



## GW I UPDATE – 30 October 2019



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*The Beijing +25 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Regional Review Meeting (RRM) is taking place this week in Geneva, Switzerland. It addresses progress and identifies challenges in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPfA) adopted in 1995 (photo source: UNECE).*

### — Graduate Women International News —

#### **GW I participates in the Generation Equality Regional Civil Society Forum**

On 28 October 2019, Graduate Women International (GWI) participated in the Generation Equality Regional Civil Society Forum. The forum was organised in preparation of the Beijing+25 UNECE RRM taking place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 29 and 30 October 2019. It brought together women's rights activists and representatives of women's organisations from more than 55 countries for a full day of movement building, advocacy strategizing and solidarity action. Participants outlined their common recommendations to decision-makers regarding the implementation of the BDPfA. These demands have been shared at the RRM. Throughout the day, GWI promoted its work and missions at the GWI booth and discussed with the forum participants how GWI is contribution to the achieve the targets determined by the BDPfA [12 Critical Areas of Concern](#). The civil society forum provided a unique opportunity as well to promote GWI membership and to network with other women's organisations from the UNECE region working towards the empowerment of all women and girls.



*Stacy Dry Lara, GWI Executive Director and Clémence Mathiaud, GWI Junior Office Administrator at the GWI booth during the Generation Equality Civil Society Forum*

#### **64<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW64) to open in March 2020**

From 9 to 20 March 2020 takes place CSW64 at the United Nations (UN) headquarters in New-York City, USA. Next year, 2020, will mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BDPfA as well as a five-year milestone towards achieving the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and will thus be a pivotal year for the realisation of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The main focus of CSW64 will be on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the BDPfA and the outcomes of the [23<sup>rd</sup> special session of the UN General Assembly](#). Do you want to join the GWI CSW64 Delegation and represent the interest and values of our organisation there? Please visit the GWI website's Member Corner for more information

about the GWI CSW Delegates application process and requirement and send out yours not later than **31 October 2019** via [info@graduatewomen.org](mailto:info@graduatewomen.org).

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## — GWI Member News —

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### **TAUW's "Hope for the Future" project reaches 800 children in summer 2019**

In 2018, the Turkish Association of University Women (TAUW) launched the project "Hope for the Future", where scholarship students reach out to children from their own neighbourhoods and communities to open their horizons and become their role models during the summer holidays. With the completion of the first project in September 2018, 169 scholarship students reached 851 children in 136 cities and towns across Turkey. This year, 152 scholarship students participated in the same project. They played games, watched movies, made cookies or chatted with five to six children each between the ages of 10 to 13. They managed to affect the dreams of 800 children and to shape their goals in life. The feedback from the scholarship students was remarkable, because they could have an impact on a child's life and offer them new experiences. Some children, for example, visited a museum or a library for the first time in their life. GWI congratulates TAUW for the success of this programme.

### **Mexican Federation of University Women inaugurates exhibition on indigenous women**

In September, the Mexican Federation of University Women (FEMU) inaugurated the temporary exhibition "Las hijas de la madre tierra" (the Daughters of Mother Earth), by the artist Anxel, to commemorate the International Day of Indigenous Women. The exhibition reflects on the difficulties indigenous women currently face and was opened by GWI Vice President Marketing and FEMU's Vice-President of International Affairs, Glenda Hecksher. It also resonates with the commitment of GWI to the protection of indigenous women's and girls' rights. In the month of September, a total of 1945 visitors were welcomed.



*FEMU's "Daughters of Mother Earth" exhibition.*

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## — Advocacy —

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### **GWI celebrates its contribution to the United Nation's vision and ideals for a better future**

On the 74th anniversary of the UN, GWI celebrates the prevailing ideals of the UN Charter, ratified on 24 October 1945. Whilst reflecting on our foremother's crucial contribution to the building of international cooperation, peace and equality, GWI looks excitedly towards the future and the celebration, in 2020, of the UN's 75th Anniversary. To mark this historical date, the UN will launch the [UN75: 2020 and Beyond – Shaping our Future Together campaign](#), the biggest-ever global conversation on the role of global cooperation in building a more equal and sustainable future for all. Today, GWI and its members call on the United Nations to urgently put women and girls' education, empowerment and rights at the forefront of this global conversation that will shape our shared vision for the future. To mark UN Day, GWI released an exclusive press release with an assorted multichannel social media campaign. Click [HERE](#) to read our full press release and [HERE](#) to view and share our social media posts.

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## — Call for applications —

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### **Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship**

Despite progress made, women still comprise a minority of leaders in the business world. Because **Zonta International** believes in gender equality, the Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship programme helps women pursue undergraduate and master's degrees in business management and overcome gender barriers from the classroom to the boardroom. The scholarship was established in 1998 from a generous bequest by Jane M. Klausman, a member of the Zonta Club of Syracuse, New York, USA. Applications are posted in **January** and must be completed and presented to Zonta clubs **according to the club's assigned deadline**. For more information on eligibility, the application process as well as the location of Zonta clubs around the world, click [HERE](#).

### **ABC Humane Wildlife Academic Scholarship for women in STEM**

While women represent 48% of the American workforce, they make up only 13% of engineering professionals and a mere 7.2% in the field of mechanical engineering. Overall, women are critically underrepresented in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). As a woman-owned corporation operating in a largely male field, **ABC Wildlife** aims to pave the way for other women pursuing their dreams in the scientific world, which is why they introduced this scholarship to increase the number of women studying and influencing the future of science. Applicants need to send a 1000-word essay responding to the question why they are passionate about STEM and how their pursuit of these fields helps preserve biodiversity, improve the health of our planet, or alleviate human suffering. Find more information on the scholarship [HERE](#). Application deadline is **1 July 2020**.

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## — GWI at the United Nations —

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### **Beijing +25 UNECE RRM**

The BDPfA of 1995 is the most ambitious road map for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere. In 2020, it will be 25 years since the BDPfA set strategic objectives and actions for the achievement of gender equality in 12 critical areas of concern. The Beijing+25 UNECE RRM provides a forum for UNECE member States to review progress and identify challenges in the implementation of the BDPfA. The meeting is held on 29-30 October 2019 in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, and is jointly organized by UNECE and the UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. The review will also include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the BDPfA, the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women as contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. GWI is actively participating in the review meeting through attendance of the plenary meeting and side-events. Full reports will follow.

### **UN General Assembly elects 14 Member States to Human Rights Council**

On 17 October 2019, the UN General Assembly elected 14 States to the Human Rights Council (HRC), the UN body responsible for promoting and protecting all human rights around the globe. The elected States will serve a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2020. Some of them join the HRC for the first time, and GWI was happy to note that two of them are GWI NFAs countries, namely the Republic of Korea and the Netherlands. Read the full UN press release [here](#).

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## — Give the gift of education —

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30 novembre - 1er décembre 2019  
**42<sup>e</sup> Course de l'Escalade**



*GWI will be leading a team of Gender Education champions at the upcoming 42nd Course de l'Escalade in Geneva, Switzerland.*

GWI will be leading a team of runners at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Course de l'Escalade to be held on 30 November 2019. Our objective is to promote the importance of girls' education and celebrate GWI's centennial commitment to improving the status of women and girls' worldwide through education at the highest level. Each year, on the first weekend 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 runs take place in the narrow streets of the old town and finish in the Bastion Park. With this fundraiser, we are promoting the importance of girls' education and raising funds for our programs such as Teachers for Rural Futures and GWI mentoring programmes. We are rallying support as we plan to run as a team on this very special Geneva event. If you are in Geneva and want to join the GWI team, contact Stacy Dry Lara at [sdl@graduatewomen.org](mailto:sdl@graduatewomen.org), before 4 November. If you are not in Geneva but would like to support our running for girls' education, please click [HERE](#) to contribute.

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## — Did you know? —

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At the San Francisco Conference from 25 April to 26 June 1945, which resulted in the creation of the United Nations, a total of 3500 people attended (including delegates, their advisors and staff). Only 3 percent of them were women. Virginia Gildersleeve, founding mother of Graduate Women International (formerly International Federation of University Women), was one of them. She was also the only woman named to write the United Nations Charter (UN Charter). The seven-member delegation were instructed to address two issues: 1) the need to prevent future wars by creating the Security Council, and 2) the need to enhance human welfare, which was achieved through the creation of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Virginia Gildersleeve received drafting responsibility for the work of ECOSOC. It is thanks to her that "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development" were inserted as goals for all people around the world into the UN Charter. Furthermore, she also persuaded her fellow delegates to add "universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" as one of the UN's aims. She insisted that the UN Charter needed to appoint the Commission of Human Rights, which under the direction of Eleanor Roosevelt, wrote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights three years later. The Secretary of State remembered Virginia Gildersleeve the following way in his tribute: "...great stature and proven statesmanship ...the objectivity of the scholar...deep convictions and a warm-hearted interest in the betterment of the conditions of human life". Read more about this extraordinary personality [HERE](#).



*Dean Virginia Gildersleeve, second from the left (source: United Nations Photo).*

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## — Other information and events —

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17 November	International Students Day, Global
19 November	World Toilet Day, Global
20 November	Universal Children's Day
25 November	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Global
25 Nov-10 Dec	16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, Global
3 December	International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Global
9 December	International Anti-Corruption Day
10 December	Human Rights Day, Global
18 December	International Migrants Day, Global
6 February 2020	International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation, Global
11 February 2020	International Day of Women and Girls in Science, Global
10 Feb-28 Feb 2020	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 75 <sup>th</sup> session, United Nations, Geneva
8 March 2020	International Women's Day, Global
9-20 March 2020	Commission on the Status of Women 64 <sup>th</sup> session/Beijing +25, New York
25 May-5 Jun 2020	109 <sup>th</sup> session of the International Labour Organisation Conference, Geneva

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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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