

**Cat Voors**

*(Women's Studies Program Graduate/  
Co-owner of Celebrations Catering):*

"Linda was a wonderful friend and mentor to me as I struggled to get my degree in women's studies as I approached my 50th birthday. She was always there for me, and I don't know how I could have done it without her.

"Linda has many talents. One that is hidden from most people is her ability to mentor students and get them to believe in themselves—and therefore to achieve at a level far beyond what they themselves had thought they were capable of.

"This ability to motivate and inspire students is a very rare quality. Linda's dedication and commitment will make the job a tough act to follow for the new

director following in her footsteps. Love you, Linda."

**Joan Uebelhoer**

*(Instructor, Women's Studies Program):*

"Linda has been a strong supporter of women's studies for many years. She has been the head of the program as we grew and became stronger as an IPFW program. She has been a part of the program since we became the first university in Indiana to teach women's studies. The past couple of years have been difficult for her as she directed a growing program, and at the same time, withstood the heartache of seeing her husband go through a devastating illness and eventually experience his death. Linda, I am hoping the 'escape' to the West coast where you will be with loving family, will be a well

deserved reward to you for all the good work you have done here at IPFW and for women's studies. You will be missed.

**Robin Newman and Susie Renfrow**

*(Director of the Center for Women and Returning Adults and Assistant Dean of Students; Student and Secretary of the Center for Women and Returning Adults):*

"As the director of women's studies and associate professor of Spanish, Linda has been a staunch student advocate. She continually strives to improve the lives of others in her capacity as teacher (in the broadest sense), professor, advisor, director, friend, sister, and mother."

Return Service Requested

Center for Women and Returning Adults  
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne  
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499



**Welcome!**  
FROM ROBIN NEWMAN

Dear New Student:

The Center for Women and Returning Adults (CWRA) welcomes you to IPFW. We provide a continuum of services directed toward an extremely diverse subculture within the campus community. The nature of our services extends beyond the campus or student life spectrum into the life-planning arena that is specific to nontraditional students or individuals and family members.



Robin Newman

The center advocates for returning adults by providing academic, financial, and personal guidance, while simultaneously familiarizing them with the network of services available on campus. Childcare, housing, financial, and domestic abuse issues also require that our services be directed from the campus to the community. Special ongoing efforts designed to meet the needs of our diverse subculture include:

- ▼ Adult Student Orientation at the beginning of each semester
- ▼ "Students with Families" programs
- ▼ Individual appointments
- ▼ National Omicron Psi Honor Society (for adult students)
- ▼ *Rapport* newsletter
- ▼ Scholarship resources for women and adults

Please feel free to contact me by e-mail, [newmanr@ipfw.edu](mailto:newmanr@ipfw.edu), or visit our Web site at [www.ipfw.edu/cwra](http://www.ipfw.edu/cwra). Our Web site will keep you current with the center's programs, events, and services geared specifically toward your needs.

As an adult student, you will face the challenge of balancing multiple roles and commitments. Yet, your experience, motivation, and focus will assist you in achieving your goals. Take the time to get to know your professors and others on campus who can help make a difference. I welcome you to one of the most challenging and rewarding times of your life and encourage you to take advantage of all of the student services and opportunities that IPFW has to offer.

Sincerely,

Robin E. Newman, Director  
Center for Women and Returning Adults  
Assistant Dean of Students  
[newmanr@ipfw.edu](mailto:newmanr@ipfw.edu)

**Student Highlight**  
CAOIMHE MCNEIL

Meet Caoimhe McNeil, a returning adult student who, like you, is busy balancing the demands of her home and work life



Caoimhe McNeil

with her educational goals. Caoimhe plans to graduate in May 2009 with a major in secondary education with a focus

on English language arts and a minor in theatre and drama. She works as a consultant in the IPFW Writing Center and has seven children. We sat down with her recently to discuss why she continues to work toward her degree at IPFW and the ups and downs of her busy life as a returning adult student.

**What kind of advice would you give to a new freshman adult student?**

The most important thing I could tell a returning adult student is to use the support that is readily accessible, like the Center for Women and Returning Adults, the Writing Center, the Spot, and Student Government. Additionally, I would encourage them to remember that life will happen and that they can succeed if they simply take one day at a time. It is very important that they do not beat themselves up if they need to take time off now and then to ensure their own mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

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**Can you share some good experiences you've had at IPFW?**

One of my best experiences at IPFW is one that I remember on a daily basis. This past summer I had the privilege of working closely with the Summer Bridge Program as a Writing Center consultant. Each one of the students I worked with brought such joy to my days that when the program was over, I knew I was definitely meant to be a teacher. Every day now, I see several of those students and am grateful that I was given the opportunity to share my life experiences with them and give them encouragement when they were discouraged. They truly were my chocolate that has sustained me when I became tired of being in school and just wanted to quit. Thinking about them continuously reminds me that it will be worth it when I am finally a teacher.

I had another great experience that just happened yesterday. I was having a very teary day, as I was feeling very homesick and missing my mom and family. I am usually the one giving out "mom" hugs and trying to support those around me who are discouraged. I was overwhelmed and just plain homesick. I walked past Jane's office (in CASA) and told her I needed a hug. She promptly got up from her desk and put her arms around me and gave me the biggest "mom" hug I ever had. She allowed me to simply be vulnerable and share my sadness. The hug lasted for a short moment, but it was all I needed to get through the rest of the day. That special time will stay with me forever.

**Can you share the funniest thing that happened to you as a returning adult student?**

One of the funniest experiences I had at IPFW happened at the beginning of fall semester 2006. I had been injured in an

accident the previous May and ended up in a wheelchair. Being in a wheelchair was a difficult situation for me, since I was then, and still am, a very active individual. I was finally getting used to dealing with the wheelchair, handicapped parking, and rude people who seemed ill equipped on how to approach people with disabilities.

To really understand the humor of this story, you must imagine what it was like for me to try to get my wheelchair out of the backseat of my car and carefully hang my book bag, lunch, and other bags off the back of the chair. Mind you, all of this probably weighed about 60 pounds. I had just sat down in the chair and was about to move around the open back door to shut both the front and the back doors, when all of the sudden a fellow whipped into the spot next to me. I very nearly wet myself because he pulled in so fast and so close to me that I was unable to move and seriously thought he was going to hit me. Then, right when I was getting up the nerve to say something to him, he jumped out of the car (obviously not needing the handicapped spot), and started running to Kettler Hall.

By that point, I was so ticked off I could barely stand it and decided I was going to get his license number and turn him in. I turned to get out from between the two cars and you guessed it... I was unable to move. Not only was I wedged between the two cars, but the foot rest of my chair was stuck in the spinner wheels of his tires. The more I struggled to get free, the more I was wedged between the two cars.

Of course my only options were to laugh or cry—I chose to laugh. Just about that time, my friend walked by and said, "Hey, Caoimhe, what're you doing?" I looked at him and pointed, and we both started laughing hysterically. I was stuck in that tire for nearly 20 minutes while we tried to figure out the best way for me to get unstuck.

You may ask why I didn't just stand up and move the chair. Well, I was pinned in the chair because of the way the back door was positioned and was unable to stand up or move out of the way of the other car. My friend finally came up with a solution and we were able to get me free from the spinner wheels. When I called my boss to let her know why I was late, I said, "Susie, I will be there soon, I got stuck between two cars." I could hear in her voice she thought that was odd and that I just should have pulled out and driven away. When I finally got to work and explained the situation we had the grandest laugh. We were both crying, we were laughing so hard!

**What has been your toughest semester as a returning adult?**

My toughest semester... wow! How can I even answer this? There have been many difficult semesters, but I would say one of the toughest was the semester I was dealing with a divorce and found out I was pregnant with a high-risk pregnancy. I was told I would probably need to take a semester off. I was divorced early during that particular fall semester and just before the spring semester, my daughter, who was born premature, died. That was definitely a very hard year.

Equally as hard was the semester when one of my sons tried to commit suicide, and I was forced to take some time off to be home with him. It was difficult to accept that I needed to stop and take an inventory of my time and priorities. However, it was a needed time and now my son is healthy and thriving in every area of his life and I am back in school.

I only survived those difficulties because I had a strong support system around me, and I allowed myself time to grieve and time to look at the difficult issues I didn't necessarily want to face. With two very

hard, yet very rewarding years of family therapy and individual therapy, we are where we need to be in order to have a healthy home conducive to growth and happiness. I had to make a choice to not be afraid or too proud to ask for help.

**What do you do in your free time?**

I have lots of hobbies, including horseback riding, playing football (soccer), rappelling, rock climbing, rock hunting, cooking, reading, dancing, and singing (just to name the major activities).

**Faculty Highlight: Linda Fox**



Linda Fox

Linda Fox, associate professor of Spanish and director of women's studies, retired this summer after 35 years of working for IPFW. Colleagues and friends shared their feelings for Linda as she begins her retirement journey.

Jeannette Clausen  
(Professor Emerita of Germanic Languages):

"I've known Linda for 35 years, ever since she joined IPFW in 1971. We shared an office for 10 years, raised our children together, and worked on many projects together during the years.

"Linda's work has benefited students, faculty, and staff at IPFW and many

women's groups and organizations in the community."

**Leslie Raymer**

(Instructor, Women's Studies Program):

"Linda's individual attention to students (the reason we're all here, after all...) is above reproach. She goes the extra mile for any one of our students and makes things 'work' for them. She's also the champion of doing much with little resources...and collaborating with others on campus to enrich our community."

**Beverly Hume**

(Associate Professor of English):

"As director of women's studies at IPFW, Linda Fox has, in my 20-year experience on this campus, always maintained a pragmatic, ethical, and sincere feminist agenda—one that persistently addresses the needs of both the academic and the Fort Wayne community. I believe she deserves an enormous thank you (if not an enormous bonus) for her sustained efforts at bringing feminist issues and speakers to the campus and community.

**Diane Taub**

(Professor and Chair of Sociology):

"Linda is a wonderful and giving woman. She epitomizes caring, generosity, and advocacy. Upon her retirement, Linda's everyday presence will be greatly missed."

**Linda Hite**

(Associate Professor of Organizational Leadership and Supervision):

"It is difficult to describe Linda Fox in mere written words; they seem to pale in comparison to an actual conversation with her. She is so passionate about women's studies (WOST) and the well being of women and girls. Without her dedication and commitment, WOST would not be the growing, vibrant entity it is. Someone else will take the position of WOST director, but

no one will "replace" Linda Fox. It is not possible."

**Donna Bialik**

(Associate Professor of Economics and Dean of Students):

"In my 30 years at IPFW, I've met no one more passionate about women's issues than Linda Fox. I think it is that passion that causes her to work so selflessly to advance the causes of women both on and off campus. She has been a great friend to me and a loyal supporter, too. Her students speak of her with respect and appreciation. She quite simply is "one of IPFW's finest" and as such, she has been a tremendous asset to this campus."

**Ann Colbert**

(Journalism Program Coordinator):

"Most of Linda's associates, as well as her students, think of her as a friend and colleague. She has a way that embraces us all and puts us into her world. Although this intimate touch might seem to negate the more public persona, she carries a public face with an informed, yet personal, manner. That said, let me add that she is extremely well-informed and scholarly without ever seeming to be out of reach.

"She has been involved with the Women's Studies Program as it has grown into the state's first degree-granting program and she has been the steward for its current development at IPFW. In that role, she should be commended, for she has done much with little in the way of university resources.

"Although to say that someone is irreplaceable sounds a bit too strong, in Linda's case it is true. Certainly her blend of personal and academic qualities is extremely rare, and she will be greatly missed when she leaves her post."

