

FORWARD announces advocates, fall ally training

The FORWARD project and the advocates group have selected three male faculty to join the current group of advocates. The newly appointed advocates include Warren Christensen, assistant professor of physics and education; Val Marinov, associate professor of industrial and manufacturing engineering; and Christopher Ray, assistant professor of education. A complete list of FORWARD advocates and allies is available at www.ndsu.edu/forward/people/advocates_and_allies.

The advocates will offer training for male faculty who want to serve as allies. Ally training will provide male faculty with strategies to help to improve the overall climate for women faculty at NDSU and to identify ways to better recruit and retain women faculty. Training is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 27, from noon to 1:30 p.m. and Friday, Nov. 16, from 11:30 to 1 p.m. in the Memorial Union Mandan room. Lunch will be provided. Registration is requested and information can be found at www.ndsu.edu/forward.

As part of their application to become a FORWARD advocate, male faculty were asked to identify reasons why they wanted to serve in this role. The responses offered a range of perspectives and motivations for their interest and commitment to be involved in this way in the FORWARD project. The reasons included:

“I have substantial concerns about equity on campus and in the broader community. I regularly attend the FORWARD ally coffee meetings and strive to bring up new issues and areas of concern. I interact with female faculty at NDSU on a regular basis and ask them to share their real-time concerns that I can bring to the meetings.”

“Enhancing the diversity of students, faculty and staff is critical to the mission of NDSU. Gender equity is one necessary component of improving the educational experiences of our entire academic community. Achieving an environment where all individuals, especially those who are under-represented on campus or in their disciplines, are valued and supported is critical to the ultimate success of our students and our institution.”

“I never thought before that gender discrimination would be a serious issue or even existed in academia until I recently stumbled upon an article in a reputable journal that provided compelling arguments in support of the fact that both individual and institutional discrimination persists in the academic institutions. Armed with the insights from this work and looking at our own backyard, gradually I came to realize that, although overt discrimination has waned, it is still well and alive.”

For more information about the FORWARD allies program, contact Sean Sather-Wagstaff, advocate coordinator, at sean.sather-wagstaff@ndsu.edu or 1-8105 or Canan Bilen-Green, FORWARD director, at canan.bilen.green@ndsu.edu or 1-7040.