



COLORADO COLLEGE



14 E. Cache La Poudre St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

November 7, 2021

Attn: President's Leadership Awards Committee
RE: Nomination for the Glenn Brooks Innovation and Courage Award
From: Dr. Naomi Pueo Wood

I am writing to nominate Professor **Heidi R. Lewis** for the Glenn Brooks Innovation and Courage Award. I have been a close colleague and friend of Dr. Lewis for the past ten years and have closely watched as she courageously and intentionally built the Feminist and Gender Studies Program into one that resembles the interdisciplinary and critical race studies base of that field of study. She has grown that program tremendously, in both majors and in successfully hiring two new full-time tenure-track faculty in the program. Having supported her two junior colleagues through Third Year Review and seeing the FGS curriculum revision to reflect the values and priorities of its current faculty, Dr. Lewis has moved on to broader issues at the College level.

Herself a Riley Scholar in Residence at the start of her time at Colorado College, she has tracked that particular program with great care and investment. And, in the last year+ has become the director of that program. She immediately created a new webpage to assist with transparency, created intentional mentoring sessions with current faculty, and engaged in difficult conversations with the Dean and Department Chairs as we move to becoming an anti-racist institution and must review the role of that program.

In the same vein, Dr. Lewis has been attentive to mentorship, culture and transparency at the level of the general pre-tenure population. Upon learning over the years that this growing group of faculty was indeed not getting consistent mentoring across their Departments and seeing that CC had routinely been unable to retain junior faculty of color, Dr. Lewis developed the Mentoring Alliance Program. This initiative was one that she took upon herself, she was not tasked nor compensated in advance to pilot the idea. After conversations with and an official pitch to both the Dean of Equity and Diversity and the Dean of the College, she was affirmed with an official position coordinating this program as a leader in Early Career Faculty Programs.

Like Glenn Brooks, Dr. Lewis has been innovating and investing in this College since she stepped foot on campus. Through a slow transformation of Feminist and Gender Studies we see a new major and a new program; through the Riley Scholars in Residence leadership, we see clarity and investment in the mission of that program's diversity through respecting the importance of CC mentorship and guidance for Riley scholars; and, through the Mentoring Alliance Program, we see innovative approaches to faculty retention and overall cultural shifts at the early career level.

I am pleased to nominate Prof. Andrea Bruder, Brian Young, Heather Horton, and Maggie Santos for their leadership in CC's response to the Covid19 pandemic - for the Glenn Brooks Innovation and Courage Award.

Courage and innovation have been the hallmark of Campus Safety, the SAG and Testing, Treatment and Response groups. As outlined on CC's webpages:

The Scientific Advisory Group brings together a team of faculty members with expertise in the biology of infectious diseases, mathematical modeling, biological and medical ethics, and the sociology of medicine. The team will synthesize, for CC decision makers, relevant local, state, and national data pertaining to the Covid-19 pandemic; and monitor and communicate scientific information about transmission of the coronavirus and strategies for minimizing its spread on the CC campus to the Dean of Faculty and Acting Provost, the Presidents' Cabinet, and the CC COVID-19 Emergency Response Team Incident Commander.

<https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/coronavirus/work-teams.html>

This working group [Testing, Treatment, and Response] is developing a testing protocol for campus. This includes an estimate for the number and cost of tests needed to test all who are symptomatic. This group is establishing a deadline for confirming with vendors on test kits and test results. It is also determining how to address testing requirements and how those could impact on-campus plans, and exploring contracting with an epidemiological specialist for the CC community. This team is developing the college's quarantine protocol and determining whether and how to establish contact tracing.

<https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/coronavirus/summer-work-teams.html>

COVID Advisory Leadership Team (ALT) Will serve as a strategic resource for college leadership for the 2020-21 year. This group will bring together representation from key groups to discuss the latest information, recommendations and feedback from across the college, county, state and national organizations in order to have a holistic view of all things Covid. The information could arise from internal experts, teams, and or individuals through the various pipelines. Information could also arise from external organizations such as the CDC, OEM, State of Colorado and the El Paso Country Health Department. The information from this group will be collected, synthesized and shared with the President's Cabinet on a weekly basis (or as needed). In addition to gathering information, this group will coordinate a multifaceted communication plan that would include campus emails, website updates, talking points, virtual town halls, and other modes of communication as necessary. The team will meet weekly at first and adjust as needed once the college reopens. <https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/coronavirus/work-teams.html#cot>

As one reads the charges for each group, the tasks outlined are tremendous, but all have been accomplished in ways that exceed the charge. Under the strong leadership of Andrea, Brian, Heather and Maggie, we have been able to implement protocols for arrival and random testing for students, faculty, and staff and also to include our local off-campus students. For these off-campus students, the value of having access to campus due to testing, cannot be under-estimated. The addition of wastewater testing and the establishment of testing machines on campus have given us the necessary information and tools to identify groups of students who may be at risk for COVID-19 and to get those students tested quickly. The establishment of a COVID incident command center and collaborative efforts between SAG, testing, Campus Safety, Communications, the Residential Experience, and other campus partners is an example of teamwork at its best.

One cannot overlook the fact that Andrea, Brian, Heather and Maggie are accomplishing these tasks while still maintaining their regular jobs at CC. Andrea also serves as Associate Dean of the faculty and professor of Mathematics; Brian has also taken on direction of Advancement Services in addition to his on-going IT leadership, Heather continues to direct the enterprise of Student Health and Wellbeing, which encompasses counseling, health center, chaplains, SARC, Wellness Resource Center, and Native American Elder-in-Residence, and Maggie still leads the college's Campus Safety operations. All have also volunteered to deliver meals to students in quarantine.

Certainly there are so many on our campus who are also working tirelessly to address the challenges of COVID-19, but the work of the Scientific Advisory Group, the Testing, Treatment and Response group, and COVID response led by Andrea Bruder, Brian Young, Heather Horton, and Maggie Santos is nothing less than transformative as they guide us through this pandemic, putting science and humanity first. They embody in every way the spirit of the Glenn Brooks Innovation and Courage Award.

Innovation and Courage – Polly Nordstrand, Curator of Southwest Art

It has only been two short years since Polly Nordstrand joined the staff at the Fine Arts Center's museum. Yet in those two years, Polly has made a big impact. Polly's job entails curating exhibitions from the museum's permanent collection of Native American and Latinx art, as well as special exhibitions of modern and contemporary art from the American Southwest. Her work supports the museum's efforts to bring the finest art from the Southwest region to the Colorado Springs community, and to build relationships with local, regional, and national artists, source cultures, and institutions. Polly has gone above and beyond that description in many ways; she has been a powerful force championing Native and marginalized voices in the cultural life of CC.

Polly has brought a world-class set of exhibitions to the FAC featuring indigenous and women artists such as Baseera Khan, Nora Naranjo Morse (Santa Clara), Melanie Yazzie (Diné) and Anna Tsouhlarakis (Creek/Diné). Her exhibition *Pertenecer: Chicana artists on belonging* features important works from Latinx artists and examines notions of family, community, and identity in the Southwest. Polly has also been an active contributor to campus life, bringing artists, scholars, musicians, and performers such as Adrienne Chalepah (Kiowa/Comanche/Apache), and traditional dancers to campus for public events including First Mondays and Cornerstone Arts Week.

Polly's goal always is to honor the work of individual artists while also supporting the needs of all related communities. She continually asks us to consider, who is art for? And how is what we do (a museum exhibition or performance, an action or a policy) benefitting those audiences? Polly's approach to her work focuses on connecting artists with communities to build possibilities for engagement, transformation, and understanding broadly. In fostering the work of Native artists and artists of color, providing opportunities for artists to work creatively and collaboratively realize their goals, and sharing knowledge of their work, Polly has created a unique space for Southwest art at CC. In cultivating this particular multicultural sense of place, Polly has also raised the national stature of the college and the FAC in the arts. Her recent grant from the prestigious Warhol Foundation to support the groundbreaking upcoming exhibition *Queer Indigenous Visualities* is good evidence of the respect for Polly's work nationally.

Two recent events exemplify the high quality of Polly's work with indigenous and artists of color and her effectiveness in creating transformative experiences that build lasting relationships. The first, the August 29 performance of violinist Laura Ortman (White Mountain Apache), affected all in the packed audience of Packard Hall. Polly invited Ortman as an ideal artist to bring to campus to exemplify the talent originating in the Southwest as well as the highest levels of excellence in contemporary multimedia art. Ortman, who is a Brooklyn, NY-based composer, musician, and artist, describes herself as a "sound sculptor." Using instruments as varied as a piano, electric guitar, megaphone, flute, voice, and four-track tape recorder to play back her vast audio experiments, Ortman's audio improvisations create dense, almost palpable, emotive atmospheres. The performance was disturbing, challenging, intriguing, gorgeous, and intense: Ortman's art asked all listeners to abandon expectation and sink into the possibilities of a pure creative and expressive experience. As both an example of the richness of contemporary work by indigenous artists, and a metaphor for the way greater understanding of cultural difference opens new horizons, Ortman's performance was transcendent. Nordstrand's goal was realized: to broaden their audience's understanding of artists like Ortman, to challenge and expand our perceptions and beliefs about art and indigenous people, and to build a community among the audience, all of whom emerged changed by the experience.

Another recent example of Polly's diverse and inclusive work is the recent interpretation of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) through a celebratory community event and exhibit Nov. 1-2. The museum's permanent collection includes thousands of artworks from Latinx and Southwestern cultures. Día de los Muertos is a holiday celebrated in the U.S. and Mexico to honor deceased loved ones and keep their memory alive. Polly and Kris Stanec, director of museum education, and countless others collaborated to create a community celebration that aimed to both celebrate and educate about this important part of Hispanic culture. Polly brought together local artists Jerry Vigil and Maruca Salazar, Aztec and folklorico dancers, mariachi musicians, student bands,

Polly Nordstrand

and local K-12 teachers and students to create this community-focused event. The event featured a traditional Aztec altar by Maruca Salazar, *ofrendas* by area school groups, like Stuart's class, free art-making activities, food, and much more. Polly's vision connected culture, community, education, and the CC alumni network in a creative display highlighting these beautiful relationships. Madi Stuart '13, MAT '14, who majored in Spanish and also received her Master's in Teaching, works at Manitou Springs Middle School. She and her students created an *ofrenda* that celebrated the life and memory of Charles Rockey, an iconic local artist who passed away over the summer. In addition to working with local schools to make class *ofrendas*, over 130 local students participated in tours of the *ofrendas* with CC Spanish-speaking students. Overall, well over 500 people attended Día de los Muertos at the FAC, including families and communities entirely new to CC.

In addition to her work in the museum Polly was one of five staff and faculty who led the work on the proposal to reclaim and rename space on the Colorado College campus for indigenous peoples. In a recent ceremony over homecoming weekend, Tava Quad was officially renamed and blessed by members of the Ute tribe and other representatives. Polly has been a tireless supporter of students in NASU and SOMOS, and an engaged collaborator with faculty and staff across campus. Her work on supporting campus communities for Native and Hispanic students ranges from initiating an annual welcome for indigenous students and staff, to advocating for new policies, to providing support and logistical assistance to the NASU students organizing the CC powwow in spring 2019, to mentoring interns, to travelling with NASU leadership on a block break study trip to Santa Fe.

These are but a few recent examples of the exemplary work that Polly Nordstrand has brought to the FAC and CC, as well as the communities of Colorado Springs. Through these events, her museum curation, and her dedication to the students at CC, Polly has helped transform CC into a thriving center for indigenous contemporary artists. Her work asks us to challenge the traditional structures and old fashioned beliefs built into the DNA of institutions such as museums and colleges. At the same time, Polly's work unveils the tremendously affirming possibilities of a truly diverse and inclusive approach to culture by being courageous and innovating. CC has benefitted broadly and in myriad ways from her tireless efforts.

Innovation and Courage – Tomi-Ann Roberts (1 of 2 nominations)

I hereby nominate Dr. Tomi-Ann Roberts for the Glenn Brooks “Innovation and Courage” Award. I do this with the emphasis on courage. Tomi-Ann is well known in academia because of her research on objectification of women’s bodies—indeed, her groundbreaking scientific article on this topic now has over 3,500 scientific citations (a huge number). She has certainly been an advocate for women on the CC campus for over two decades: she served as the director of Feminist and Gender Studies for seven years; she was instrumental in getting the Slocum investigation initiated; she has given numerous talks on campus about sexual objectification; she has involved many CC students in research on sexualization and sexual; and she currently serves on the Title IX investigation team. In addition, she has been an expert witness in court cases related to sexual objectification, has been invited to speak at several national conferences, and has served on the sexual harassment task force for the Society for Personality and Social Psychology and on the sexualization of girls’ task force for the American Psychological Association. There is more, but let me here specifically address where her conviction and fortitude have recently shined the most, and why I am nominating her for this award.

In the last year, she exhibited tremendous courage when she spoke out as a former victim of Harvey Weinstein, setting the tone for the #metoo movement on the CC campus, helping others be more courageous about reporting their Title IX cases, and also showing young women that they could indeed walk out of a situation. She was more than a role model for just the CC community, however. Her influence expanded to the (inter)national level, as she appeared in many articles and in the media, speaking not only as an advocate for women but, perhaps more importantly, as the well-researched, scholarly voice on such matters. She helped raise a nation’s awareness of such issues, with the following but a small sample:

NYTimes: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/10/us/gwyneth-paltrow-angelina-jolie-harvey-weinstein.html>

Denver Post: <https://www.denverpost.com/2017/10/12/harvey-weinstein-harassed-colorado-college-professor/>

DemocracyNow: [https://www.democracynow.org/2017/10/12/tomi ann roberts on her encounter](https://www.democracynow.org/2017/10/12/tomi_ann_roberts_on_her_encounter)

Slate: <https://slate.com/arts/2017/11/harvey-weinsteins-accusers-in-conversation.html>

Colorado Public Radio: <http://www.cpr.org/news/story/colorado-professor-who-shared-story-of-weinstein-harassment-reflects-on-metoo-movement>

Third Rail with Ozy on PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/third-rail/episodes/episode-6-is-sexual-harassment-inevitable-workplace/>

The APA Monitor: <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2018/01/conversation-roberts.aspx>

She has thus spoken out on a topic (e.g., sexual objectification) where people are, for good reason, often hesitant to speak out—indeed, we see this playing out on the national stage as I write this. I cannot imagine how hard this must be, especially when the topic hits so close to home. Nor can I imagine the fortitude it requires to be the voice for so many that have been silent for so long.

She has received accolades from her alma mater, Smith College, in recognition of her advocacy for women. I think it is time that CC acknowledges all that she has done for girls and women in this regard. It has been a long road and treacherous road to speak out on behalf of women, and she has been doing that for close to three decades, representing the best of CC to the world.

Innovation and Courage – Tomi-Ann Roberts (2 of 2 nominations)

I nominate Tomi-Ann Roberts for this award due to the amazing courage she showed in publicly identifying herself as a victim of Harvey Weinstein, even after decades of building an impressive career as a scholar and teacher, which required setting the incident aside, forgetting it, minimizing it, and all of the other coping mechanisms used regularly by survivors of sexual misconduct. When she found out that the various movie stars and other celebrities were stepping forward to make public complaints, she called the NYT and joined the chorus, knowing that she wasn't a celebrity, so it probably wouldn't matter, but that she was a scholar of gender and body shame, and other related issues. She could bring a unique perspective to the issue, and she did. Little did she know that she would be on every major news network and that her life would be overwhelmed with calls from the press. At the one-year anniversary this fall, she was bombarded once again. And as happens to most high-profile survivors, she became "Harvey Weinstein's" victim rather than the respected professor and expert that she had been BEFORE "coming out." That kind of public work wrecks your life in ways you don't anticipate, yet Tomi-Ann persisted. She then helped lead the effort to take down the name of Slocum from the residence hall, and has continued to inspire not just her colleagues, but students who have similar stories – SO many of them. Not sure her announcement was "innovative" in that the voices of the #MeToo Movement have become all too common, but this award in recognition of what Tomi-Ann did, not just for the HW case but for feminists on our campus and beyond, would be one way for those of us who work with her every day in the CC community, to say thanks for her courage.