The Center for Women and Gender is an academic entity located in the Provost’s office and offering an undergraduate minor and certificate and a graduate certificate in women and gender studies. Directed by Dr. Ann Berghout Austin, Professor of Human Development, its mission is to bring the campus together around an ongoing conversation of equity and diversity. Students across the university, in every discipline, can find a home with women and gender studies, and all students, regardless of major or minor, grow through participation in the Center’s brown bag and speaker series. From the early days of the Center (2007), HDFS students have been involved in Center activities. In Spring 2018, when Dr. Angela Davis, professor, writer, and activist, visited USU as a guest of the Center, Tyra Hardin, an HDFS major and a member of the Shoshoni tribe along with student Denishia Tsosie of the Navajo tribe, welcomed Dr. Davis to USU. This is how Tyra describes the experience:

"I am currently a senior at USU. I am majoring in Human Development and Family Services. I recently got accepted into U of U to the Masters of Social Work program! I recently finished my practicum at CAPSA which motivated me to become a Social Worker. I currently work at the Access and Diversity Center as a multicultural intern. I love it. Last year during the time that I met Angela I was Miss Native American USU.

"I grew around Utah and was born in Salt Lake City. My tribe the Northwestern Shoshone had originally been from Cache Valley. As an Indigenous person of this land, I had appreciated the way the Angela Davis had previously recognized the people who of origin to the lands in which she speaks to. That is something you only see other Native Americans do, and for her to do that shows that she understands and respects our culture. I think meeting her was great! She was a very kind person and was very grateful for our gifts. But it was not until after that her words had really impacted me. After I met her I watched more of her speeches and more about her history. One of my favorite quotes now that I currently live by and the first sentence in my graduation application autobiographical statement is the words "I'm no longer accepting the things I cannot change...I'm changing the things I cannot accept."

"As a Native American woman, I am statistically more likely to die from a violent death or be sexually assaulted than any other ethnicity in the U.S. Angela Davis is a voice for women like me. Her words inspire me to make a difference and to make a difference. She is empowering women and people who are often oppressed. She speaks on social justice issues that are often not discussed. The more I learn about Angela Davis the more I am inspired. She is an amazing person and I am deeply grateful I got the opportunity to meet her. "