

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Texas Women in Higher Education Announces 2023 Leadership Development Grant Recipients

DALLAS, Texas – Texas Women in Higher Education (TWHE) has announced the recipients of their 2023 Leadership Development Grant, given to only four women state-wide. TWHE leadership development grants are designed to support women in higher education in Texas as they pursue opportunities for advancement and professional growth. Recipients will each pursue individual projects that will support their goals, then will attend the TWHE conference in Denton, Texas, in March 2023. The recipients are Rebecca Morrow, Ph.D., Tarleton State University; Heidi Rushing, M.A., Austin College; Tammie Williams, DNP, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, CNE, Texas Christian University; and Qinghua Yang, Ph.D., Texas Christian University.



Rebecca L. Morrow, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Tarleton State University. Her project will be to create a writing accountability community for faculty at Tarleton State, in order to help participants complete papers for publication, a necessary step in the faculty tenure and promotion process. “I have heard many women who are struggling like me to balance teaching, research, and service in order to obtain tenure and promotion. We have struggled to protect time on our calendars for research, to schedule out tasks of research in realistic ways, and to feel like part of a community. This group will allow us to achieve our writing goals, and provide a leadership opportunity for me at Tarleton” says Morrow.



Tammie S. Williams, DNP, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, CNE is an Assistant Professor of Professional Practice in the Texas Christian University Harris College of Nursing and Health Practice. Her project targets the intersection of public health and the environment, bringing together a coalition of community-based organizations, the local parks and recreation department, and nursing and health care students to assist in the clean-up and restoration of a local park. The project aim is to improve air quality and decrease water pollution, thereby creating an environment for socialization and recreation among community members, leading to better health outcomes. The project will give Williams the opportunity to apply new knowledge and skills that she gained from the Climate Health Organizing Fellowship as well as provide evidence of her professional executive leadership skills.



Qinghua Yang, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Texas Christian University also works in the public health sphere. She has been invited to give a talk at PRISM (Promoting Research in Social Media and Health Symposium), an annual conference focused on social media and public health research, and will use the grant to attend the pre-conference activities and participate in mock interviews with program officers from the National Institute of Health (NIH), a major funding source for the type of research she conducts. Yang hopes that this exposure will help

her secure funding for future research and “be conducive to my goal of becoming a leading health communication scholar.”



Heidi Rushing, M.A., is currently the Assistant Director of Marketing and Public Affairs at Austin College. She will use the grant to join the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and to attend their Higher Education Educators Academy Summit in order to learn more about best practices and current trends in public relations for higher ed. Rushing will be stepping into the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer role at Austin College starting in January 2023, and says “My leadership aspirations are already coming to fruition, and this professional development opportunity will allow me to take that next step feeling confident and well prepared for this aspect of the job. Especially at a smaller institution, you can start to feel like you are operating in a closed loop, so joining and participating in a professional organization for my field will help me broaden my view.” She continued, “my hope is to take

what I learn at PRSA and help the staff and faculty at my institution who have thoughts of becoming public intellectuals achieve their goals as well.”

The leadership development grant is administered by Abigail Tilton, Ph.D., Dean in the College of Arts & Sciences at Texas Woman’s University, and Martinella Dryburgh, Ph.D., the Leslie B. Crane Chair of Leadership Studies and Associate Professor of Business Administration at Austin College. According to Dryburgh, President-Elect of TWHE, the organization is re-vamping the Leadership Development Grant program after a hiatus, with a goal of gaining momentum for women in higher education leadership, in tandem with the national organization American Council on Education and their Moving the Needle Initiative. Texas Women in Higher Education (TWHE) is dedicated to developing, advancing, and supporting women employed at colleges and universities across the state of Texas. Unlike organizations focused on one area of responsibility, TWHE serves women in all sectors of higher education—public and private, university and community college—working in all areas of their institutions.

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