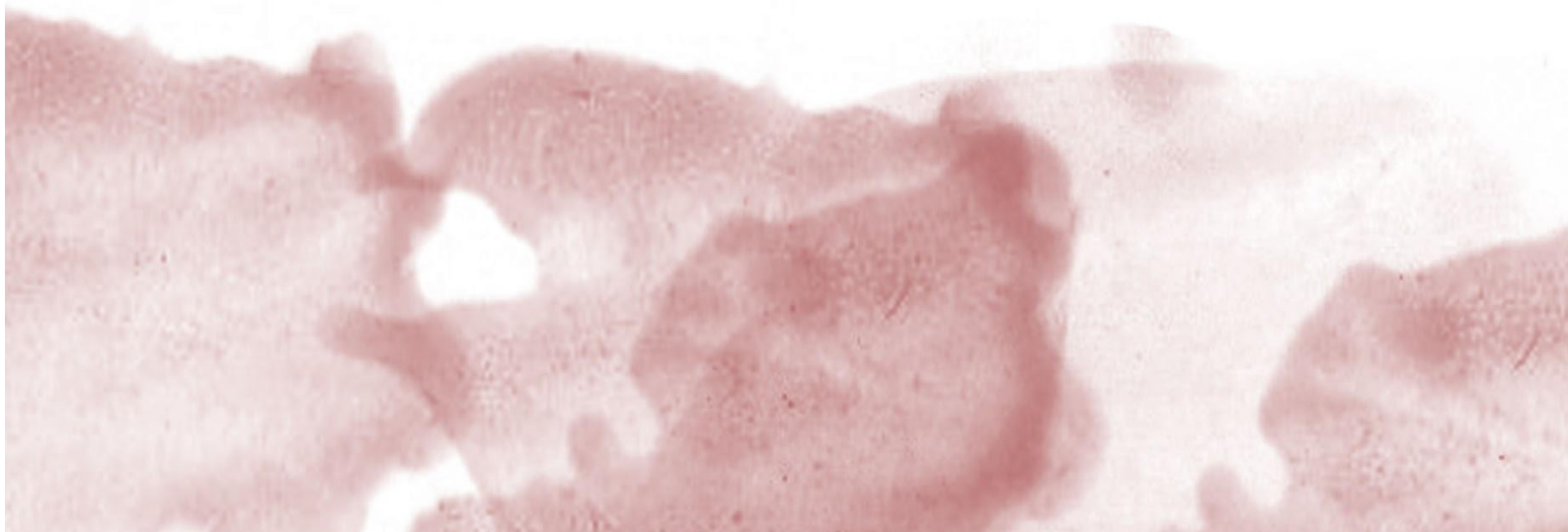


# *period perspectives*

## WILL/WGS Capstone Spring 2016

Tabiya Ahmed - Francesca Buarne - Rebecca Celestina - Karen Chan - Stephanie Cirullo  
Ashley Doctor - Rachel Fikslin - Kayla Gross - Colleen Murphy - Kristen Randolph  
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"So what would happen if suddenly, magically, men could menstruate and women could not?  
Clearly menstruation would become an enviable, worthy, masculine event...

The truth is that, if men could menstruate, the power justifications would go on and on.  
If we let them."

- gloria steinem

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## Introduction

This year's Women in Leadership and Learning (WILL) capstone's activism project at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) is unique, as it blends the concepts of two projects proposed by the class. Both the community and campus groups created projects about menstruation. It was clear from this coincidence that the issues that surround menstruation are ones that we as women leaders are passionate about and feel need to be addressed.

The community group aimed to address the needs of homeless menstruating persons in the Trenton and Ewing area by raising awareness about the occurrence of menstruation and the lack of access to menstrual products among homeless communities, as well as provide these individuals with reusable, transportable, low maintenance and long-lasting products.

The campus group aimed to increase awareness in the campus environment of the stigma against menstruation and the inequalities women face in connection with menstruation. In addition, a donation drive for menstrual products would be conducted for the homeless population in the area.

In combining our two projects, we decided to title the project "Period Perspectives" to encompass the different aims we were trying to achieve. These aims included:

- Bringing awareness of society's prejudiced perspective of menstruation
- Challenging the menstrual stigma
- Celebrating the unique experiences that each individual has with menstruation
- Challenging and changing people's perspectives on menstruation

## Mission

Our mission is to fight the stigma of menstruation through increased awareness as well as bring to light the lack of access to menstrual products among homeless communities. We hope to not only raise awareness but provide homeless persons who menstruate with reusable, transportable, low maintenance and long-lasting products.

## Target Population

The target population of this project is twofold. The initial phase of the project aims to address the TCNJ campus community by providing them with information about the general negative social stigma menstruation elicits as well as the intersectionality at play in the homeless menstruation experience. The second population targeted is the

homeless community of Trenton and Ewing in hopes that we may provide them with products that will alleviate some of the stress associated with homeless menstruation and empower them through this experience.

## **Events and Activities**

In order to bring awareness to the menstrual stigma and promote discussions about various aspects of menstruation, such as the pink tax and homeless individuals' experiences with menstruation, we hosted several on-campus events that took place from April 18 to 21, 2016. See Appendix A for pictures taken at each event. Along with our events, we had a Spare One, Share One initiative that encouraged people to share their disposable menstrual products with others who may need one in times of emergency. Furthermore, we engaged in discussions about menstruation with the TCNJ community through social media.

### **The Price is Right**

To start off our week of events, we hosted an interactive event that is based on the well-known Price is Right game show. At this event, we hoped to bring awareness to the “pink tax,” which is the extra amount charged for a product when it is marketed towards women. Although the “male” version of the product is equivalent to the “female” version, the “female” products are more expensive. Such gendered pricing also includes the luxury tax on certain items, such as tampons, and this presents an additional and unnecessary financial burden to women. Overall, through this event, we aimed to demonstrate the pervasiveness of the pink tax and the cumulative effect it has for women. By doing this, we hoped to raise awareness about gendered pricing.

This event took place on Monday, April 18, 2016 in the hallway of Eickhoff Hall from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Through our version of the Price is Right, students learned to recognize gendered pricing. On a poster, there were pictures of nine pairs of products; each pair contained a female-oriented version and a male-oriented version of the same product. The nine pairs of products were chosen from a sample of products reviewed by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. See Appendix B for the list of specific products used on the poster.

First, students were given the price of a male-oriented product and were then asked to guess the price of the female-oriented counterpart. The products used were items that are typically used throughout one's lifetime. This was intentionally done to demonstrate the pervasiveness of this inequality throughout one's life. After students guessed the price of the female-oriented item, we engaged the students in a brief discussion of gendered pricing, made connections to the homeless community, and then gave the

students candy as prizes.

Overall, the event was very successful. We had a strong number of people (both men and women) who stopped by our table. People seemed to be generally aware of how women's products tend to cost more than men's products, but many were surprised at how wide the margin of difference was. It seemed that the participants took our lesson to heart and agreed that such gendered pricing is unfair and should be challenged.

### **Making Reusable Pads**

In our efforts to raise awareness about different menstrual products and menstruation in the homeless community, our group held an event where we made reusable menstrual pads outside of Eickhoff Hall. The motivation behind this event was to publicly support menstruation and provide a launch point for conversations about alternative menstrual products. Through this event, we were able to discuss the difficulties of menstruation as a homeless person, the benefits reusable products have for this population and people in general, and advertise for events for the week including our active donation drive. At this event, we also sold menstrual pride bracelets as a fundraiser.

The event lasted for two hours, with two shifts of approximately 5 women. Those present sewed reusable pads from a template and engaged passers-by in discussion of the activity and its purpose. Some interested individuals assisted in sewing for some time. There was moderate interest from the students who walked past.

### **The Period Monologues**

Menstruation is often silenced. It is something by which many of those who menstruate are ashamed and embarrassed, and it is something that is encouraged to be hidden. However, we wanted to help break the stigma that surrounds menstruation at the Period Monologues. Menstruation is a natural process that about half the population goes through, so we wanted to give students the opportunity to share any experiences they had with menstruation in order to break the silence. We held the Period Monologues on Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 7:30 PM in the TCNJ Library Auditorium. To acquire student speakers, an email was sent to WILL members on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 (Appendix C).

Members of the Period Monologues committee also asked their friends to participate. From these recruiting efforts, we were able to get eight speakers. They were sent a congratulatory acceptance email as well as a line-up of when each person would speak so that they could prepare for the event.

The following individuals spoke about the following topics at the Period Monologues:

- Kayla Termyna: The first time she had to buy pads
- Ashley Doctor: Crushed ovary
- Ula Widocki: A period mishap
- Samantha Franz: Experiencing painful periods
- Jennie Sekanics: Using a tampon for the first time
- Bridget Appleby: The struggles of endometriosis
- Gigi Garrity: Having sex while menstruating
- Jessica Milne: High school pad experience
- Becky Celestina: Having polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)

To transition between these speakers, Rachel acted as our narrator, giving facts about periods and engaging with the audience. See Appendix D for the script. At the end, we held the floor open for 30 minutes to let audience members share an experience they've had with menstruation, where many additional speakers came forward.

The event was heavily attended, with almost the entire Library Auditorium being filled. There were even about ten men who attended. The feedback from the audience was extremely positive. One person said it was the most empowering event that she's been to on campus, while another attendee said hearing the stories inspired her to want to go to a doctor to check up on her irregular period.

We feared that, by having seven of the nine speakers be from WILL, the event would seem like a WILL-only event, and thus, affect the turnout. However, that was not the case at all. Nonetheless, if this event is held in the future, having a more mixed group of speakers might make the number of attendees even greater. Providing guests with a pamphlet so they know how many speakers there are and what the order is might prove to be beneficial as well.

## **Homelessness and Menstruation**

The hopes for this event originated in acknowledging that various people experience menstruation differently, and, because of our socioeconomic status, we have a very privileged menstrual experience. We wanted to bring to light a very important aspect of homelessness that does not normally get addressed: menstruation. Through much of our research, we found evidence stating that homeless people who menstruate experience more severe mental illnesses and health risks as well as an increased sense of shame that follows the stigma of menstruation. Our goal was to collect (through on-campus and company organizations) donations of both reusable and disposable menstrual hygiene products and donate them to a few local shelters or areas of refuge for homeless people. In addition to the donations, we wanted to conduct "information sessions" for using reusable products, such as the menstrual cups.

Unfortunately, due to confidentiality and smaller populations than previously expected, the information sessions were not possible. However, all the shelters and centers that we reached out to were more than happy to accept donations.

In order to provide the homeless community with reusable menstrual products, we reached out to a variety of menstrual cup companies and on-and off-campus eateries for “dine-to-donate” fundraisers. An example of the email we used to explain our project to the menstrual cup companies is available in Appendix E. We also made menstrual pride bracelets to sell at our events. Due to time constraints, poor response from eateries, and the minimal expenses accrued through this project, the “dine-to-donate” fundraisers were foregone. Appendix F lists the companies contacted for menstrual product donations.

We received positive responses from Lena Cup and Femme Cup and are expecting to receive 20-25 menstrual cups. Precious Stars Pads agreed to donate a small number of reusable pads. Edgewell Personal Care of Allendale, NJ donated 48 packages of panty liners.

### **Spare One, Share One Initiative**

The goal of the the Spare One, Share One Initiative was to raise awareness about the empty menstrual product dispensers on campus. The initiative began with reaching out to the college administration to understand why the menstrual product dispensers are not filled. Student Affairs was the first party contacted about the empty dispensers. Angela Lauer Chong, the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, was contacted after Student Affairs failed to respond. Angela Chong then suggested contacting Kathy Leverton, Associate Vice President of Facilities and Administrative Services. Kathy Leverton finally answered the questions of the empty menstrual product dispensers by saying they take too much time and money to keep filled. The unreasonable response led to writing an [opinion piece in the \*Signal\*](#) (Appendix G) and the implementation of the Spare One, Share One Initiative. All correspondence can be found in Appendix H.

The displays for the Spare One, Share One Initiative consisted of baskets and two flyers that were taped above the basket. The flyers (Appendix I), which were designed on Photoshop, brought awareness to the fact that the menstrual product dispensers were not stocked and encouraged women to join in solidarity to share a pad or tampon or take one if needed. In addition, one of the flyers (Appendix J) advertised our events for the week, with the location and timings. These displays were set up in the library bathrooms on each floor. In order to get them approved, we had to contact Paula Rainey and meet with her in person to discuss our objective. Overall, we believe that the project went well. Many of the displays had multiple menstrual products in them. An



issue that we had run into was that, despite being approved, the displays were being torn down. Luckily, we were able to fix this by simply posting another flyer.

## Engagement through Social Media

### Twitter

Along with our events and Spare One, Share One Initiative throughout the week, we wanted to further engage with the TCNJ community and spread awareness about the Period Perspectives project through discussions on social media. Jennie Sekanics, one of the WILL capstone students, was responsible for maintaining the Twitter account [@PeriodPrspctvs](#). In order to create a sense of cohesiveness between the two social media platforms and ensure consistency, the Facebook page and the Twitter account were both branded with the same images (Appendix K).

This was a very important step in maintaining an easily recognizable image for our followers to look for and expect when researching our project or attempting to locate information regarding our week of events. If WILL students decide to continue this mission throughout the Aprils to come, we suggest for them to use the same images or use the same set of new images for both existing accounts. In this way, we can maintain our following while increasing engagement with new followers.

To kick off the creation of our Twitter account, Jennie first tweeted about our mission. The first tweet was: “In creating this on-campus movement [@TCNJ](#), we are determined to eradicate the stigma of menstruation from topics of conversation.”

Through this tweet, Jennie wanted to make it clear that our account was about menstruation and menstruation activism so that followers were immediately aware of what our purpose was. Additionally, Jennie followed various menstrual product companies, feminist activists, menstrual activists and students at TCNJ.

After tweeting about our mission, Jennie tried to use her knowledge of Twitter and successful feminist Twitter accounts, such as Femspain and Huffpost Women, and apply a witty, humorous but raunchingly real attitude to our tweets. For instance, Jennie’s first “humorous but real” tweet was: “The sigh of relief when ur period comes when ur on the toilet in the am instead of while u were sleeping w/o wearing any menstrual tech>>>>” This tweet is light and funny but incredibly relatable, and, thus, it engaged greatly with our audience of students and menstruators.

In order to increase our following in the beginning, Jennie used her own Twitter account [@jen\\_fem](#) to retweet [@PeriodPrspctvs](#) tweets and add a personal flair to our capstone. With our Twitter account on her feed, Jennie’s followers were able to take interest in our account because they recognized her face and voice. With this strategy, Jennie live tweeted about her period every day for a week, using a different menstrual product each day. This allowed her to ensure that she discussed every type of menstrual technology as well as continue that personal sentiment she sought to convey.

In addition to tweeting about her personal experiences with menstrual products (pads, tampons and cups), Jennie conducted a poll to engage our followers about their own menstruating experience. They had the opportunity to choose between disposable pads, disposable tampons, menstrual cups and reusable pads as their preferred menstrual technology. We were able to receive 45 votes, which at the time, was almost our entire following. The poll was extremely successful and granted a weeklong discussion on examining preferred menstrual products amongst college-aged menstruators.

As Jennie started to talk about her period, she tried to use general/humorous visuals as often as possible so that followers would feel welcome to retweet/favorite the material. She used the GIF toolbar often to tweet common thoughts menstruators have while menstruating with a humorous image to go along with it. She also took selfies with her menstrual products so that our followers were able to put a face to the tweets being generated, making the material and following the experience much more real and genuine. Each interaction, in this way, was personal.

In between funny and honest tweets about menstruation and menstruating, Jennie researched facts about the products she was using and tweeted those to our followers. She specifically focused on the expenses and sustainability of each product because that was the main goal of our capstone—to raise awareness of the pink tax, lack of accessibility for homeless communities and promoting environmentally friendly products.

Storytelling is also a very important tool when trying to maintain a following. Jennie posed questions to her followers and then retweeted their answers so that we could promote their social platforms while they engaged with us. The use of retweeting our followers continued our personal sentiment and encouraged other followers to tweet at us, whether for the cause or for the personal exposure. Jennie's most successful Twitter campaign was: What your first time using a tampon like? What was your experience?

As the Social Media Strategist, Jennie also tweeted at every event and asked participants for their handles/names and quoted/took pictures of them so that they would feel inclined to retweet the material. She live tweeted the Price is Right event and the Menstrual Pad Making Day while she took pictures at the Period Monologues and uploaded a Facebook photo album. Because she was also performing in the monologues, it was difficult to tweet the entire time so for the next launch of this project, we suggest having someone who isn't performing a monologue live tweet and film the event so that we can post about it in the moment and later on.

She also consistently retweeted articles about periods, pink tax and menstrual technology. She wanted to keep our followers informed of not only what we were doing on our campus, but what was going on in the greater community. We hoped to convey that this issue is not limited to our individual TCNJ student experience.

In total, we obtained 83 followers, and we definitely would have reached 100 if we had live tweeted the monologues. Our most successful tweet had 4 retweets and 14 favorites: “if I run with a tampon in hand can I pass it to other joggers like a baton in a relay race??? tryna end the menstruation shame at all costs”

Overall, using colloquialisms and maintaining a personal connection to and engagement with our followers allowed for our Twitter account to be a success. In the future, we would like for there to be a hashtag campaign for students to write to throughout the week of events. Additionally, we think it would be helpful to continue having the event the third or fourth week of April so that it can be tied to Earth Week and the sustainability movement, being that we focused on menstrual cups and raising awareness about menstrual product waste.

## Facebook

Our Facebook group, “[Period Perspectives](#),” was created and used to share relevant articles and videos associated with menstruation, leading up to the main week of events. Our goal was to not only promote our main events, but also to create a space that shared and discussed important, relevant information about menstruation. It is important that the students of TCNJ are aware of the negative stigmas associated with menstruation in society. It is equally as important that those who menstruate on campus are aware of safer ways to take care of their menstrual period.

To do this, we posted articles, such as “For Homeless Women, Getting Their Period is One of the Most Difficult Challenges” and “Myths and Facts About Menstrual Bleeding.” These articles provided factual information to the TCNJ community, with the goal of educating to eliminate the spread of inaccurate information. These articles also accounted for intersectional viewpoints of menstruation; those who menstruate do not all undergo the same experiences. We also provided articles on the politics behind menstruation; to encourage students to become educated about the very few legislators who are pushing the FDA to expose the harmful materials used in menstrual products. These articles not only educate them on safer alternatives that can be used, but also encourage them to vote for a representative that can make a positive impact on women’s reproductive health.

Videos were also posted to promote period positivity. Menstruation should empower individuals, not make anyone feel shameful or dirty. By breaking the silence and promoting awareness about the existing negative stigmas of menstruation in society, students on campus can better understand the importance of our project’s mission to challenge and end those stigmas. We also promoted our Twitter account on our Facebook page, so we can not only gain more crossover followers, but also to encourage the conversation on two different social media platforms.

During the week of our main events, we used the Facebook page to promote our events to the students at TCNJ. An event page for the Period Monologues was also created, in which 36 people said they were “going” to the event, though more people attended. Pictures from the Price is Right and Making Reusable Pads events were posted as they

happened to encourage students to stop by our events to learn more about the pink tax and to help sew, respectively. Pictures of the Period Monologues speakers were also posted on the Facebook page. We continued to utilize Facebook to keep followers up-to-date on our project's events so that they, too, could play an important role in actively destigmatizing menstruation.

In the "About" section of our page, our "short description" was listed as: "Our mission is to bring menstruation to the forefront of conversation and awareness to the lack of access to menstrual products in homeless communities."

Our long description was:

"Period Perspectives is a women's series created by the 2016 graduating Women's and Gender Studies community activism capstone at TCNJ. In creating this on-campus movement, we are determined to eradicate the stigma of menstruation from topics of conversation. We will be holding events on campus to discuss the pink tax and how it causes women to pay higher costs for daily necessities (especially in regards to menstrual products), the difficulties homeless women face when menstruating (due to the lack of access they have to menstrual products), and share different comedic/informational/somber/etc.. anecdotes people have experienced with periods. We hope to provide everyone with an abundant amount of information in regards to women's health, and to alleviate some stress people may find when discussing their periods."

Social media, such as Facebook, is a crucial tool to reach a broader audience of people. Facebook has been an important, necessary aspect of our project in order to continue the conversation.

## **Committees**

To ensure efficiency throughout this project, there were eight different committees. Three of the committees were "general committees," each with an essential function. The remaining committees were "event committees," which were each responsible for one of the five main events/activities. Everyone was encouraged to join one general and one event committee, where they would be able to share ideas, collaborate, and carry out the various duties assigned to each person. The committees are as followed:

### **General Committees**

#### **I. Handbook Committee**

This committee was responsible for creating the handbook. Specific tasks included assigning various parts of the handbook to people, compiling the information, editing, and finalizing the handbook.

Members included Karen Chan and Kristen Randolph.

## II. Fundraising Committee

In order to ensure that the costs associated with the overall project were taken care of, this committee planned different ways we could fundraise. These various ways included selling handmade bracelets and trying to organize a few “dine-to-donate” events at on- and off-campus restaurants like Piccolo’s and RedBerry. However, due to time constraints, a lack of responses from restaurants, and the minimal expenses accrued throughout the project, the “dine-to-donate” fundraisers were foregone. The fundraising committee also reached out to menstrual product companies to ask for donations of products for our drive.

Members included Rebecca Celestina, Stephanie Cirullo, Rachel Fikslin, Kayla Gross, Alyssa Rosenberg, and Kathleen Yorke.

## III. Publicity Committee

This committee was responsible for creating materials that would bring awareness to the Period Perspectives project and its events. To publicize the events around campus, the committee designed and posted flyers (Appendix J) in the main academic and dormitory buildings and wrote an [article](#) (Appendix G) related to menstruation for TCNJ’s school newspaper *The Signal*.

In order to further spread awareness about the project, the committee publicized on various social media platforms, specifically Twitter and Facebook. The committee created our Facebook page titled [Period Perspectives](#), where they posted articles and videos related to menstruation, encouraged people to attend our events, and overall spread awareness about the project. By the end of the project, the Facebook page had 111 “likes.” On the Twitter account, [@PeriodPrspctvs](#), the committee encouraged others to share their perspectives and experiences related to menstruation. Additionally, through the Twitter account, we were able to share pictures from our events and share our own experiences with using different types of menstrual products. By the end of the project, the Twitter account had 84 followers.

Members included Tabiya Ahmed, Francesca Buarne, Ashley Doctor, Colleen Murphy, Jennie Sekanics, and Isabelle Tan.

## **Event Committees**

### **I. The Price is Right Committee**

This committee was responsible for planning for the Price is Right event. To prepare, the committee did some research about the pink tax and gendered pricing. Additionally, the committee members selected the various products (Appendix B) that were used for the event and created a display (Appendix A) for the event.

Members included Francesca Buarne, Karen Chan, and Kristen Randolph.

### **II. Making Reusable Pads Committee**

This committee was responsible for planning for the Making Reusable Pads tabling event. To prepare for the event, the committee found tutorials on how to make reusable pads and purchased the appropriate supplies needed. Additionally, one member of the committee who is familiar with sewing provided a tutorial of how to sew and make reusable menstrual pads. This tutorial took place at the end of class the week before our event.

Members included Rebecca Celestina, Jennie Sekanics, and Alyssa Rosenberg.

### **III. Period Monologues Committee**

This committee was responsible for planning, organizing and narrating at the Period Monologues. In preparation for the event, the committee recruited speakers through the various means discussed above, found “fun facts” to share between each monologue, and narrated at the event.

Members included Ashley Doctor, Rachel Fikslin, and Colleen Murphy.

### **IV. Homelessness and Menstruation Committee**

This committee was responsible for planning for our menstrual product drive, which aimed to collect menstrual products for the homeless population. Donation boxes were placed around campus, such as in the Student Center and Bliss Hall. Additionally, this committee reached out to local homeless shelters to try to organize an event in which we could invite a homeless individual to come speak at TCNJ and share his/her experiences with menstruation. Along with having a speaker, the committee tried to organize an event that would allow the capstone

class to visit a local homeless shelter so we could donate our collected menstrual products and provide lessons on how to use menstrual cups. However, as discussed above, these plans were not carried through due to confidentiality and a lack of interest from local shelters. However, we still plan on donating the collected products to a few nearby shelters.

Members included: Katie Yorke, Kayla Gross and Steph Cirullo.

#### **V. Spare One, Share One Initiative Committee**

This committee was responsible for leading the Spare One, Share One Initiative. For the initiative, the committee members reached out to various people on campus about the lack of stocked tampon dispensers around campus. Additionally, the committee organized the Spare One, Share One Initiative with its baskets around campus.

Members included Tabiya Ahmed and Isabelle Tan.

## Project Timeline

### WEEK 1: March 6 to 12, 2016

- Book locations and rooms for all events
  - Library Auditorium for Monologues
  - Eickhoff Hall for the Price is Right and Making Reusable Menstrual Pads
- Spare One, Share One Initiative
  - Contact Paula Rainey to gain permission to have the bathroom displays in the library
  - Contact TCNJ Facilities, Student Government, and Student Affairs about how to restock tampon dispensers
- The Price is Right
  - Conduct research about pink tax and gendered pricing
  - Choose featured items for the game board
- Menstrual Product Drive
  - Reach out to homeless shelters, asking if they're interested in receiving donations
  - Reach out to homeless shelters for potential speakers
  - Book space for speaker

### WEEK 2: March 13 to 19, 2016

- The Price is Right
  - Record local prices of selected items for the event
- Outreach to menstrual cup companies
  - Send emails
  - Asking for donations

### WEEK 3: March 20 to 26, 2016

- Create flyers for events
- Find facts related to menstruation to be shared at Period Monologues
- Fundraising
  - Reach out to potential dine-to-donate eateries
- Social Media
  - Create Twitter
  - Create Facebook
  - Start promoting both
- Period Monologues
  - Email WILL for speakers
  - Ask friends for speakers



**WEEK 4: March 27 to April 2, 2016**

- Make menstruation awareness bracelets for fundraising

**WEEK 5: April 3 to 9, 2016**

- Find other student organizations to co-sponsor with
- Period Monologues
  - Finalize speakers
  - Create a script

**WEEK 6: April 10 to 16, 2016**

- Submit events to Lionsgate
- Get flyers approved and hung up around campus
- Spare One, Share One Initiative
  - Meet with Paula Rainey about bathroom displays
  - Write opinion piece for the Signal
- Purchase all supplies for events
- Place donation boxes for tampons/pads around campus
- Follow up with Period Monologues speakers
- Start promoting and telling people about our social media platforms and project

**WEEK 7: April 17 to 23, 2016**

- April 17: Set up Spare One, Share One Initiative in library
- April 18: The Price is Right tabling
  - Eickhoff Hall hallway from 4 to 6 PM
- April 19: Making Reusable Menstrual Pads
  - Eickhoff Hall hallway from 4 to 6 PM
- April 21: Period Monologues
  - Library Auditorium from 7:30 to 9PM

## Supplies and Costs

<b>The Price is Right</b>	
1 tri-fold poster	\$5.49
1 bag of candy	\$4.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10.48</b>
<b>Menstrual Awareness Bracelets</b>	
Beads	Donated by Alyssa Rosenberg
String	Donated by Kayla Gross
<b>Making Reusable Menstrual Pads</b>	
3 yards of fabric	N/A
2 yards of batting	N/A
Thread	N/A
Needles	N/A
Buttons	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>
<b>Spare One, Share One Displays</b>	
2 baskets	Donated by ML Hopps
Printing flyers	\$4.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4.20</b>
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>\$34.68</b>

## Resources

Angela Lauer Chong, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, [chonga@tcnj.edu](mailto:chonga@tcnj.edu)

Edward Gruber, Director of Building Services, [gruber@tcnj.edu](mailto:gruber@tcnj.edu)

Kathy Leverton, Associate VP of Facilities and Admin. Services, [kleverto@tcnj.edu](mailto:kleverto@tcnj.edu)

Javier Nicasio, Student Government Executive Vice President, [sg@tcnj.edu](mailto:sg@tcnj.edu)

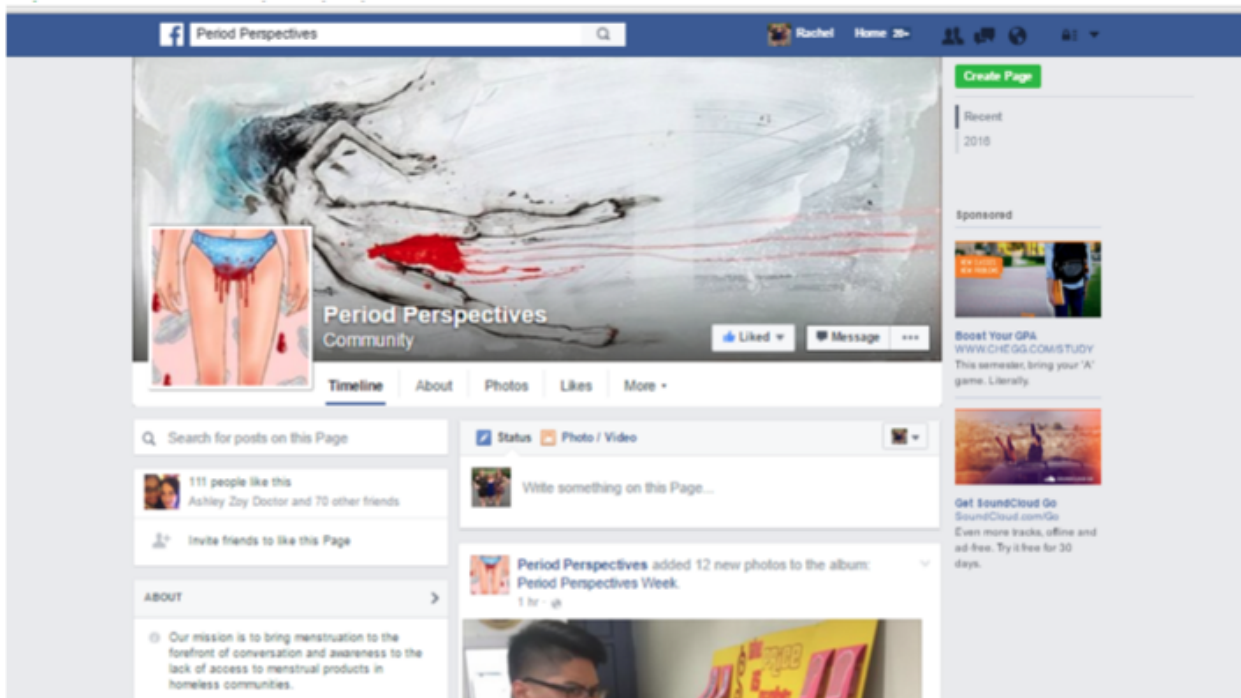
Paula Rainey, Program Assistant, Library, [rainey@tcnj.edu](mailto:rainey@tcnj.edu)

Kate Selby, Femme Cup, [kate.selby@femmecup.com](mailto:kate.selby@femmecup.com)

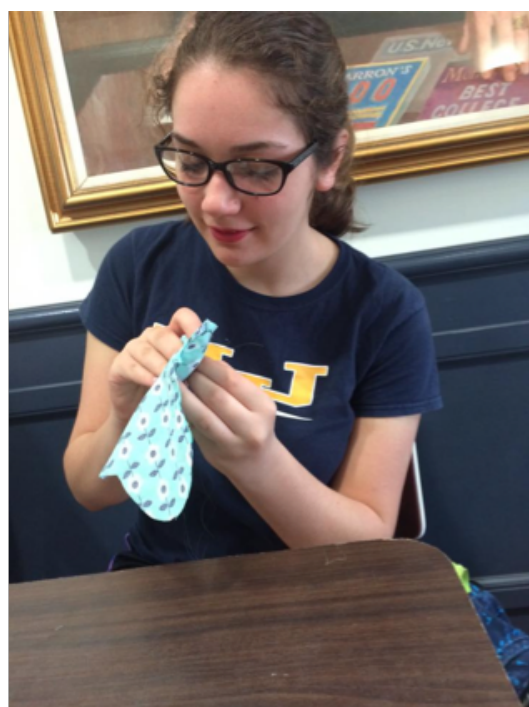
## Appendix

### A. Photos.















**B. List of Products Included in The Price is Right Game.**

<b>Item Category</b>	<b>Male Product &amp; Price</b>	<b>Female Product &amp; Price</b>
<b>Toys &amp; Accessories</b>		
Bikes and Scooters	Radio Flyer My 1st Scooter-Sport Red \$24.99	Radio Flyer My First Scooter-Sparkle Pink \$49.99
Helmets and Pads	Raskullz Shark Attax Ride Alongz Toddler Helmet \$14.99	Raskullz Unicorn Ride Alongz Toddler Helmet \$27.99
<b>Children's Clothing</b>		
Children's Shirts	Short-Sleeved Uniform \$10.95	Uniform Short Sleeve \$12.95
<b>Adult Clothing</b>		
Jeans	Levi's 501 CT Jeans \$68.00	Levi's 501 CT Jeans \$88.00
Shirts	Abercrombie & Fitch Applique Logo Graphic Tee \$30	Abercrombie & Fitch Applique Logo Graphic Tee \$40
<b>Personal Care Products</b>		
Shampoo & Conditioner	Alberto VO5 3-in-1 Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash \$1.29	Alberto 2-in-1 Moisturizing Shampoo + Conditioner \$1.99
Razor Cartridges	Schick Hydro 5 Cartridges \$14.99	Schick Hydro Silk Cartridges \$18.49
<b>Senior/Home Health Care</b>		
Supports and Braces	ITA-MED Rib Support-White \$22.99	ITA-MED Rib Support-White \$26.99
Compression Socks	FUTURO Revitalizing Dress Socks-Medium Black \$18.99	FUTURO Revitalizing Trouser Socks-Medium Black \$21.99
<b>Average price for a box of tampons = \$7.95</b>		

### C. Email Invitation to WILL Members to Speak at Period Monologues.

Hi WILL,

The WILL capstone is planning a really exciting week of events in order to destigmatize menstruation. We hope for one of those events to be the Period Monologues, which is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, at 7:30 p.m.

We are looking for a couple of WILL members who would be interested in giving a 5-minute or so monologue on their menstruation experience. This could be taken in any direction you might want to go: telling the story of the the first time you menstruated, discussing medical conditions you might have, recounting a funny story, explaining how menstruating affects your life, etc. Really anything.

**If you are interested in getting involved, please email me back by this Friday, April 1,** with a brief description of what you would like to talk about in your monologue. This is just to ensure that we have a nice mixture of stories.

Thank you, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Colleen Murphy

## D. Narrator's Script for Period Monologues.

Hello and welcome to The Period Monologues! This event is the last event in a series of events and efforts put forth as a part of our WGS capstone, Period Perspectives! The purpose of this project is two-fold. Period perspectives on campus has been an effort to challenge menstrual stigma by opening up the conversation on campus and promoting a period positive attitude. In addition, period perspectives acknowledges that different groups have different and more challenging experiences with menstruation than others. For example, many overlook the menstruation experiences of transgender people, people living in extreme poverty, prison inmates, and homeless people. In particular, our goal is to spread awareness about the challenges of menstruating homeless women in affording menstrual products and managing their menses. We have been collecting donations of menstruation products, both disposable and reusable, for local Trenton shelters as part of this effort. If you would like to donate, please bring new boxes of products to one of the donation boxes in the library, Social Sciences building, or Bliss Hall.

The Period Monologues was created to challenge the silence surrounding menstruation and acknowledge the complex experiences that people have with menstruation. Every person's story matters and can have an impact. Tonight, we are so excited to have our speakers share their stories with you. If there is enough time, we will then open the floor for anyone in the audience to get up and share a menstruation story of their own.

Please give a warm welcome to our first speaker, Kayla Termina

\*Monologue 1\*

Myth: Women lose a lot of blood during their cycle.

Fact: On average, women lose only around 2 to 3 tablespoons during their whole period.

Let's give it up for our next speaker, Ashley Doctor

\*Monologue 2\*

People usually refrain from sharing their menstrual status. Let's break down that barrier. Who here is currently menstruating? Let's give them some love! Anybody on Day 1? Day 2 anybody? Day 3? 4 or more!?

Thanks for sharing everybody! Next to the stage, let's welcome Ula (Ursula) Widocki

\*Monologue 3\*

The average box of pads or tampons costs about \$7. For someone who needs one box per cycle, this is about \$84 a year spent on menstrual products. Most men do not have such an expense and so women have this added expense. This is one element of what is often called the "pink tax." This added expense is especially significant for those living in poverty or those who are homeless. It is important to recognize the challenges that these menstruators face. Please consider donating a box or telling your friends about this issue and our drive!

Our next speaker is going to talk about another often unacknowledged challenge related to menstruation. Please welcome Sam Franz

**\*Monologue 4\***

Some people like to use their periods to a creative advantage. Here is an example of a menstrual art piece that was painted with menstrual blood. One woman even painted a portrait of Donald Trump's face with her menstrual blood! The period positive possibilities are endless.

Next up, we have Jennie Sekanics!

**\*Monologue 5\***

At least 500 million girls and women globally lack adequate facilities for managing their periods, according to a 2015 report from UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO). In rural India, one in five girls drops out of school after they start menstruating. Four in five girls in East Africa lack access to sanitary pads and related health education. These challenges occur in many countries around the globe. The good news is that many local and global organizations involved with girls' education and menstrual hygiene are involved in efforts to provide solutions to this problem. Spreading knowledge about these issues is one way to help these movements gain support.

Please give a warm welcome to our next speaker, Bridget Appleby

**\*Monologue 6\***

Myth: It isn't safe to have sex when a woman is menstruating.

Fact: You are at the same risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) during menstruation as at any other time of the month. If either partner has an STD, the menstrual blood can make it easier to transmit. You should always use a condom for protection whether menstruating or not.

Our next speaker will continue to address this topic. Please welcome Gigi Garrity!

**\*Monologue 7\***

Hi again everyone. Raise your hand if you have previously heard of a menstrual cup. Awesome! Raise your hand if you have ever gotten to play with one? I'm gonna pass this menstrual cup and reusable pad around so everyone can have a chance to check it out! They are used for demonstration only and have not been inside or around a vagina.

Our next speaker did her senior research on attitudes about menstrual cups, but has a different experience to share. Welcome Jessica Milne

**\*Monologue 8\***

In a study by Roberts et al, a woman who dropped a tampon versus a hairclip was viewed as less competent and likeable by participants who were not aware about the purpose of the study. This shows that even an indication of a woman menstruating can cause people to view her more negatively. These perceptions can have tangible consequences for women in the workplace and other settings. Together we can change negative attitudes surrounding menstruation.

I'd like to introduce our last scheduled speaker, Becky Celestina

\*Monologue 9\*

Thank you all again for coming! We now have about # minutes of time if anyone from the audience would like to come up and share a period story. We have time for about (3) speakers. Please raise your hand if you would like to!

## E. Email to Menstrual Cup Companies.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (Company),

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name here) and I am a Women's and Gender Studies student at The College of New Jersey. I am in a program called Women In Learning and Leadership (WILL) and as part of our capstone/senior seminar, my fellow students and I are designing and executing a community-based activist project. We have become increasingly interested in reusable menstrual products and the benefits of their use, specifically for people who may not have access to menstrual products. We have decided to design a project in which we will hold a drive to collect reusable menstrual cups and sew menstrual pads. We will then partner with a local homeless shelter in Trenton, NJ in order to tell those who menstruate at this shelter about reusable products and offer them free products.

We are writing to ask if you would be willing to donate any of your reusable menstrual products for this project. Since this is a small project, any number of products you would be willing to donate would help us immensely! As a thank you for your generous donation, we will include your brand logo on our promotion materials that will be posted online and on The College of New Jersey campus and we will vocally thank your company at a series of events leading up to the completion of the drive.

Please let us know if you have any questions or any capacity to support this project. We appreciate your commitment to enhancing women's experiences with menstruation and hope you will extend this commitment to people who might otherwise have no access to reusable menstrual products.

Thank you,  
(Name)

## F. Menstrual Product Companies Contacted.

Companies Contacted for Donations			
AngelCup	FemmyCycle	Lunette	Rainbow Cup
Anigan EvaCup	FleurCup	Luv Ur Body	Ruby Cup
Bella Cup	Intimina Lily	MeLuna	SckoonCup
Blossom Cup	Iris Cup	MenstroCup	Si-bell
Comfycup	Juju	MiaLuna	Softcup
CupLee	Keeper	Mia Cup	Super Jennie
Diamond	Lady Cup	Moon Cup - US	Yuuki
Divacup	Lena Cup	Mooncup- UK	
Edgewell Personal Care	Lola Cup	NaturCup	
Femmecup	Luna Cup	Precious Stars Pads	

\*Companies who donated are highlighted.



G. [Opinion Article](#) Published in the *Signal*.

## COLLEGE FAILS TO BREAK GENDER DISPARITIES

APRIL 19, 2016 SIGNAL CONTRIBUTOR



*The College neglects to provide stocked menstrual product dispensers in the bathrooms. (Tom Ballard / Opinions Editor)*

By Isabelle Tan and Tabiya Ahmed

Menstruation is not only a biological function, but also part of a larger ongoing social, political and economic debate. Oftentimes, the stigma of menstruation is accepted without consideration, but it is important to critically analyze these social norms and understand how they directly impact women.

Due to the detrimental social stigmas surrounding a woman's period, women are often denied access to income equality across the globe, whether in the form of exclusion from schooling or marginalization in higher levels of leadership and economic power. This economic inequality is further worsened as menstruating women either completely lack access to or face higher prices and taxes for menstrual products throughout the world.

According to the Washington Post, 40 states in the U.S. tax menstrual products as a luxury good, which is designated for products deemed unnecessary or unessential. On the other hand, products such as Rogaine for Men are considered tax-exempt because they qualify as "medical supplies," as described by the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance.

This gender disparity in terms of lack of access to menstrual products is blatantly visible on the College's campus through the absence of stocked menstrual product dispensers in the bathrooms. Most women have not seen them stocked in so long that they forget their existence as a resource. This is an issue that needs to be addressed by the College's administration.

In addition, in regards to issues with access, individuals with a uterus are being charged higher prices for their periods, a natural process which they cannot control. This tax puts a disproportionate financial burden on women, especially women living in poverty.

As college students, a lot of us often take our menstrual products for granted. Imagine what it would be like if you could not afford these products. How would we complete everyday activities? Where would we find resources that could help us? This is an issue that women, especially homeless and low-income women, face every day across the world and even in the College's neighboring city of Trenton, N.J., a city in which, according to the U.S. Census, has a high population of 28.4 percent of individuals living below the poverty line.

In order to promote gender equality and respect women's bodies, it is important to de-stigmatize menstruation and increase the awareness about this natural process that about half of the world's population undergoes.

We have to stop teaching girls to hide their menstrual products and instead focus on empowering them through education about menstrual hygiene. We need to shift our focus to combating systemic inequalities, such as the "tampon tax," that were created under the governance of all-men politicians.

Women's rights are human rights and the progression of society as a whole can only occur when all of its members are treated with dignity and equality.

*Tan and Ahmed are members of the Women in Learning and Leadership/women's and gender studies capstone class, which is advocating for the de-stigmatization of menstruation.*

## **H. Email Correspondence Regarding Menstrual Product Dispensers.**

### **Emails with Edward Gruber, Director of Building Services**

**March 6, 2016**

Dear Mr. Gruber,

My name is Tabiya Ahmed and I am a student in the Women and Gender Studies Capstone at TCNJ and a Community Advisor in Travers. Our project this year is focused on de-stigmatizing menstruation around campus. We noticed a trend where most bathrooms on campus do not have a stocked feminine product dispenser. Is there any thing that can be done to have these refilled? We wanted to research why this was the case and would greatly appreciate your insight.

Thank you so much for your time and input,

Tabiya Ahmed

**March 8, 2016**

Hi Tabiya,

It has never been the practice of Building Services to supply and stock feminine product dispensers on the campus. I cannot provide insight into the history of the practice of the campus not providing the product. Any possible reasons, would be total speculation.

We will continue to provide for the disposal.

I am sorry that I could not be of more help.

Ed

**March 9, 2016**

Ed,

Thank you so much for your quick reply. I was wondering if you knew anyone that I could contact about this issue?

I greatly appreciate all of your help!

**March 9, 2016**

Tabiya,

As a student, possibly Student Affairs or someone in Res Ed? As staff/faculty, possibly Office of Human Resources.

I have a sneaky suspicion that it may work it's way back to us.

Let me know how it works out.

## **Emails with Javier Nicasio, Student Government Executive VP**

**March 24, 2016**

Hello Javier!

My name is Tabiya Ahmed and I am a student in the Women and Gender Studies Capstone. Our project this year is focused on de-stigmatizing menstruation around campus. We noticed a trend where most bathrooms on campus do not have a stocked feminine product dispenser. Do you know if there is anything in Student Government's ability that can be done to have these refilled? We wanted to research why this was the case and would greatly appreciate your insight.

Thank you so much for your time and input,  
Tabiya

**March 29, 2016**

Hi Tabiya,

This is the information that I have received regarding your question. It seems like administration is looking into this. Let me know if I can do anything else for you.

Best,

Javier Nicasio

Executive Vice President

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Elizabeth Bapasola <bapasola@tcnj.edu>

Date: Tue, Mar 29, 2016 at 7:53 AM

Subject: Re: WGS question Student Gov

To: Angela Lauer Chong <chonga@tcnj.edu>

Cc: Janice Vermeychuk <vermeyj@tcnj.edu>, sg@tcnj.edu

Angela,

Thanks for letting us know! I'm copying Javier on this so he knows the administration is already looking into this student concern.

Elizabeth Bapasola

Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Engagement

The College of New Jersey

bapasola@tcnj.edu

On Mar 28, 2016, at 9:05 PM, Angela Lauer Chong <chonga@tcnj.edu> wrote:

Liz and Janice,

This student group has emailed multiple folks. Curt and his folks are already looking into it.

ALC

On Mar 28, 2016, at 8:59 PM, Elizabeth Bapasola <bapasola@tcnj.edu> wrote:

Just forwarding you something Janice is helping SG with.

Hope you're feeling better!

Elizabeth Bapasola  
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Engagement  
The College of New Jersey  
bapasola@tcnj.edu

Begin forwarded message:

From: Janice Vermeychuk <vermeyj@tcnj.edu>  
Date: March 28, 2016 at 8:56:50 PM EDT  
To: Javier Nicasio <nicasij1@tcnj.edu>  
Cc: Elizabeth Bapasola <bapasola@tcnj.edu>  
Subject: Re: WGS question Student Gov

Hi Javier,

I am out of the office until Thursday but will find out who oversees the stocking of these dispensers.

Janice

On 3/28/2016 4:40 PM, Elizabeth Bapasola wrote:  
Javier,

It might be best to start with Student Health Services to have them weigh in on this concern expressed.  
I'm copying the Director, Janice, on this message.

Best,  
Liz

Elizabeth Bapasola  
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs  
The College of New Jersey  
2000 Pennington Road  
Ewing, NJ 08628  
T: (609) 771-2455  
F: (609) 637-5012  
bapasola@tcnj.edu

From: "Javier Nicasio" <nicasij1@tcnj.edu>  
To: "Elizabeth Bapasola" <bapasola@tcnj.edu>  
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 11:09:44 AM  
Subject: Re: WGS question Student Gov

Hi Liz,

I received this email and don't really know how to respond to it. I was wondering if you would be able to provide me with more information regarding this issue so that I can respond appropriately to her. Do school have to have these dispensers?

Best,

Javier Nicasio

Javier Nicasio  
School of Education | Urban Elementary Education  
School of Humanities and Social Science | History  
Student Government | Executive Vice President  
TCNJ Admissions | College Ambassador  
Leadership Development Program | Facilitator

**March 31, 2016**

Hi Javier,

Thank you so much for your help! All of us greatly appreciate it. Let me know if you hear about any further developments.

Thanks again!

**Emails with Angela Lauer Chong, Assistant VP of Student Affairs**

**March 24, 2016**

Hello,

My name is Isabelle Tan and I am currently enrolled in the Women and Gender Studies Capstone at TCNJ. Our project this year is focused on de-stigmatizing menstruation around campus. We noticed a trend where most bathrooms on campus do not have a stocked feminine product dispenser. Is there any reason why these dispensers are empty? In addition, can anything be done to get these dispensers refilled? We are unsure of who to turn to regarding these questions and are hoping you can help!

Thanks in advance,  
Isabelle Tan

**March 28, 2016**

Dear Isabelle,

I wanted to circle back with you. We were able to connect with the facilities department, and the leadership of that department is looking into your request at this time. I can let you know what develops, but it appears they are the correct area to make the inquiry.

Best,  
Angela

**April 6, 2016**

Dear Isabelle,

I have confirmed that the person investigating this issue in facilities is Kathy Leverton, Associate Vice President of Facilities and Administrative Services. Her email address is [kleverto@tcnj.edu](mailto:kleverto@tcnj.edu).

Best,  
Angela

**Emails with Kathy Leverton, Associate VP of Facilities and Administrative Services**

**April 6, 2016**

Hello Kathy,

I hope you are doing well. Angela Chong gave me your email in regards to filling the feminine product dispensers around campus. To give you more background- I am currently in the Women's Leadership and Social Change capstone and this year we are creating a campaign to de-stigmatize the menstrual cycle. We also want to raise awareness about homeless women and menstruation as well as provide more resources on campus. Please keep me up to date about filling the feminine product dispensers and let me know if there is anything I can do!

Thank you,  
Isabelle Tan

**April 14, 2016**

Hello Kathy,

I wanted to follow up with my previous email. Has there been any progress about the menstrual product dispensers since I have reached out to you last? In addition, would we be able to put up bathroom displays in Eickhoff and the Social Science Building in order to raise awareness about the lack of menstrual products available? I have attached the displays.

Thanks for your help,  
Isabelle Tan

**April 18, 2016**

Dear Isabelle,

Thank you for reaching out to me on this topic. I apologize for the delay in responding, but I wanted to have some research done before getting back to you.

Many years ago (late 1980's/early 1990's), the then Office of Custodial Services was responsible for installing, stocking and collecting money from the feminine product dispensers. Due to the cost and time to maintain them, along with the sharp rise in vandalism to the dispensers and the resultant theft of product, the service was discontinued with no complaints. We have since benchmarked other institutions, and found that there is no best practice or consistency on this issue. For those institutions who have not provided such dispensers, the reason provided was that they were too costly to maintain and manage. Unfortunately, this is the same for TCNJ. We neither have the budget nor the staff to purchase, stock and maintain the feminine product dispensers.

Please accept my best wishes with your Capstone project, and for the rest of the semester!

Kathy Leverton



### I. Flyers for Spare One, Share One Initiative.

Office of Student Activities  
Posting Expiration  
Date: 4-22-16  
Staff: Sarah Bennett

Have you noticed the bathroom dispensers are never stocked with feminine products?

*share one and spare one*

so the women on campus will never have to scramble for feminine products again!



Office of Student Activities  
Posting Expiration  
Date: 4-22-16  
Staff: Sarah Bennett



## J. Period Perspectives Flyer.



Did you know that in the United States tampons and other menstrual products can be taxed as luxury items, implying that they are unnecessary or nonessential? Ever heard of a menstrual cup? Interested in seeing how you can help women in the Trenton community get access to menstrual hygiene products? Want to hear live stories about periods by women on campus?

If these questions interest you, come out to WILL/WGS capstone's events during our Period Perspectives week and reclaim menstruation!  
#PeriodPerspectives

*the price is right*

Monday April 18th, 4-6PM  
Eickhoff Hallway

*make reusable  
menstrual pads*

Tuesday April 19th, 4-6PM  
Eickhoff Hallway

*the period monologues*

Thursday April 21st, 7:30-9PM  
Library Auditorium

Look out for our menstrual product drive. Donate menstrual products for homeless women!

Follow us on social media: @PeriodPrspctvs #PeriodPerspective facebook.com/periodperspectives

## K. Social Media Images.

Profile Picture:



Cover Photo:

