



2023

PROGRAM

WISE 6TH ANNUAL WOMEN ON WELLNESS RETREAT

SCHEDULE

- 8:00 – 8:45** Registration & Breakfast (Lyceum - 3rd floor Science Center)
- 8:45 – 9:00** Opening Remarks (Lyceum - 3rd floor Science Center)
- 9:00 – 9:45** **Session 1 - Choose your session**
- Yoga with Melanie Hosier (Science 101)
 - Mindfulness with Dr. Rob Merritt (Science 103)
 - Weighted Snakes with Hanna Ingo & Katelyn Goins (Science 100)
- 9:45 – 10:00** Break
- 10:00 – 10:45** **Session 2 - Choose your session**
- Creative Writing with Dr. Rob Merritt (Science 103)
 - Painting with Hannah Ingo and Katelyn Goins (Science 100)
- 10:45 – 11:00** Break
- 11:00 – 11:45** **Session 3 - Choose your session**
- Stress Management with Victoria Weisiger (Science 101)
 - Jazzercise with CiCi Dyer (Lyceum - Science Center 3rd floor)
 - Power in your Plate with Brenda Workman (Science 100)
- 11:45 – 12:15** Vendor Visits, Health Screenings & Pamper Stations (Science Center)
- 12:15 – 1:00** Lunch & Keynote (Lyceum - Science Center 3rd floor)
Keynote Speaker Brandi Smith, MAEd, LPC, LPSC, NCC, ACS
- 1:00 – 1:45** **Session 4 - Choose your session**
- Hike on Campus Trail with Antowynne Shaw (Quad)
 - Pottery Activity with BU Art Club (Science 101)
 - Diabetes Prevention with Constance Saunders (Science 100)
- 1:45 – 2:00** Closing Remarks & Door Prizes (Lyceum - Science Center 3rd floor)
- 2:00 – 3:00** Vendor Visits, Health Screenings, Pamper Stations & Campus Walks

BLUEFIELD UNIVERSITY

CAMPUS MAP

1. DOME GYMNASIUM
2. MISSIONARY HOUSE
3. FACULTY ROW
4. ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT
5. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
6. MACMILLAN CENTER
7. MARRIED HOUSING
8. GUEST COTTAGE
9. ALUMNI HALL

10. RISH HALL / ACE CENTER
11. HARMAN CHAPEL
12. LANSDALL HALL
13. SCIENCE CENTER
14. SHOTT HALL
15. CRUISE HALL / CAMPUS SAFETY
16. EAST RIVER HALL
17. EASLEY LIBRARY
18. QUAD
19. ANNEX
20. MAINTENANCE
21. TENNIS COURTS
22. BLUESTONE COMMONS
23. COX VISUAL ARTS
24. FUTURE ATHLETIC / RECREATION FIELDS
25. ALUMNI / ADVANCEMENT



Welcome

Thank you for joining us today at this wonderful event. Seeing so many passionate individuals come together to support WISE and its mission to empower women in our community is not only encouraging, but exciting, especially when we are talking about a woman's well-being.

So many women neglect their healthcare, often prioritizing the needs of others above their own. This can be due to various factors, including busy schedules, financial constraints, and cultural norms. However, neglecting one's healthcare can have serious consequences, leading to undiagnosed and untreated health issues. Simple lifestyle changes or working with support networks are often great first steps women can take to prioritize their well-being.

Throughout the day, you'll have the opportunity to participate in a range of sessions, from creative writing and yoga to health check stations, and even do a little shopping if you'd like. Hopefully, your experiences today will allow you to learn, connect, relax, and grow your knowledge about your mind, body, and overall well-being. We hope everyone will find something valuable to take away from our time together.

KEYNOTE

Brandy Smith, MAEd, LPC, LPSC, NCC, ACS

Ms. Smith is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Professional School Counselor, National Certified Counselor, and Approved Clinical Supervisor. Brandy is a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech, Director of the Counselor Education Program, and an Assistant Professor at Bluefield University. She is the co-owner of Connected Community Counseling, where she has been teaching about the effects of trauma for over a decade. In addition to hundreds of hours of training in trauma-informed care, she has had extensive education in mindfulness, expressive therapies, play therapy, parenting education, and more. Brandy has worked in schools and private practice with children and families, and has consulted with and trained clinicians, educators, social workers, law enforcement, and business leaders.

SESSIONS

- Yoga with Melanie Hosier**
- Mindfulness with Dr. Rob Merritt**
- Creative Writing with Dr. Rob Merritt**
- Expressive Arts with Hannah Ingo and Katelyn Goins**
- Stress Management with Victoria Weisiger**
- Jazzercise with CiCi Dyer**
- Diabetes Education with Constance Saunders**
- Flower Pot Making with Bluefield University Art Club**
- Guided Hike on Bluefield University Campus Trail - weather permitting**

VENDORS

- Women's breast health information on self-breast exams by Dr. Fred Barker & MammoCare**
- Health Screening Checks provided by the Bluefield University nursing students**
- Nail services provided by the Lady Project Salon and Academy**
- Abel Crisis Pregnancy Center**
- Clinch Valley Community Action**
- Abby Jo Designs with Haley Via**
- Thirty-One Gifts with Vickie Witt**
- Scentsy with Michaela Hall**
- New York Life with Catherine Vollmer**
- Color Street Nails with Stephanie Day**
- Mary Kay Cosmetics with Pamela Hull**
- Body and Skin with Marissa Mitchell**

SPEAKER BIOS

Rob Merritt, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus and Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at Bluefield University, is an active member of The National Association for Poetry Therapy, an organization through which he has offered workshops demonstrating how reading and writing poetry can give voice to our inner struggles. He believes in poetry that points the way out of ego via rituals (time-tested) and ceremonies (new).

Born in North Carolina, he has lived in Bluefield, West Virginia, for over thirty years. He is the author of *Early Music and the Aesthetics of Ezra Pound* and the poetry collections *View from Blue-Jade Mountain* (2019), *The Language of Longing* (2012), and *Landscape Architects* (2006).

Melanie Hosier, a 500+ hour trained yoga teacher. For the past ten years, she has taught Hatha yoga, a slow-moving yoga that focuses on stretching the body. Melanie wants everyone in her yoga classes to be comfortable and learn modifications to practice yoga comfortably if needed. Yoga movement, breath work, and meditation are essential to relaxing the body and mind. "God helped me get through all of my yoga training, and I am thankful to be able to teach yoga with God as the focus."

M. Victoria Weisiger, MEd, earned a Master's in Education from the University of North Carolina in Charlotte. She has had a long career in the Mental Health field, as a Licensed Professional Counselor, and most recently as a Life and Wellness Coach. Victoria has been providing Consulting Services in Charlotte, North Carolina, Philadelphia, Pa., and most recently in the two Virginias. Some of her clients include The Charlotte Fire Department, Allstate Insurance Company, Sanofi-Aventis Pharmaceutical Company, and locally: WVVA, Bland County Medical Clinic, Bluefield State College, Wytheville Community College, Pillar, Inc., Community Action of South West Virginia, Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. and Wythe County Department of Social Services.

Ms. Weisiger focuses on making a positive long-term impact on the organizations and communities she serves. She offers management consultation, including advising Executives individually and with Executive staff and the Board of Directors, strategic planning, focus groups, meeting facilitation, Leadership Training for existing management and employees eligible for promotion, and program development for new directions focused on Employee Wellness. Additionally, investigative interviews for grievance complaints are provided to ascertain the validity and recommendations for addressing the issues – (working in cooperation with the organization's legal counsel).

To develop productivity and cohesion in the workplace, Ms. Weisiger conducts Employee Needs Assessments and follows up with recommendations to address the needs. Additionally, Training Services can include Anti-harassment, Diversity, Communication Skills, and Leadership topics,

including Documentation Practices, Employee Evaluations, and Stress Reduction through Mindfulness Practices. Victoria's training programs are highly interactive and focused on including participants' involvement.

She is the founder of a non-profit – WindHorse Healing Arts Center, and is a member of Rotary and both the Wytheville Community College and St. Paul Methodist Church choirs.

Frederick W. Barker, MD, FACS, is a Bluefield, Virginia-based, board-certified general surgeon and breast care specialist with nearly 40 years of surgical experience. His offices, Surgical Care of the Virginias and MammoCare are located in Westwood Medical Park in Bluefield, Virginia.

Receiving his Bachelor of Science degree in animal and veterinary science at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia, he continued his graduate studies in animal nutrition and went on to earn his Doctor of Medicine from West Virginia University School of Medicine in 1981. From there, Dr. Barker completed five years of General Surgery Residency Training at the Yale affiliate Bridgeport Hospital in Connecticut. As part of his surgical training program, Dr. Barker spent six months at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City and two months at the University of Maryland "Shock Trauma" in Baltimore, Maryland.

Dr. Barker joined the United States Air Force in 1984. Upon completing his general surgery residency, he served on overseas and stateside assignments. Honorably discharged in 1989, he moved to Bluefield, West Virginia, where he practiced at Bluefield Regional Medical Center, Saint Luke's Hospital, Princeton Community Hospital, and Tazewell Community Hospital—now Carilion Tazewell Community Hospital. Upon discharge, Dr. Barker was recalled to active duty in support of Desert Storm and returned to his private practice in Bluefield - Good Samaritan Surgical Service.

In 2004, Dr. Barker was recruited by Carilion Clinic to Bedford Memorial Hospital in Bedford, Virginia, and later moved with his family to Union, South Carolina, where he practiced for four years. Returning home in 2011, Dr. Barker has continued to apply his considerable surgical experience to the practice of general surgery while maintaining a passionate focus as a thoughtful innovator, providing comprehensive breast care to innumerable women in the area.

Dr. Barker has held many medical staff leadership positions, published medical articles, and spoken at many medical and community meetings. However, the compassionate care of patients and their families motivates him and makes his long hours and many sleepless nights worthwhile.

It's no wonder that Dr. Barker enjoys an outstanding reputation and has a very busy practice of general surgery and comprehensive breast care. Dr. Barker and his top-notch support team stand at the ready with a kind word, a comforting touch, a heartfelt prayer, and reliable surgical advice whenever you or a family member needs surgical care.

As a cancer survivor himself, with siblings who are also cancer survivors, and a sister who is currently battling breast cancer, Dr. Barker has tremendous empathy for the challenges facing women diagnosed with breast cancer. He's always willing to take the time to help family members

understand what lies ahead. Dr. Barker firmly believes his mission and calling is to cure when possible and compassionately care for all.

Constance E. Saunders, RN, BSN, MS, CCM, is the Patient Educator at Princeton Community Hospital in Princeton, WV, focusing on Diabetes Education. She received a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Radford University, a Master's degree from Mountain State University, and a Certification in Case Management. She has worked as a Registered Nurse for over 25 years, with work experience in Med-Surg, Oncology, Neurology, Transplants, Physical Rehabilitation, Wound Care, Home Health, and Case Management. She also spent five years working at the University of Virginia Medical Center. She is a native of Virginia, growing up in Rocky Gap, where she learned the value of family, friends, and God by attending Tynes Chapel AME Zion Church. She is also a Delta Sigma Theta Sorority member, embodying the Founders' vision and carrying on the mission of public service.

CiCi Dyer, LMT, started teaching Jazzercise in 1987 in Holland. She works as an administrator with her husband, James Dyer, in their Physical Therapy Clinic in Bluefield, Virginia. She is also a licensed massage therapist. She teaches Jazzercise along with three other instructors in Bluefield, Virginia.

Jazzercise was established in 1969 by Judi Sheppard Missett and is practiced in every US state and 25 countries. This form of exercise sets the standard for and establishes the style and substance of "boutique fitness" and offers five benefits - lifting your mood, keeping your brain fit, keeping your body fit, reducing stress, and building self-esteem.

Brenda Workman operates her own business, Brenda Workman Speaks LLC. She speaks to groups about the importance of living intentionally, eating whole food plant-based, and setting and achieving goals. Brenda has spoken to groups at professional training sessions, women's church events, professional business conferences, and public school events.

Brenda worked at Bluefield University for 16 years before launching her business and attributes her great experiences at BU to preparing her well for operating her own business. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees at BU as an older adult. Brenda says receiving her master's degree lit a fire under her and made her realize she could do anything she set her mind to do moving forward. Check out her website at www.brendaworkmanspeaks.com

Brenda believes there is Power in Your Plate: Food Matters. Diet-related chronic diseases are major threats to Americans. Being overweight and obese now affects most of the U.S. population, increasing the risk of diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease and taking a disproportionate toll on under-served populations. However, improved lifestyle choices, especially dietary, need not be reserved for those in a particular income, social, gender, or racial demographic. Eating healthfully can be less expensive than diets fueled by seemingly inexpensive processed, fast-food, or nutrient-poor products. The savings can happen in the short and certainly in the long term, measured not only by dollars but also in quality of life. During her presentation, she will share her

health transformation, the health state of the country, and how food matters to our health and overall well-being. She will share practical ways to implement more plants in our cooking & how to make it a lifestyle, not a diet.

Hannah Ingo is a Bluefield University student in her final year of the M.A. Counselor Education program and will graduate in May 2023. She is a BU graduate with a B.A. in Music Education. Her concentration is in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Katelyn Goins is in her final year of the M.A. Counselor Education program at Bluefield University. She graduated from Bluefield State University with a B.A. in Applied Science. Her concentration is in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Francine Kirby, BSN, MSN, is a Jefferson College of Health Sciences graduate with a degree in nursing, WVU Tech with a degree in education, and Mountain State University, with her BSN and MSN in Nursing Administration and Education. She is an Associate Professor of Nursing at Bluefield University and an ATI Assessment Coach for Ascend Learning. She is a breast cancer survivor, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.

Hannah Hill is a junior at Bluefield University. She is co-president of the BU Art Club.

Antowynne Shaw is a senior at Bluefield University and will graduate in May 2023.

Special Thanks

Bluefield University for lending us the use of their facilities and beautiful campus.

Emily Cook and WOW Retreat committee for their hard work planning and coordinating the event. With their initiative to volunteer, events like this are possible.

Kenneth Kormendy and the Bluefield Elks Lodge for generously sponsoring 5 of today's attendee registrations.

New Opportunity School of Women for sponsoring 3 of today's attendee registrations.

All of our vendors for agreeing to join us today to create a fabulous boutique shopping experience for our guests.

All of our healthcare and service professionals for bringing your love and skillset to our retreat to help brighten someone's day by providing services or helping them gain more insight into their healthcare and taking a positive step towards becoming a healthier version of themselves. Learning to be your own health advocate is often the best first step to a better you.

ABOUT WISE

WV Community Services for Women, lovingly known in our community as WISE Women's Center, is a non-profit organization founded by Connie Saunders and her two daughters, Wendy Philpott and Grey Peretti, in 2004.

The mission of WISE (Women in Search of Empowerment) is to provide resources and support to empower women to aspire to a better quality of life through work, education, wellness, and financial independence. Providing women with the tools and resources to succeed can create a more prosperous community for everyone.

At WISE, we partner with our community through service projects.

- **Women on Wellness Retreat** provides a positive approach to improving women's health.
- **Working with Drug Education and Awareness programs** in our area to help women connect with resources and make better choices for their future.
- **Provide Care Closets** with hygiene and school supplies for students in Mercer, Tazewell, Bland, and McDowell counties.
- **Assemble and distribute Baskets of Hope and Crisis Backpacks** to women and children with hygiene insecurity needs, housing displacement, domestic violence victims, veterans, or other crisis intervention needs from our office or through local healthcare clinics, preschools, daycare centers, churches, and service organizations.
- **Provide scrubs to women** who work in the healthcare, food service, and hospitality industries through donations, scrub drives, and charity shop sales.
- **Partnering with regional programs** like the New Opportunity School for Women sponsored by Bluefield University with a concentrated residential program to help women better themselves.
- **Fundraising projects** like our annual golf tournament, holiday fashion show, and silent auctions to raise awareness about our programs and services.

To make our programs and services possible, we rely on the support of volunteers, clothing and monetary donations, and partnerships with local businesses and organizations. We are grateful for our private and legacy donations and grant funding provided by the United Way of Southern West Virginia, the Community Foundation of the Virginias, and the Bluefield Elks Lodge.

We encourage anyone interested in supporting our mission to get involved and help us positively impact our community. Contact a staff or board member if you are interested in volunteering with WISE, or visit our website to learn more about being involved - www.wisewomenscenter.org.

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