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Morrison Bruce Center Fall 2024 Newsletter

Please enjoy these articles written by our undergraduate staff on the Marketing and Development Committee. Our outreach has continued to grow this semester, and we have been so fortunate to have the opportunity to serve those in the surrounding communities. On behalf of our Fall 2024 staff, thank you for your participation in our programs and continued support of the Morrison Bruce Center!

A Note from Our Executive Director

Greetings from the Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) and thank you for taking the time to enjoy our Fall 2025 newsletter. My name is Dr. Cathy McKay, and I'm an Associate Professor in the Kinesiology Department and the new Executive Director of the MBC. Dr. Jill Lassiter, an Assistant Professor in the Health Science Department, joins me on the leadership team, serving as the new Associate Director of the MBC. Dr. Lassiter and I spent the summer transitioning into leadership of the MBC and have hit the ground running this Fall.

The MBC has a strong foundation of excellence, established through the vision, dedication, and leadership of Drs Morrison, Bruce, Flohr, Edwards, and Carson-Sackett since its founding twenty years ago. As we look to the next twenty years, Dr. Lassiter and I are excited to build on this strong foundation, thinking strategically about how the MBC can expand into the R2 institution space (R2/National University Status), especially related to community-driven and interdisciplinary scholarship and service endeavors. JMU's vision is to be the national model for the engaged university, and the work of the MBC brings this engagement to life with a focus on physical and health literacy. I hope you enjoy reading about our Fall 2024 programs and events. Wishing everyone a relaxing and joyful holiday season!

With gratitude,

Catherine McKay

Cathy McKay, Ed.D, CAPE, Executive Director of the Morrison Bruce Center



Dr. Jill Lassiter (left) and Dr. Cathy McKay (right)

The Flohr Scholarship

Dr. Judi Flohr had a vision to honor two outstanding faculty who made such a difference in the lives of women at Madison, in the community and nationally. The Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) just celebrated its 20th Anniversary reflecting Dr. Flohr's vision of continued support and research into the health and wellness of women and girls. And now it is our turn to honor Dr. Flohr by supporting her scholarship - Dr. Judith A. Flohr Endowed Scholarship for Graduate Studies in Exercise Science. Please join us in honoring Dr. Flohr with a gift to the Flohr scholarship, by clicking the "Give Now" button at the end of this page and selecting the appropriate designation for your donation.



Wellness Table Events

Julia Ritter, MBC Intern

This semester, the Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) has dedicated significant time and effort to improving its marketing strategies and outreach within the JMU community. We were able to accomplish this through hosting two

marketing wellness table events, one at the JMU Faculty and Staff Wellness Fair and another for JMU students on the Warner Commons, outside of D-Hall. Our tabling event at Warner Commons was a popular one amongst both our MBC staff and JMU students, with 139 JMU students reached during our two-hour tabling time. The focus during this event was stress management, as the semester ended, and finals were approaching. At the Faculty and Staff Wellness Fair, we reached over fifty staff members, providing educational resources related to stress management, nutrition, and physical activity. Our wellness table events provided fun and interactive activities, educational resources, and take-home prizes. Through future tabling events, we hope to continue promoting self-care and wellness for the JMU community, as well as to highlight the great work of the MBC.



Families in Motion

Julia Ritter, MBC Intern

Families in Motion (FIM) is an annual event held in collaboration with the Virginia Preschool Initiative and the JMU Young Children's Program, where the Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) brings exciting fitness and nutrition learning activities for children and caregivers to participate in together, creating an evening of movement and fun. The goal of FIM is to inspire and challenge families to find ways to stay active together, while highlighting the importance of movement and nutrition in a lively and enjoyable setting. Amy Taylor, the Director of the Young Children's Program, shared, "My favorite part about Families in Motion is that it brings parents together with their children to showcase the skills the children are learning while in school. It helps educate the children and their families regarding the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices." Daniela Soria from the Virginia Preschool Initiative, shared her excitement leading up to our FIM winter event stating, "The families that were present last year had so much fun getting active with their parents by

doing different activities with the students that were organizing the event. I cannot thank the MBC enough for being willing to come to our building to promote healthy habits to our families.” Her feedback highlights the positive impact that the program has had so far, and the continuous effort to engage even more families in the future!



EmpowHER

Jesse Frey, MBC Intern

EmpowHER is a strength training program hosted by the Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) for the JMU community. The goal of EmpowHER is to uplift, encourage, and empower women by guiding them through weekly resistance exercise sessions so that they are equipped with the confidence and skills to navigate the gym independently. Jeanette Zyko, a third-year participant, shared that she enjoys, "Seeing how I gain strength over the course of the semester and building confidence/courage to lift weights. Also, the camaraderie with participants and the students leading the classes!" are among her favorite things. Jeanette would recommend EmpowHER to all faculty, staff, and students, "no matter what their level of fitness is!" Other participants remark on how positive the atmosphere is. Kayla Corey, a second-year participant, states: "My favorite thing about it is not only the workouts, but the workout environment. All the ladies are fabulous and energetic and friendly and it's a really lovely space to push yourself. It's a commitment which helps the showing up aspect of working out." She

recommends EmpowHER as a great resource for women looking to feel belongingness in a gym community.



20th Anniversary

Jesse Frey, MBC Intern

The Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) proudly celebrated its 20th anniversary on November 2, 2024, with a gathering of former and present MBC staff, participants, and supporters. Dr. Liz Edwards, Academic Unit Head for the JMU Kinesiology Department and former executive director of the MBC, reflected on the program's evolution, sharing, "The MBC started with one program, back in 2004, that was geared only towards alumnae of JMU. Now we serve girls and women across the whole lifespan, from preschoolers to women aged 90+." Dr. Edwards highlighted why having Dr. Flohr, the founder of the MBC, at the event was so special: "Dr. Flohr is the reason we're all here. While Drs. Morrison and Bruce did incredible work, it was Dr. Flohr who would not let this idea die – even when told no on multiple occasions." Dr. Cathy McKay, the new executive director of the MBC, shared her thoughts on the reunions' significance, sharing, "The MBC has touched the lives of hundreds of program participants, undergraduate students, staff members, graduate students, faculty, and alumni. It was special to see such a wide variety of stakeholders represented at the 20th anniversary event, and to celebrate the impact of the MBC together."



Healthy Kids

Cyann McDaniel, MBC Intern

The Healthy Kids program is a year-long collaboration between the Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) and JMU's Young Children's Program (YCP). The MBC staff provide pre-school children with lessons about nutrition, locomotor, and object control skills through engaging activities that foster healthy lifestyle habits. The nutrition lessons are designed to inform young children about the importance of various food groups and their connection to overall health and wellness. The motor development lessons review fundamental motor skills through age-appropriate activities which reinforce efficient movement production through safe and fun tasks. These motor skills include running, sliding, galloping, horizontal jumping, hopping, kicking, overhand throwing, underhand rolling, and catching. Amy Taylor the Director of YCP said "Children absolutely love having the healthy kids program. Teachers enjoy it as well!"



Spring Semester Program Overview

Cyann McDaniel, MBC Intern

The Morrison Bruce Center (MBC) will have a busy spring semester with programs that include Older Women's Wellness for Life (O.W.W.L), Movin' & Groovin' Day, Girls Have H.E.A.R.T., Gus Bus Family Engagement Nights, as well as our reoccurring programs EmpowHER, Healthy Kids, and Marketing, Research, & Development. We will welcome 14 new undergraduate student staff members and welcome back 3 returning students to help run these amazing programs. O.W.W.L. is a daylong event for women ages 55 and older that includes various fitness and health assessments, the development of individualized fitness plans, and informative workshops on health and wellness domains. Movin' & Groovin' Day is a one-day outreach event that is tailored toward girls in grades K-8 in the Harrisonburg community. This event aims to empower young girls to make healthy lifestyle choices and includes a morning full of fun activities to learn about various aspects of health and wellness. The MBC has also partnered with Gus Bus, a literacy and academic enrichment program serving young children in the Harrisonburg area to promote physical activity among families who are already involved with the Gus Bus program. We also provide a 10-week running program for girls in 3rd through 5th grade called Girls Have H.E.A.R.T. Through this program we aim to encourage healthy eating habits, promote self-efficacy, and foster non-competitive physical activity through fun, interactive activities. We are excited for what the spring semester holds and hope you will be able to join us for one or more of our exciting programs. Follow

us on Instagram and Facebook @morrisonbrucecenter to see how these programs are going throughout the semester. Finally, as we say goodbye to the fall semester, please join us in thanking our awesome student staff, pictured below.



Giving to The Morrison Bruce Center

Gifts help the Center to be able to continue its mission of offering innovative and enjoyable physical activity programs for girls and women of all ages. Please consider donating to the Center by clicking the "Give Now" button below.

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