



News Release

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Century Names Four Women of Distinction for 2011

Century College has selected four women to receive the annual Women of Distinction Award for 2011.

They are: Mary Bussman, artistic director and founder of the Twin Cities Women's Choir; Jennifer Plum, founder and coach of the Minnesota Roller Girls' Debu-Taunts; Patty Tanji, president of the Pay Equity Coalition of Minnesota, and Joanna Woolman, director of the Reentry Clinic.

Mary Bussman believes in the power of music to heal, nurture, revive the spirit and spread joy. To that end, she founded the Twin Cities Women's Choir in 1997. A music teacher for 13 years in the public schools, Bussman now serves as principal of Central Middle School in Columbia Heights.

Jennifer Plum is the founder and head coach for the first recreational roller derby league in the Twin Cities. The league is open to all women over age 18, regardless of body type or athletic ability. The Minnesota Roller Girls' Debu-Taunts is in its second season and consists of 80 skaters who practice for up to three hours every week.

Patty Tanji works with local and state government agencies and the State Legislature to ensure the elimination of gender-based disparities in public employment in Minnesota. Her work allows for pay equity in the workplace, which positively impacts the lives of Minnesota women who work in the public sector. Her work directly impacts the economic power of these families.

Joanna Woolman directs the Reentry Clinic, a combined effort of the Minnesota Department of Corrections and the William Mitchell College of Law. Women reentering society from prison are paired with lawyers in training and a social worker to help them overcome legal and social barriers to successful reintegration. More than 100 women have participated, with a drastically reduced rate of recidivism.

Each Women of Distinction award recipient is being honored by Century College not only for her professional accomplishments, but also for her work in improving the lives and increasing opportunities for women and girls. Century began its Women of Distinction awards in 2005 to highlight the accomplishments of women in our society, and also to celebrate that more women gain access to higher education through community/technical colleges than through any other type of post-secondary institution.

Century's seventh annual awards ceremony and reception will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 1, at Dellwood Hills Golf Club, 29 Highway 96, Dellwood. Toni Randolph of Minnesota Public Radio will be the guest host and the Century College Choir will perform.

The Women of Distinction awards are sponsored by Century College and the Century College Women and Gender Studies Department. The public is invited to attend this free event. To RSVP, please call [Theresa Glass](#) at 651.779.5531.