



## GWI UPDATE – 21 February 2018



*GWI marks the International Day of Women and Girls in Science and encourages worldwide cooperation to increase opportunities for women and girls in the scientific domain*

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### — Graduate Women International news —

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#### **The Bolivian Federation has reaffiliated**

Graduate Women International (GWI) is delighted to welcome the Federación Bolivian de Mujeres Profesionales Universitarias (FBMPU) back into its international network of National Federations and Associations (NFAs). Located in Sucre, the constitutional capital of Bolivia, FBMPU is headed by President Dr. María Eugenia Lopez Paravicini. She is assisted by Dr. Virginia del Rosario Cuadros Rivera, Coordinator for International Relations, Ms. María Inés Sanabria, Secretary, and Ms. Gina Romay, Treasurer. FBMPU was founded in September 1948 and today celebrates active members in La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Oruro and Chuquisaca. FBMPU's mission is to improve the status of Bolivian women and girls and to increase the inclusion of women in professional, cultural, scientific and social activities. FBMPU also aims to enable its members to be independent, creative and dynamic members in their community and within the Bolivian society as a whole.

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### — GWI member news —

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#### **British Federation of Women Graduate prize winner to discuss the role of women in science**

On the heels of a successful International Day of Women and Girls in Science, GWI salutes global initiatives that took a stand towards eliminating gender stereotypes about women and girls in science. The Greater London Association of Women Graduates, an association of GWI's British Federation of Women Graduates (BFWG) plans to commemorate achievements of women in science through their "Rocky Road to Science" event to be held on 22 March at the Kings College Department of Pharmacology in London. On this occasion, BFWG prize winner and PhD student at the University of Durham, Aisha Bismillah, will examine her journey towards earning her PhD and the challenges in undertaking novel scientific research. She will also present her project, entitled "The Synthesis and Study of Shapeshifting Molecules". For additional information about the event and to register, please visit [BFWG](#).

#### **Women Graduates-USA at the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of Commission on the Status of Women**

Women Graduates-USA will participate in the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women with the following parallel events : a WG-USA sponsored panel, "Intersecting Grassroots Radio and New Technologies to Reach Rural and Refugee Women" on Monday, 12 March and a panel sponsored by

Nonviolent Peace force and co-sponsored by WG-USA, “Preventing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Rural South Sudan” on Tuesday, 13 March. Please visit the WG-USA website for [more information](#).

### **The IFUW will hold its annual Public Speaking Competition Final for girls under 15**

The Irish Federation of University Women (IFUW) will hold the Final of its Annual Public Speaking Competition for Girls under the age of 15 on 3 March at University College Dublin. Each IFUW association previously held local rounds of the competition. The winning teams of three girls and the best individual speaker from each Association’s competitions will compete for the team and individual awards. This annual public speaking competition began in Galway in 1957 with full participation of each IFUW Association by 1991. Marie Flatley, Galway University Women Graduates Association President says, *“Apart from the obvious benefits accruing through practice of public speaking, no less important is the social dimension, the opportunity it affords to competitors to mix with their peers from other parts of Ireland. It is one of the more worthwhile activities of the federation and one of which we can be justifiably proud”*. GWI commends IFUW and its local associations for this formidable project contributing to the empowerment of young girls through secondary education and that actively fosters understanding, friendships and cooperation among Irish women and girls. To learn more about the IFUW Annual Public Speaking Competition for girls under 15, please visit the [IFUW webpage](#).



*Winners of the Galway University WGA heat of IFUW Public Speaking Competition pictured here with their proud teachers*

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## — Advocacy —

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### **GWI publishes the Human Rights Council written statement**

GWI’s written statement addressing the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) on the promotion of all human rights has been accepted by the United Nations (UN) Geneva and is published on the [UN website](#). The statement addresses the issues of Menstrual Hygiene Insecurity (MHI) and menstruation stigmatization as severe barriers to girls’ and women’s education worldwide. The statement makes strong recommendations about the importance of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 3, 4, 5 and 6. We invite you to [read our statement](#). GWI thanks East Anglia University in the UK for their contributions to this statement.

### **GWI observed the International Day of Women and Girls in Science**

On 11 February, GWI joined the global community in observing the third International Day of Women and Girls in Science through a seven-days social media advocacy campaign and the publication of a press release. This year’s theme “Equality and Parity in Science for Peace and Development” provided the space for GWI to reaffirm that removing the barriers girls’ and women’s face in science studies and careers is vital for the achievement of the internationally agreed 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The deficiency of women and girls in STEM is characteristically linked to the deep-rooted gender biases and gender stereotypes broadly accepted by education systems towards women and girls in science, as exemplified by the personal experience of Dr. Sophie Turner Zaretsky, GWI United Nations Representative in New-York. *“I graduated from medical school in London, England in 1962. At that time women represented about 10% of the class, and I was told by fellow male students that I should not be there because I was taking a man’s place and that I would get married and would not*

*practice medicine”, says Dr. Turner Zaretsky. “Needless to say, none of the women listened to negative statements, and we worked extra hard and succeeded in proving these statements wrong. I went on to marry, have a family, and practice full time, specialising as a radiation oncologist. I retired from practice after 45 years and since then have been a UN rep of GWI” she further adds. To know how GWI is bridging the gender gap in STEM and allowing women and girls to reach their maximum potential in science, please read our [press release](#).*

### **GWI spotlighted on the Montenegro Science Minister webpage**

GWI is pleased to announce that the report by Dr. Manjit Dosanjh, GWI UN Representative in Geneva on the occasion of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science has been published by the [Montenegro Science Minister’s Office](#). Dr. Dosanjh’s report rightly points out that science plays a major role in today’s fast changing world and that it is, thus, urgent to address the gender gap in science and empower women to participate fully in scientific studies and career. We invite you to [read the report](#).

### **GWI will observe International Women’s Day on 8 March**

GWI encourages all members, partners and friends to celebrate International Women’s Day on 8 March. This event represents an opportunity to celebrate the economic, political and social achievements of women around the world and to advocate for the furthering of the status of women and girls. The 2018 theme for International Women’s Day is “**#PressforProgress**”. With global activism for women's equality fuelled by a variety of movements, there is indeed a strong global momentum striving for gender parity. Find out more about the activities taking place across the world [here](#). Beginning 7 March, plan to follow the GWI social media campaign that will offer three daily posts on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn towards the advancement of the status of women and girls.

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## — Call for applications —

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### **Heinrich Böll scholarships for International Students wishing to study in Germany**

The Heinrich Böll Foundation awards some scholarships to international students who gained their university entrance qualification from a school outside of Germany who wish to study a Master’s or PhD Degree in Germany. The scholarships are towards Master’s Degree or PhD Degree in all subjects offered at state or state-recognised universities in Germany. For EU students, Master’s Degree courses at state or state-recognised universities in Germany, Switzerland, and other EU member states are possible. The application process is held twice a year. The deadlines for application are **1 March** and **1 September**. For more information about eligibility, please visit the [Heinrich Böll Foundation webpage](#).

### **PEER presents new Women in Science Mentoring Programme**

The Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) has announced the launch of the Women in Science Mentoring Programme. This new initiative aims at supporting the career development of women in science, in response to established studies showing that women are underrepresented in higher education and academia, in part due to a disproportionate number of female researchers leaving science as they advance in their careers. This situation is particularly acute in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa regions. Following recommendations made in these studies, which suggest that mentorship can play a key role in encouraging women in their career paths, PEER is launching a programme to help retain women researchers by establishing mentorship cohorts in which women in senior academic positions can support and advise junior female researchers who will benefit from their knowledge and experience. The programme is currently inviting applications from interested groups made up of **one senior-level female mentor** and **2-4 junior-level female mentees** from selected countries in **Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa**. The application deadline is **16 March**. For further details please visit the [Women in Science Mentoring Programme webpage](#).

## International Women’s Media Foundation 2018 Elizabeth Neuffer Fellowship

The Elizabeth Neuffer Fellowship gives academic and professional opportunities to women journalists who focus on covering human rights and social justice. Fellows will have the chance to complete research and coursework at MIT’s Center for International Studies and participate in internships with media outlets including *The Boston Globe* and *The New York Times*. The Fellowship is open to women journalists worldwide working in print, broadcast and/or Internet-based media, including freelancers. Applicants must have a minimum of three years professional experience working full-time in news media. A fixed monthly stipend will be provided to cover housing, meals, and ground transportation during the fellowship. The application for 2018 are now opened. The deadline is **6 March**. For further details please visit the [International Women’s Media Foundation webpage](#).

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## — GWI at the United Nations —

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### **GWI joins Plan International in calling for the strengthening of girls’ rights**

On 7 February, Executive Director, Stacy Dry Lara, participated in the launch event of Plan International’s innovative report, [“Girls’ Rights are Human Rights”](#) at Palais des Nations in Geneva. GWI congratulates Plan International on the launch of their in-depth report and comprehensive database, [Girls’ Rights Platform](#), that contributes to the global campaign to achieve equality for all girls. The Girls’ Rights Platform is deemed the world’s most comprehensive, searchable human rights database and accountability tool regarding States. The event gave rise to a fruitful discussion on the advancement of girls’ rights between the speakers, Ms. Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, Plan International’s CEO; Ms. Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights; and their Excellencies Ms. Veronika Bard, Ambassador of Sweden, Mr. Foo Kok Jwee, Ambassador of Singapore and Dr. François Xavier Ngarambe, Ambassador of Rwanda. As pointed out by Ms. Gilmore, the global community will celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 2018 and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2019. Yet, girls continue to be the largest excluded group in the world and face discrimination and abuse simply because they are young and female. There is an urgent need to strengthen girls’ position in international law by increasing the visibility of girls’ rights, building a wider movement in support for them and pushing back regressive trends that have stifled progress for girls worldwide.



*Girls’ Rights are Human Rights Report launch event at Palais des Nations Geneva*

### **GWI attends NGO brief with Director General of the United Nations, Geneva**

On 15 February, GWI participated in the bi-annual meeting with Mr. Michael Møller, Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). During the briefing, Mr. Møller informed those in attendance of the various reforms of the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, and recognised the crucial role of civil society in supporting those reforms, *“The expertise and experience of civil society organizations in monitoring, campaigning, defending, delivering services, researching and building solidarity are vital in supporting all three pillars of the United Nation’s mandate”*, said Mr. Møller. *“Civil society is an ally of the United Nations. We need to shoulder each other in defending the universal values and in tackling the difficult and complex*

*challenges of sustainable development, peace, justice and human rights”,* he added. Mr. Møller reiterated UNOG’s commitment to the advancement of the status of women and the fight for gender equality. GWI warmly applauds the UN for taking concrete measures to establish an inclusive and enabling organisation culture free from gender bias and to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women in the work of UN Geneva. Read the full Bi-Annual Civil Society Briefing on the [here](#).



*Lidiya Grigoreva, NGO Liaison Officer (left) and Mr. Michael Møller Director General of UNOG (right)*

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## — Give the gift of education —

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GWI is directly addressing the lack of women teachers as a barrier to girls’ secondary education by sponsoring girls from rural areas in Uganda to qualify as teachers through the [Teachers for Rural Futures](#) project. An increase in qualified women teachers in rural Uganda will have a huge impact on girls' education in the country. The project aims to enable some 2500 more girls to attend school over ten years. Educated girls and women are better equipped to participate effectively in society, to protect themselves from harm and to care for their children. Children of educated women are healthier and far more likely to go to school, creating long-term positive effects for generations. We invite you to contribute to our GlobalGiving campaign that enables young women to achieve their potential, inspire girls to go to school and build more prosperous communities. [Give today](#).

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## — Did you know? —

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Did you know that [the Hegg-Hoffet Fund](#) has been instrumental in providing help to refugee and displaced graduate women for over 82 years? The Hegg-Hoffet Fund was established in 1936 as the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) Emergency Fund to help women at the graduate level and above who had been deprived of the right to work, and in many cases, the right to live in their native countries. Arriving in a new country, most face complex challenges to integration, among them language difficulties, unemployment, rejection of foreign qualifications and the need for retraining. Later called the Relief Fund, it took the name of Madame Blanche Hegg-Hoffet (1894-1978) in 1968, to honour her many years of service during and after the Second World War.



*Former Hegg-Hoffet Fund recipients*

Mme Hegg-Hoffet was particularly responsible for raising money and distributing assistance in that difficult period and accomplished her mission with great passion and commitment, travelling regularly to Germany to meet with refugees as soon as the war ended.

Today, the Hegg-Hoffet Fund continues to assist graduate women who have been displaced as a result of war, political upheaval or other serious emergencies. Some are fleeing gender-related atrocities in their home countries, such as rape, honour crimes, forced marriage and female mutilation. Others fear for their lives because of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group. The Hegg-Hoffet grants rely on the ongoing generous contributions of GWI members and other supporters. [Give today](#) to give displaced graduate women the opportunity for a better future.

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## —Other information and events —

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Until March 2018	<a href="#">Les Olympes de la Parole</a> , University Women's Club of Montreal (CFUW-GWI)
26 Feb – 23 March	37 <sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council, United Nations, Geneva
23 Feb	NGO CSW Forum, " <a href="#">Women and Global Migration: Root Causes and Innovative Solutions</a> ", Palais des Nations Geneva (mandatory registration)
March 1	Zero Discrimination Day, Global
March 8	International Women's Day, Global
March 12-23, 2018	<a href="#">Commission on the Status of Women, 62th Session</a> , United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA
14-15 March	<a href="#">ZurichEduCaExpo 2018 - 2nd International Education &amp; Career Exhibition</a> , Zurich, Switzerland
22 March	World Water Day, Global
17-19 April	Federation of University Women Africa (FUWA) Regional meeting, Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Conference Center, Alexandria, Egypt
21-23 June	University Women of Europe (UWE) Annual Meeting, Rome, Italy
31 July-2 August	<a href="#">4th Gender &amp; STEM Network Conference</a> , Oregon, USA

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## 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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