kenyon-Allen Room. Students are invited to meet with the board at 10 a.m. in the Powell Campus Center board room, and University faculty and staff will meet at 11 a.m. in the Kenyon-Allen Room. "We are excited about the work that has been done so far, and we're looking forward to discussing it with the Alfred University community," said Kathy Woughter, interim vice president for Student Affairs and director of the Career Development Center. A \$250,000 gift from an Alfred University alumna is funding the startup of a Women's Leadership Center - "dedicated to promoting the intellectual and social growth of Alfred University's women students" - on the AU campus. The creation of the center is an appropriate step for Alfred University, which was the first co-educational institution in New York State, and only the second in the nation. While other early co-educational colleges and universities required women to take a separate curriculum from men, from the beginning Alfred University had men and women in the same courses. The funds from the gift will be used to hire a director and implement programming to help AU's women students "realize their full potential, personally and professionally." The Women's Leadership Center will be housed in space being renovated in The Commons, adjacent to Openhym Residence Hall. Creation of a Women's Leadership Center has long been a goal of the Women's Studies faculty. Alfred University has offered an interdisciplinary Women's Studies minor since 1981. Founded in 1836, Alfred University has always encouraged not only women's education, but also the opportunity for women to work. Jonathan Allen, the University's second president, once said, "I cannot see why, if woman has a mind, it was given her to be cramped and dwarfed and starved." "Woman is knocking at college doors for admission," Allen said, "Many colleges have slammed their doors in her face." Abigail Allen, Jonathan Allen's wife, shared her husband's vision of educational equality at Alfred. She believed that men and women alike must work to challenge the limits set by society and institution. A revolutionary woman of her time, Abigail Allen's contributions are still honored by university students and faculty today with an annual award to an alumna, a student and a faculty member who strong advocate for women's issues.