



GW I UPDATE – 16 May 2018



From left to right, (front) Katharina Strub, Treasurer, Geeta Desai, GWI President and Hazel Bowen, Vice President Advocacy and Education; (back) Basak Ovacik, Vice President Fundraising, Louise McLeod, Vice President Marketing, Rae Duff, Vice President Legal and Governance, Eileen Focke-Bakker, Vice President Membership

— Graduate Women International News —

GW I Board of Officers meets in Geneva

The Graduate Women International (GWI) Board of Officers met from 5 to 9 April 2018 at the GWI headquarters in Geneva for their annual face-to-face meeting. On this occasion, Geeta Desai, GWI President, led discussions with the Board and Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director, to review progress towards implementing the 6-Goal strategic plan as outlined in the [Mission and Advocacy](#) and [Membership and Communications](#) publications. Final structuring and continued planning for the GWI 33rd Triennial and Centenary Celebration, [Peace through Education](#), to be held 25 to 28 July 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland was also a key objective of the meeting. The GWI Board was pleased to host the Swiss Local Arrangement Committee for discussions regarding provisions for several key elements related to the planning of the GWI Centenary Celebration.

— GWI Member News —

Israel Association of University Women welcomes the President and Secretary General of UWE

The Israel Association of Graduate Women (IAGW) was pleased to host the President of University Women of Europe (UWE), Edith Lammerse, and Roxana Petrusco, UWE Secretary General, on a visit to Israel 12-18 March. In addition to touring historic, archaeological and religious sites in all parts of the country, activities of the Tel Aviv and the Jerusalem chapters were highlighted.

The newly-organized Tel Aviv chapter recently adopted a pilot mentoring project called *Achieving a 'Like' for Higher Education: Women Seeking Change*. Working originally with one boarding school for children in the central city of Netanya, the program has already expanded to 40 students from difficult family backgrounds residing in four boarding schools. The program is designed to raise the girls' self-image, to expose them to a variety of possible careers and to inspire them to further their education. Sessions thus far have focused on opportunities in music and in photography and also in debate and public appearances. Until now 40 volunteers have been recruited to mentor the students one-on-one and also to join in group

activities. The goal is to replicate the project with 400 students and 400 volunteers in the wider central area which includes Tel Aviv. The University of Tel Aviv has been approached to join this initiative by opening university facilities for sponsor meetings between the high school girls and women undergraduate and graduate students or enabling workshops to raise interest in STEM careers.

The Jerusalem chapter invited Ms. Lammerse and Ms. Petrusco to attend an evening of informal presentations by several women who won Israel Association of University Women grants when they were PhD candidates at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Prospective new donors were also present at the gathering. The project of grants to women PhD students has been ongoing for over 40 years and includes more than 500 recipients. The unique feature of this project is that there is no age restriction, unlike many other scholarship programs that have a ceiling at 35 years of age. This age limit is particularly restrictive in Israel because so many women start academic studies well into their 20s due to national or military service and/or the pressure of starting families. In the past most of the applicants specialized in the social sciences and humanities and in professions such as social work and teaching. Today about 60% of the applicants study sciences and math, especially biology and chemistry, pharmacology, ecology and environment, and agriculture.

Ms. Lammerse and Ms. Petrusco were also invited to a discussion with police officers in Jaffa about community relations in a mixed neighborhood; a visit to a seminary for priests on the Sea of Galilee; meetings with leaders of several voluntary organizations; and a panel discussion at a meeting in Tel Aviv to recruit new members where the focus was on the role of women in professional fields and the lack of equality. GWI warmly thanks Joan Krauss, IAGW CIR for this comprehensive write up of this very positive exchange between IAGW and UWE, which rightly exemplifies GWI's goal of fostering friendship between graduate women around the world.

The University Women's Association Singapore (UWAS) meets with Singapore's first women President



GWl is honoured to share pictures of UWAS President, Irene Boey, and UWAS Membership Chair, Casey Tan, with Singapore President Halimah Yacob, the current and first women president of Singapore. The meeting, which took place at the end of 2017, provided a unique opportunity for discussion on women's issues with Singapore's newly elected President.

This gathering also provided an opportunity for

UWAS to interact with board members of other women's associations affiliated to the the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO), the national women's council of Singapore. SCWO is the main coordinating body with a total membership of approximately 94'000, drawn from all walks of life. Members range from homeworkers to businesswomen and professionals. Those present benefitted from the rare chance to forge deeper bonds and explore the possibilities of working together on various UWAS programmes. GWI congratulates UWAS for its continuous contribution to the promotion of lifelong education and to the improvement of the status of women and girls.



Halimah Yacob (front center) with meeting participants including Casey Tan, UWAS Membership Chair (back, second from right)

— Advocacy —

Dr. Shirley Gillett CSW62 final report

The intense excitement surrounding the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) may be over but noteworthy reports are still flowing in from GWI delegates around the worlds. Those reports provide the opportunity to reflect on this very successful session of the CSW. “I have been to several CSW’s”, said Dr. Shirley Gillett, from Graduate Women New Zealand (GWNZ). “The first one, of course, was a knock out and influential, however, this year’s was the best I have experienced from a GWI delegate perspective” she adds. In her final report, Dr. Gillett captures the essence of the CSW unique experience saying, “it is deeply moving to be in an environment with so many women from so many different countries and backgrounds yet with similar desires for a fairer world where women are not only not abused but political powers are exerted for them to be able to develop to their potential. Attending CSW is somewhat overwhelming with so many simultaneous choices and like being in a bubble with a kaleidoscope of impressions and many layers and, whilst exhausting, also energising”. Read her full report [here](#).

GWI to mark Menstrual Hygiene Day on 28 May 2018

Menstrual Hygiene Day, observed annually on 28 May, is a reminder that women and girls across the world continue to face a variety of unnecessary challenges due to their menstruation. This year marks GWI’s first observance of Menstrual Hygiene Day (MH Day). Initiated by the German-based NGO WASH United in 2014, this annual awareness day brings together non-profit organisations, government agencies, private sector, the media and individuals from around the world to promote Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM). GWI is pleased to announce the start of its alliance with [Menstrual Hygiene Day \(MH Day\)](#) in their efforts to catalyse a growing, global movement that recognizes and supports girls’ and women’s rights and advocate for the integration of MHM into global, national and local policies, programmes and projects. A comprehensive write up, press release and social media campaign will be released in the coming days. Look for the full campaign on our [Facebook page](#).

— Call for applications —

OWSD PhD Fellowships

The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World is offering a fellowship to women scientists from Science and Technology Lagging Countries with funds provided by the Swedish International Development Agency. The fellowship aims to contribute to a new generation of emerging women leaders in science and technology and promote effective participation in science and technological developments in their countries. Fellowships are available as two study themes 1) full-time (maximum 4-years) research conducted in another developing country or 2) the ‘sandwich’ theme which allows PhD students to conduct studies in another country while simultaneously completing their degree at home. Deadline for applicants: **1 June 2018**. For a full list of eligibility requirements and information about the fellowship, please click [here](#).

Nature Research Awards for Inspiring Science and Innovating Science

Nature Research announced their inaugural Inspiring Science Award and Innovating Science Award, in partnership with The Estée Lauder Companies. The aim of the two new Nature Research Awards is to celebrate and support the achievements of leading women in science and of those who have encouraged

girls and young women to engage with STEM subjects around the world. The Inspiring Science Award welcomes nominations of exceptional scientists who self-identify as female and who are within 10 years of completing their PhD. Nominations from around the globe and from all subject areas are encouraged. **Candidates should be nominated** by laboratory heads, department heads or someone else from their institute. The deadline is 11 June 2018. Further information about the awards is available [here](#).

— GWI at the United Nations —

Intersessional Expert Meeting on the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls

On 2 May 2018, GWI participated in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) intersessional Expert Meeting at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on the full enjoyment of human rights by all women and girls and the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. At the Expert Meeting, participants discussed gaps, challenges and promising practices in realizing women's rights and mainstreaming a gender perspective in implementing the 2030. The discussions built on already existing assessments and used illustrative examples of areas where the integration of a gender perspective can be strengthened to draw lessons that can guide the operationalization of the 2030 agenda. Key features of the 2030 Agenda are indivisibility and interlinkages of all Sustainable Development Goals, across its social, economic and environmental pillars. The discussion attempted to link a number of SDGs across all pillars through the lenses of women's rights and gender equality. The discussion also highlighted key strategies to enhance synergies across the United Nations (UN) system and other multilateral actors in efforts to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in a way that promote women's rights and gender equality. GWI acknowledges the contribution of this Expert Meeting in providing additional guidance on how to integrate a gender perspective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ensure that efforts towards achieving the SDGs promote women's rights and gender equality.

UPR30 (NFAs under review: Burkina Faso, Canada, Cameroon, Russia, submitted pre-session reports)

The 30th session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group is being held in Geneva from 7 to 18 May 2018. The UPR is a unique mechanism of the Human Rights Council (HRC) aimed at improving the human rights situation on the ground of each of the 193 UN Member States. The [UPR](#) assesses the human rights situations of 14 UN Member States each year. With the goal of obtaining targeted recommendations, [UPR Info](#) hosts pre-sessions that allow civil society organisations to input their assessments of the reviewing country. Four GWI National Federations and Associations (NFAs) are being reviewed at this session which are Burkina Faso, Canada, Cameroon and the Russian Federation. For each NFA, GWI submitted a pre-session report. Highlights of the recommendations include: [Burkina Faso](#): GWI called on the Burkina Faso government to significantly strengthen, through decisive and measurable political action, its efforts towards the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls that prohibit their achievement of the fundamental right to education; [Cameroon](#): GWI recommended stronger legal and regulatory framework against the pervasive corruption and the rampant impunity seen in the education sector and addressed the urgent need to protect and improve the lives of women and girl refugees, [Canada](#): GWI recommended increasing access to non-traditional education for girls and women through distance such as radio and web-based platforms. GWI remains concerned about the discrimination and violence against indigenous people in Canada and especially indigenous women and girls, and the high suicide rates and calls for the implementation of intensified public awareness programmes in collaboration with CSOs and NGOs on all levels; [The Russian Federation](#): GWI called on the Russia Federation to significantly strengthen, through decisive and measurable political action, its efforts towards the elimination of gender-based violence (GBV) against women and girls that prohibit their achievement of the fundamental right to education.

— Give the gift of education —

Do you know a graduate woman who would like to join the leading women's international organisation that works to empower girls and women through access to lifelong, quality education and training? [Give the gift of membership](#) to join a global community of some 18'000 members in 60 countries, either as a GWI independent member or national member of one of our National Federations and Associations (NFAs).

— Did you know? —

Did you know that the inFocus, GWI's bi-monthly newsletter for members is undergoing a format change? To forge a closer relationship with membership and engage in regular contact, beginning in May 2018, the bimonthly inFocus will provide leadership and strategy reports written by the GWI Board of Directors. The publication will include a Letter from the President, updates from Vice Presidents and Treasurer, and the Executive Director. The format change is GWI's commitment to transparency and to providing its National Federations and Associations with detailed viewpoint of the future. To have access to this exclusive member publications and many other benefits, find out more about membership application [here](#).

— Other information and events —

14 May-1 June	Committee on the Rights of the Child, 78 th session, United Nations, Geneva
24 May	GWI-NL & Student Team The Hague University of Applied Sciences Seminar: Future of Technology—Future of Women, The Hague.
12 June	World Day Against Child Labor, Global
18 June-6 July	Human Rights Council, 38 th session, United Nations, Geneva
19 June	International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, Global
20 June	World Refugee Day, Global
21-23 June	University Women of Europe (UWE) Annual Meeting, Rome, Italy
2-20 July	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 70 th session, United Nations, Geneva
15 July	World Youth Skills Day, Global
30 July	World Day against Trafficking in Persons, Global
31 July-2 August	4 th Gender & STEM Network Conference, Oregon, USA
9 August	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, Global
12 August	International Youth Day, Global
10-28 September	Human Rights Council, 39 th Session, United Nations, Geneva
17 Sept-5 October	Committee on the Rights of the Child, 79 th Session, United Nations, Geneva
25-28 July 2019	GWI Centenary Celebration and Conference, Geneva

SAVE the DATE



GWI 33rd Triennial and Centenary Celebration
Geneva, Switzerland
25-28 July 2019

Peace through Education

Fostering the culture of peace for the future by empowering women through education

Early Bird registration opens 1 October 2018



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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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