Give the Gift of Membership

Dear Members,

Thanks to you, our members, the ECU Women's Roundtable has made a great impact at East Carolina University in 2014! As we reflect on the gifts we've received this past year and consider sharing that tradition, the Women's Roundtable invites you to give the gift of membership. This is one gift that will make a difference in the lives of many.

Your membership has enabled us to grow from an idea into a vibrant alumni community with more than 250 members whose philanthropy has made a noticeable impact. As you will read in the newsletter below, our support of ECU's Access Scholarship program has reached an apex this year. We are making a difference!

You have an opportunity to shape ECU's future for the women who follow in your path in pursuit of an East Carolina University education! Please visit ECU's secure online donation form to renew your tax-deductible Women's Roundtable membership and sponsor a new member this year. Click here to view member levels. Or you may submit your gift of membership by mail, by downloading the attached commitment form and mailing along with your payment by check or credit card to the address provided.

Sincerely,

Valeria Lassiter, Chair
Stephanie Bunn, Director of Women's Philanthropy and Constituent Development

New Class of Leaders Join Women's Roundtable Board

The Women's Roundtable Board of Directors welcomed seven new alumnae and friends to its ranks during the October 4, 2014 meeting.

These accomplished women were nominated to serve by their peers and recommended to the board by the Nominating Committee. Each new board member will serve a four-year term.

Board members attend fall and spring Board meetings, support the mission of the Women's Roundtable with annual contributions, participate in programs and serve on a standing and/or ad hoc committee.
Kelsey Waterfield

Kelsey Waterfield is a senior at East Carolina University with plans to become a substance abuse counselor. She is majoring in rehabilitation services with a minor in alcohol and drug studies. Waterfield plans to complete an internship in a substance abuse services program in the spring, followed by enrollment in ECU’s substance abuse and clinical counseling master’s degree program.

A committed volunteer, Waterfield tutors in many subjects such as math, history and English and is a member of the Cornerstone Baptist Church Leadership Academy. She volunteers with the Adoptable Companion Animals of North Carolina, a rescue organization seeking suitable homes for adoptable animals. Sometimes she helps by fostering animals until homes can be found.

Waterfield, recipient of the ECU Women’s Roundtable Kay Chalk Access Scholarship, said she is always grateful for the support of the Women’s Roundtable. "Without the scholarship, I would not be where I am today," she said. "It was a major factor in my selecting ECU."

She also enjoys the networking opportunities offered by the Women’s Roundtable. "So many women in the group have reached out to me, offering help or connections for my career," she said.

For additional information about service on the Women's Roundtable Board of Directors, contact Director of Women's Philanthropy Stephanie Bunn at bunns@ecu.edu or 252-328-9597.

First Full-time Director of Women's Philanthropy Hired

Increased engagement translates to greater impact at East Carolina University. That's the concept behind Stephanie Bunn's objective to renew current members' affiliation and attract additional members to the ECU Women's Roundtable in the coming years.

As the first full-time director of Women's Philanthropy at East Carolina University, Bunn believes that adding members will result in higher participation, amongst women in campus leadership and more alumnae making a difference for deserving ECU students.

"We would especially like to connect with more of ECU's influential female constituents and provide a channel for involvement in the overall leadership of the university," Bunn said. Young alumnae, she added, might enjoy the opportunities for networking offered by the Women's Roundtable, as a pathway for moving forward into positions of leadership in their careers and communities.

"The Women's Roundtable wants to continue its strong tradition of legacy and service at East Carolina University," Bunn added.

Bunn brings significant experience in philanthropy and university development to her current role. She has worked at ECU since 2008, most recently in the Office of Development and Communications in the College of Education. She served the Department of Alumni Relations for over four years - as assistant director for alumni programs from 2009 to 2012 and as program and marketing assistant from 2008 to 2009.

A 2005 graduate of North Carolina State University, Bunn holds a bachelor's degree in art and design and a bachelor's in visual arts applications. She is active in the Greenville Junior Women's Association, currently serving as past president. Her experiences with that organization, Bunn said, served to enforce her awareness of "the powerful force that women's organizations can be for communities and the great impact they can have."
“It’s nice to know that there are so many women at ECU, in Greenville, in North Carolina and throughout the country that I have a connection with, by virtue of being a Pirate and a member of the ECU Women's Roundtable.”

Member Spotlight

Featured alumna Nicole Kloss ’02 and event attendee Brandon Collier ’99 pose for a photo at the Alumni Networking Reception in Charlotte.

Nicole Kloss ’02

New Women’s Roundtable Board Member Nicole Kloss ’02 was a featured alumna at the East Carolina Alumni Association Alumni Networking Reception at Queen City Q in Charlotte, NC on Tuesday, November 11.

Nicole networked with fellow alumni; spoke about her involvement with the Women’s Roundtable and responded to questions from a group of nearly 40 East Carolina alumni and friends.

During her time at ECU, Nicole was active with Club Volleyball and served as president. As a student, she balanced a management position with Hooray Harry’s Bar in Uptown Greenville with volunteering for the Special Olympics and coaching middle school volleyball teams, including the Junior Olympic Volleyball team.

Nicole received her Bachelors of Science degree in Exercise and Sports Science from the College of Health and Human Performance.

Bunn said she is looking forward to developing relationships within the Women’s Roundtable, while implementing strategies that will sustain and build upon the organization’s success.

Mission Accomplished: Kathy Taft Scholarship Endowed

Members of the ECU Women’s Roundtable have completed the Kathy A. Taft Memorial Women’s Roundtable Access Scholarship Endowment.

Valeria Lassiter, chair of The Women’s Roundtable, said the Executive Committee and Board of Directors in 2013 established the sustainability of scholarship support as a major focus. "Thanks to the generous financial contributions of Kathy Taft's family and friends, members of The Women's Roundtable, and its Board of Directors, we successfully completed the Kathy A. Taft Memorial Women's Roundtable Access Scholarship Endowment one year ahead of schedule," she said.

The goal of $125,000 was reached with final dollars being raised through a reception at the chancellor’s residence in April 2014.

This scholarship endowment will provide one Access Scholarship ($5,000) per academic year to a deserving incoming student who demonstrates both financial need and academic potential.

The Access Scholarship program supports a historically underserved but greatly deserving group of ECU students. Since 2008, the Women’s Roundtable has awarded more than $90,000 in Access Scholarships in addition to building the endowment.

The scholarship endowment is named in memory of Kathy Taft, a founding board member of The Women’s Roundtable.

"Reaching the $125,000 goal is something that we were very proud to see happen. Kathy’s daughter and WRT board member, Jessica Gorall, led the way in completing the scholarship endowment," Lassiter added.

"I am truly thankful to all who supported this effort and proud of our members for accomplishing this milestone."

Sister Talk Book Club Celebrates 1-Year Anniversary
Succeeding through kindness was the theme at the fall 2014 Women's Roundtable Sister Talk Book Club meeting, held September 5, 2014 at the home of Steve and Nancy Ballard.

The topic emerged from discussion of the book club's selection, "The Power of Nice: How to Conquer the World with Kindness," by Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval. The authors promote the concept that - despite commonly-accepted practices - success in business arises from treating others with genuine, habitual courtesy.

ECU sociology major and book club member Kenya I.A. Shakir led the discussion. She said the group agreed that a leader does not have "to play dirty" to succeed.

Instead, Shakir said, "Courtesy to even your opponents benefits you," because helping an adversary succeed engenders positive feelings and creates constructive connections with unforeseeable long-term effects.

"You don't know what one small act of kindness can do in the future," Shakir said.

Created one year ago to encourage a dialogue on leadership, the book club holds meetings each semester with a small, intimate group of students and campus leaders including Nancy Ballard, wife of Chancellor Steve Ballard; Valeria Lassiter, chair of the Women's Roundtable; Marcy Romary, interim associate vice chancellor, Alumni Relations; Phyllis Horns, vice chancellor for Health Sciences; and Dr. Virginia Hardy, vice chancellor of Student Affairs.

Nancy Ballard said, "Having the students at the Chancellor’s Residence discussing good books, personal insights, and discoveries, is pure fun and richly gratifying for all of us in the group."

Shakir has been a member of the book club from the start. She said that networking with women in leadership at the university and interacting with fellow student achievers has inspired her to be a better student leader. She applies this inspiration in such roles as resident hall advisor at Greene Hall, co-educational and volunteer coordinator for ECU-WRITES, president of the ASB Committee of Campus Living, and member of Golden Key International Honor Society.

Following her anticipated December 2016 graduation, Shakir plans to pursue a master's degree in student affairs or higher education administration.