

Virginia Commonwealth University Assistant Professor Faculty Receives \$50,000 Grant from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Grant will support Bethany M. Coston

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the nation's leading philanthropy on health and health care, has awarded Virginia Commonwealth University, Assistant Professor Bethany M. Coston a 12-month grant through the New Connections program. Dr. Coston is among a select group of early career researchers to receive one of the grants from New Connections. The grant will allow Dr. Coston to study bisexual and non-monosexual women at the intersections of other marginalized identities, their experiences of intimate partner, dating, and sexual violence, and their access to culturally competent health care.

New Connections is a national program designed to introduce new scholars to RWJF and expand the diversity of perspectives that inform the foundation's programming. New Connections seeks early career scholars from backgrounds that are historically disadvantaged or underrepresented in research disciplines, such as individuals from ethnic or racial groups historically underrepresented in research disciplines, first-generation college graduates and people from lower-income communities.

"We are so excited to welcome Dr. Coston into the eleventh cohort of New Connections grantees. The program connects first-time grantees to the Foundation, and the new perspectives they bring are essential to solving the critical, complex issues affecting our nation's health," says Catherine Malone, DBA, MBA, Program Officer at RWJF.

"This cohort joins the larger New Connections network of more than 900 scholars—a network that provides opportunities for scholarly support and collaboration for academics from underrepresented groups," says Malone.

"I am extremely proud to be among the researchers honored with this prestigious grant," says Coston "This award will connect me to a network of established experts in research and evaluation related to health and health care, while providing me with an opportunity to conduct a research study that has far-reaching implications for health equity among the bisexual and non-monosexual community"

More information about New Connections is available at <http://rwjf-newconnections.org>.

About Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia Commonwealth University is a public research university located in Richmond, Virginia. With a record \$270.3 million in sponsored research funding in the fiscal year 2014–15, VCU is designated as "R1: Doctoral University - Highest Research Activity" by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. A broad array of university-approved centers and institutes of excellence, involving faculty from multiple disciplines in public policy, biotechnology and health care discoveries, supports the university's research mission. Dr. Coston is an Assistant Professor of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies. The GSWS Department began as a Women's Studies Program in 1989 and was granted departmental status in 2007. To more accurately reflect their intellectual project, in 2013, they renamed the department Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies. GSWS is committed to social transformation; interdisciplinary scholars in the department produce and disseminate feminist knowledge and theories and are embedded in vital community engagement and activism. Integrally, GSWS faculty critique the construction of differences as producing and reinforcing social, cultural, economic, and political inequities.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are working with others to build a national Culture of Health enabling everyone in America to live longer, healthier lives. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at www.rwjf.org/twitter or on Facebook at www.rwjf.org/facebook.