

# A Bit of Me

This series of profiles on SUNY Broome community members is a part of the Student Village diversity calendar initiative. We will be highlighting members in our community who identify with or can speak on the diversity theme or topic for each month. The theme for March is Women's History month and the topic is women in the workforce. To be featured in this series please reach out to Pamela Alvarez or Alexandria Donkor.

## Maureen Breck

SUNY Broome Forever Friend



**Background:** Maureen Breck is the former Staff Associate for Academic Affairs at SUNY Broome.

### WHAT IS YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS PROFESSION?

I have an Associate's Degree in Individual Studies from SUNY Broome, a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies from Binghamton University, and a Master's Degree in Higher Education Administration from Binghamton University. I thought I wanted to do climate research as an undergraduate. I completed an internship with the National Weather Service in my senior year and learned I really enjoy working with people and wanted more direct person interaction. Upon researching possible Master's Programs, it was suggested I should consider higher education.

I have appreciated the opportunities working in higher education has provided me. I have been able to support adult learners who are often returning to school to create a better life for themselves and their families. I have been able to coordinate orientation, which I hope has helped incoming students navigate high education successfully to create a better future for themselves.

### WHAT DOES FEMINISM MEAN TO YOU?

To me, feminism means taking a seat at the table.

### DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOUR GENDER PLAYED A LARGE ROLE IN CREATING THE PERSON YOU ARE TODAY? WHY OR WHY NOT?

I do think that gender has played a role in who I am today. I think the personal relationships I have established with my female peers has been empowering and helped create the person I am today. Without these women who champion being a strong female, I do not know where I would be.

### WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO HAVE A WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH?

It is important to celebrate the progress that has been made and acknowledge the gender gaps that are still in existence.

### IS THERE ANY ADVICE YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN?

Know your worth and advocate for yourself.

### WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN WOMEN'S HISTORY?

Women earning the right to vote.

## **WHAT KIND OF WOMAN DO YOU STRIVE TO BE?**

Balanced. I think that it is important that women find the right balance between work and their personal obligations. I think there is a pressure on women to do it all without prioritizing themselves and this can lead to burnout.

## **IF YOU COULD MEET WITH ANY FAMOUS WOMAN FROM ANYWHERE AND ASK THEM ONE QUESTION, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHAT WOULD YOU ASK?**

I would choose Margaret Sanger and I would want to know how she was able to stay motivated to fight for reproductive rights and birth control.

## **WHAT WOMAN FIGURE DO YOU FEEL LUCKY TO HAVE IN YOUR LIFE?**

I think all the women in my life serve as important figures. I don't think there is a one size fits all approach to life and I appreciate the broad range of women I have in my life who demonstrate the importance of following your instincts. I admire the women in my life who balance work and families, the women who know they don't want a family and don't let society tell them otherwise, the entrepreneurs, the artists, and the dedicated public servants that I am beyond grateful to call friends and family.

## **WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT AS A WOMAN YOU WISH YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN TOLD WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER?**

The importance of finding your people. I have been blessed with a supervisor who has served as a mentor and friend. Find other women who support you and serve as role models for the kind of person you want to be and surround yourself with those women.

## **WHAT IS ERA IN WOMEN'S FASHION IS THE MOST APPEALING TO YOU?**

I am all about comfort, functionality, and bright colors. I know nothing about fashion, but think the right clothes can make someone feel confident and bring them joy and that's what matters. Oh and pockets, pockets are important!