



GWI UPDATE – 1 November 2017



GWI celebrates students worldwide on International Students' Day

— Graduate Women International news —

GWI celebrates International Students' Day

To mark the 2017 International Students' Day, Graduate Women International (GWI) celebrates the determination of students around the world. We also use this day to reaffirm our commitment to promoting the safe access to quality, secondary education for female students around the world with emphasis today on government investment in school infrastructure. The lack of adequate physical infrastructure and its consequential barriers to education can only be addressed effectively with the exposure and reduction of underlying corruption and gender bias that limit domestic spending on school infrastructure. It is imperative that the private and public sectors collaborate with civil society to ensure that budgeted commitments made by governments are kept so that student teacher ratios are improved, sanitation facilities are adequate and girls' access to safe, quality education is guaranteed. We encourage you to read and share our press release that can be accessed [here](#).

GWI invites participants to join their Geneva Escalade Run team

In a Radio 74 recorded announcement, GWI Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara, invites Girls' Education Champions to join GWI's 2nd Annual Escalade team who will run in the *Course de l'Escalade* to promote girls' education and celebrate the vitality and potential of girls. The deadline to join the team is 6 November 2017 so let us know quickly by emailing GWI at sdl@graduatewomen.org. Those not participating in the run are welcome to contribute the GWI team by contributing [here](#). To hear Stacy's Radio 74 announcement, click [here](#).

GWI kicks off Centenary (1919-2019) Activities with the Centenary Logo Design Contest

GWI is excited launch the Centenary Logo Design Contest. In 2019 GWI will celebrate 100 years of advocating for girls and peace through education. Ahead of the General Assembly and conference to be held in August in Geneva, GWI National Federations and Associations (NFAs) and Independent Members are invited to create an illustration that celebrates GWI's century-long legacy of university women peacebuilding through education. The logo should encompass the entrant's vision of GWI's

mission that promotes the advancement of girls and women in all forms of public and private life through education. Artwork can be submitted from 1 November 2017 through 31 March 2018. Winners will be notified in April 2018. For official rules and entry form, click [here](#). We encourage participation and we look forward to seeing many creative submissions. Happy designing!

As part of the GWI centenary celebration, in the coming days GWI will announce the opening of the Caroline Spurgeon Centenary Fellowship. The fellowship will be open to established, female PhD and postdoctoral students in a country engaged in research relevant to GWI who's research in education, gender related issues or sustainable development will be looked upon favorably. The grant award will be for 12'000 Swiss francs. Full details about the fellowship will be available on the GWI website soon with details to be published in our publications and social media.

— GWI member news —

TAUW BRPID 2017 project

Supported by the Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund, the Turkish Association of University Women (TAUW) Antalya Branch commenced the Bina Roy Parent Empowerment and Student Coaching Project aimed at preventing girls from leaving school before secondary courses begin. An orientation meeting was held on 14 October 2017 with the participation of TAUW volunteer members, volunteer university students and the parents of target students.

Project Coordinator Fulya Sarvan gave introductory remarks. To allow for effective communication with the target students of the project, Psychologist Kivilcim Selen Sayar gave separate sessions on Adolescent Psychology to the project team and to the parents.



Following, on 22 October 2017, volunteer TUKD members met target students and their parents for a day of introductions and conversation about the project strategy and goals. GWI congratulates TUKD for the launch of their 2017 Bina Roy Partners in Development project and wishes them much success in the year to come.

WG-USA AGM Report

Recently Women Graduates-USA (WG-USA) held their Annual General Meeting under the theme: *Beyond borders: turning commitment into action in a global society*. The program and advocacy activities for WG-USA concern equal access to education for women and children in migrant, immigrant and refugee communities both globally and in the United States. Issues regarding refugees and immigrants was the common thread for the



L-R: Florine Swanson, Louise McLeod, Fay Weber, Geeta Desai

weekend program culminating in the adoption of two new resolutions for WG-USA public policy and action: human rights violations and the barriers to equal rights for education for refugees and; the monitoring of gender equality in accountability methods used by the US Department of State in the reporting of progress of the SDGs as priorities for WG-USA.

GWI President, Geeta Desai, made a moving [speech](#) at the beginning of the conference on the vision and perceptiveness of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW), now GWI, founding mothers and the work of this board.

During the weekend, WG-USA members and guests learned about the plight of refugees fleeing Syria and their struggle to reach safe havens in parts of Northern Europe; engaged in a role playing activity that put group members in various roles in a refugee camp; and heard from speakers on many aspects of refugee issues in the United States that included: a repeat of the WG-USA refugee UNCSW panel presented in 2017 (including Hegg Hoffet recipient Martine Tchitchihe from the Cameroon now earning her PhD at the University of Pennsylvania); Social Policy and Refugees by speaker Karolina Lukasiewicz, a Polish post-doctoral student at NYU; how healthcare, legal aid for refugees and education for refugee children and other issues are being handled in the resettlement of people in the Milwaukee area; a panel of WG-USA post-graduate students (all immigrants) on bridging careers and strengthening commitments in a global society. Keynote speaker Cheryl Thomas 'Set the Stage' by opening a discussion on global violence against women and Saturday evening speaker Vednita Carter, founder and president of Breaking Free closed the weekend presentations with her presentation on the how trafficked women 'break free' of the bondage of prostitution.

The highlight of the weekend was the presentation of awards to four young refugee high school students for their entries in the WG-USA essay contest. Each young woman, dressed in national costume, read her essay, usually tearfully, of her personal story.

Also celebrated was the WG-USA 10th anniversary that included a silent auction to raise funds for Hegg Hoffet, a birthday cake and a few words from each of the past presidents (Florine Swanson and Louise McLeod).

— Advocacy —

GWI attends the 68th session of CEDAW

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is currently holding its sixty-eighth session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva that will run until 17 November 2017. During the 68th session several GWI NFAs will be up for review including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Israel, Kenya, Norway and Singapore. At the time of this publication, Singapore and Israel have been covered in the session. Singapore representatives of non-governmental organizations expressed concern that sexual violence of all kinds was common and unreported in Singapore, and that marital impunity applied to rape, including rape of a minor. In oral reports delegates expressed concerns about the ageing population in the country and the need to ensure that health, education and employment policies addressed the specific needs of elderly women.

Introducing the report for Israel, Aviva Raz Schechter, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva, noted that Israel placed great importance on respect for human rights, thereafter non-governmental organizations underscored Israel's steps forward but noted a number of remaining problems, such as the State party's reservation to article 16 of the Convention on the age

of marriage, and the fact that Israel had not ratified the Optional Protocol. A full report on the CEDAW 68th session and recommendations for GWI NFAs will be provided after the session wraps up.

— Call for applications —

NGO CSW/NY is accepting Nominations for the Woman of Distinction Award

Every year NGO CSW/NY presents the *Women of Distinction Award* to a woman in recognition of their leadership in the struggle for gender equality, human rights and women's empowerment. The awardee gives the keynote Address at the Consultation Day, the launch of the CSW62 Forum. The award is presented at the NGO CSW/NY Reception.

The honouree should be a leader of distinction in her field of expertise and a role model usually from a developing country (this is not required); an advocate for positive social change to close the leadership gap, implement the SDGs, particularly SDG5, to create a more equitable society; a public speaker who can address "challenges and opportunities and empowerment of rural women and girls", the priority theme of CSW62; an activist who will benefit from participation in the NGO CSW Forum, including Consultation Day (she must be available to speak at Consultation Day); a leader who can make a difference when she returns home; must be available to travel to the United Nations, New York, from 8 March 2018 to 14 March 2018.

Please email nominee suggestions with a letter of nomination and curriculum vitae to woda@ngocsw.org by **30 November 2017**. The names and bios of previous Women of Distinction Awardees are on the NGO CSW/NY website.

Buildium's Women in Technology Scholarship

Encouraging the pursuit of education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is one way to help more women achieve their dream of careers in design and development. The *Women in Technology Scholarship* is awarded each semester to a Product Design, Interaction Design, UX Design, or Computer Science student who writes the most compelling essay about a topic related to women in technology. The deadline for this scholarship is 15 April 2018. You can find out more information about this opportunity [here](#).

— GWI at the United Nations —

Human Rights Committee prepares to select four civil society speakers to address the High-Level Segment of 37th Session of the Human Rights Council in March 2018

As an active member of the CoNGO Human Rights Committee, GWI Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara and GWI Boston University intern, Danielle Innocent, recently participated in the first of a series of meetings aimed to identify four civil society speakers who will gain the opportunity to address the High-Level Segment of the 37th Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in March 2018. As human rights advocates and civil society, the four selected speakers will have the unique occasion to address the HRC on critical and emerging issues regarding human rights in today's world. As a recipient of this opportunity, during the March 2017 High-Level session, GWI's WG-USA, Convenor of International Relations, [Rosette Adera](#), shared her plight as a refugee girl seeking an education and the importance of investment in refugee girls' education. Other themes from the 2017 session included an appeal for peace, human rights implications in the war on terror, and the closing of the space for human rights defenders, and women human rights defenders. The NGO Human Rights Committee will meet 1

December 2017 to pinpoint central themes for the 2018 speakers and will soon circulate the Call for Applications to non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to submit candidates from civil society to address the Council in March 2018.

— Give the gift of Education —

GWI will be leading a team of runners at the 40th *Course de l'Escalade* to be held on 2 December 2017. Our objective is to promote the importance of girls' education and to raise funds for our programs such as *Teachers for Rural Futures*, the *Girls' Choices Mentoring Program*, the *Girls' Choices App*. We sincerely appreciate your contributions to these live-changing GWI education programs and your support of our team who will be running as girls' education champions. Contributions can be made [here](#) For more information, please contact Stacy Dry Lara at: sdl@graduatewomen.org.

Each year, on the first Saturday in December, the most popular sporting event in Geneva takes place in the old town the, [Escalade Race](#). Last year nearly 45,000 runners participated. This event is for everyone - famous international runners to beginners, children and adults alike. Distances run vary from 2km to 8 km depending on the category.

All the races take place in the narrow streets of the old town and finish in the Bastion Park.



GWI graciously thanks professional cartoonist, Laurence Rassat, for contributing this groovy cartoon. More of her work can be seen on her website, LRCartoonist.weebly.com.



— Did you know? —

Caroline Frances Eleonor Spurgeon was a leader in education for women. A child of the Raj, born in India in 1869, she was educated at Cheltenham Ladies College, Kings College London and University College London. In 1912, she became the first ever recipient of the British Federation of University Women's Fellowship award. Her ground-breaking scholarly criticism of English literature led to her appointment in 1913 as the first woman Professor in that field and the second woman professor anywhere in the United Kingdom. This was followed by other distinctions, such as election to the Royal Society of Literature (1916).

PROFESSOR
CAROLINE F. E.
SPURGEON
UNIVERSITY
of LONDON.

ONE OF TWO
WOMEN of
GREAT
BRITAIN to
OCCUPY
UNIVERSITY
CHAIRS.



Caroline Spurgeon constantly used her own academic prestige to advocate strenuously for women's access to all academic degrees. In 1918, she was a member of the British Educational Mission to

America. There she met Virginia Gildersleeve, Dean of Barnard College, Columbia University, New York. The friendship and common aspiration for women's education shared by these two formidable women would be a major inspiration to create the IFUW, an international body that could, through access to education, make a difference in the lives of women.

From that time, Caroline Spurgeon lived between England and America, settling finally in Tucson, Arizona, where she died in 1942. GWI is proud to remember one of its founders.

— Other information and events —

Oct 23 – Nov 17	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 68th Session , Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland
Oct 30 – Nov 14	General Conference, 39th Session , UNESCO, Paris, France
Nov 6 – Nov 17	Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, 28th Session , Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland
Nov 8	Girls' Education Research and Policy Symposium: Reaching the Most Marginalized , Center for Universal Education at Brookings, Washington DC, USA
Nov 14-16	IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour , Buenos Aires, Argentina
Nov 24-25	“Atrevete a Cambiar” , Federación Mexicana de Universitarias (FEMU-GWI), Mazatlán, Mexico
Dec 1-2	Course de l'Escalade , GWI running team, Geneva, Switzerland
Dec 4-8	International Civil Society Week , Fiji
Dec 1-10	60th Anniversary Celebration , Hong Kong Association of University Women (HKAUW-GWI), Hong Kong
Jan 29 – Feb 7, 2018	Commission for Social Development, 56th Session , United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA
March 12-23, 2018	Commission on the Status of Women, 62th Session , United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA
March 14-15, 2018	ZurichEduCaExpo 2018 - 2nd International Education & Career Exhibition , Zurich, Switzerland
April 17-19, 2018	Federation of University Women Africa (FUWA) Regional meeting, Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Conference Center, Alexandria, Egypt
July 31-Aug 2, 2018	4th Gender & STEM Network Conference , Oregon, USA

Follow us on social media!



Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace. GWI, formerly IFUW, is in special consultative status with ECOSOC since 1947 and is an NGO maintaining official relations with UNESCO and ILO.

Graduate Women International

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