



GWI UPDATE – 23 October 2024



— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

Heritage Fundraising Wall

The virtual Heritage Fundraising wall in celebration of GWI 105 anniversary is still accepting donations, with all contributions going towards advancing girls' education and supporting GWI missions. GWI is incredibly grateful to all who have already given, helping us raise 9275 Swiss francs since the fundraising began. We invite you to join us in reaching our goal of 10,000 Swiss francs by 11 July 2025. **To make your donations, click [HERE](#).**

GWI publishes a toolkit for the International Day of the Girl (IDOG)

On 11 October, GWI celebrated IDOG 2024 by publishing a useful toolkit aimed to demonstrate the role that girls play in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This observance day, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2011, is a powerful reminder of the unique challenges girls face around the world and the importance of promoting their rights. Aligned with this year's theme "Girls' vision for the future", this toolkit serves as a source of inspiration and hope for a brighter, more equitable future where girls' contributions in shaping a more just society are globally recognized. **Access the toolkit [HERE](#)!**

— GWI Member News —

Irish Federation of University Women (IrFUW) centenary celebrations

IrFUW was founded in 1924 and proudly celebrates its centenary this year. Established by women from Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Queen's University Belfast (QUB), the IrFUW is affiliated with GWI and the University Women of Europe (UWE). To commemorate the centenary milestone, women graduates associations and members from various universities across Ireland gathered at TCD. After a warm welcome from Dr. Linda Doyle, the Provost of Trinity College, the event featured former President of Ireland Mary McAleese along with Patrice Wellesley Cole representing GWI and Anne Nègre President of UWE. The event included past and present presidents of the IrFUW, and other exceptional speakers who honoured the remarkable women who over the past century broke barriers, empowering women in higher education, politics, the judiciary, and beyond. Read [HERE](#) the full program with more detail on various talks spoken throughout the event, and complete list of contributors.

A key mention towards the success of the IrFUW Girls Public Speaking Competition and its long history, expressing gratitude to Arthur Cox LLP this year for their generous support of this vital initiative. The centenary celebrations of the IrFUW will continue throughout 2024/2025 and round up with a UWE Meet & Greet in Belfast on 25-27 April 2025. **GWI extends a huge congratulations to IrFUW on their centenary celebration and all who honoured this milestone. With a special thanks to Grace O'Malley, CIR of IrFUW, for contributing to this update and look forward to the events in 2025!**

GWI congratulates the first female president of Mexico

On 1 October, Claudia Sheinbaum made history by being elected the first female president of Mexico, marking a turning point in over 200 years of modern Mexican history. By breaking the glass ceiling, she boldly declared, "It is time for women. We have arrived to shape the destiny of our beautiful nation." GWI extends its congratulations to President Sheinbaum and wishes her great success in her administration. GWI also expresses deep gratitude to the Mexican Federation of University Women (FEMU) for their dedication to empowering girls and young women through education, enabling them to become future leaders.

GWI Young Member Network (YMN) set for 2nd session of mentorship series

After successfully launching its first session, find the recording [HERE](#), the YMN looks forward to its upcoming session of the mentoring series **on 24 October in celebration of the United Nations Day**. This mentorship programme will focus on the work of NGOs, processes within the United Nations, and career opportunities in international relations. Cecilia Schirmeister, Representative for the Baha'i International Community at the United Nations, has been invited to share her experiences leading up to and throughout her current term of service within this community. **All GWI young members and guests are encouraged to join** and benefit from this initiative hosted by the GWI YMN. A certificate of attendance will be provided to each participant. An additional session will take place on 25 November, focusing on e-learning and gender studies. **Register [HERE](#) to join GWI YMM second session of mentoring series and see the flyer at the end of this newsletter for further information!**

— GWI at the United Nations —

GWI attends Beijing+30 Civil Society Forum

On 19 and 20 October, GWI participated in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Beijing+30 Civil Society Forum, organised by NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW) Geneva. Bringing together NGO CSW Geneva member organisations, member states, and other stakeholders, the consultation has offered a comprehensive review of the UNECE progress related to the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) and its 12 Critical Areas of Concern.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is the outcome document of the Fourth World Conference for Women which took place in Beijing in 1995. It remains the basic document that is referred to in order to assess achievements, gaps and challenges for women and girls domestically and globally. Every five years there is a review of significant Conventions and major agreements. In preparation for the UNECE Preparatory Committee, which took place in Geneva on 21 and 23 October, this civil society forum was organised for consulting with all stakeholders to ascertain critical analysis of the declaration and collect best practices for implementing gender equality.

This two-day forum featured interactive workshops on gender equality and women's empowerment, intergenerational discussions, advocacy training, and strategy meetings. GWI is honoured to have participated in this civil society forum, contributing to impactful discussions and collaborating with other organisations to ensure an intensification of action and a strengthened movement for equality for all. **Click [HERE](#) to read more information about the session and to download the working group statements produced.**

GWI contributes to Widows Rights International (WRI) seminar

On 17 and 18 October, WRI hosted a two-day seminar titled, "Widows: Challenges, Gaps, and Best Practices" at the United Nations Office of Geneva. The seminar brought together international experts from civil society and Member States, advocates, and policymakers to explore the critical issues widows of all ages face locally, nationally, and globally. Topics of discussion included violence against widows, harmful traditional practices, the rights of widows in conflict zones, inheritance issues, and implementing international legal frameworks as an actionable solution. GWI proudly cosponsored this event, aiming to raise awareness of the often overlooked issues surrounding widowhood. It is crucial to recognize the urgency of taking action to protect widows' rights. By contributing to this discussion, GWI seeks to inspire both advocacy and tangible legislative changes supporting the well-being of widows worldwide. **GWI expresses its gratitude to Zarin Hainsworth, Chair of WRI, for leading such an inspiring and meaningful discussion. GWI invites readers to learn more about WRI and its mission by clicking [HERE](#).**

GWI joins UN Women dialogue on women's empowerment

Today, on 23 October, GWI is attending an event organised by UN Women at the United Nations Office in Geneva. This dynamic dialogue, titled "Learning, Earning, and Second Chances: Innovative Approaches to Women's Empowerment," brings together multiple stakeholders. The event features the participation of Ms. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, UN

Women Deputy Executive Director for Normative Support, United Nations System Coordination, and Programme Results. By engaging in this discussion, GWI reiterates its ongoing commitment to empowering girls and women not only through education but also by exploring innovative approaches that address the unique challenges they face. GWI's participation in the event reflects its belief in the power of collaboration and partnerships with multiple stakeholders in developing comprehensive and impactful solutions.

— Give the Gift of Membership —

The GWI Independent Member network grows with every new member that joins from around the world, adding to a community of empowering women. A thoughtful gift for the graduate woman in your life is a GWI membership. Being a member of GWI offers multitudinous benefits, including belonging to an influential international NGO composed of graduate women influencing policy and legislation on women's issues at the international level and gaining an international perspective on women's issues through networking activities. Click [HERE](#) to find out how to join GWI.

— Did you know? —



My name is Connie Preston, and I recently graduated with a First-Class Honours BA in Marine and Natural History Photography from Falmouth University. My time at university fostered a passion for working with women, communicating, and sharing their stories to empower and raise awareness. This culminated in creating my final year project; a handmade book about menstruation, addressing various aspects to normalise a topic that is often stigmatised and misunderstood. My passion lies in the journey of empowering, working together and advocating for women. With my own educational experience, I firmly believe in the imperative role education plays in encouraging women to pursue their dreams, take on leadership roles, start businesses, and empower

future generations. Women should never be denied their basic rights due to the choices of others or barriers that can be overcome. Education is a fundamental right to all, not just a privilege for a few. GWI plays a vital role in advocating for women's educational rights, providing opportunities and breaking down barriers for women and girls' globally to reach their full potential. I'm honoured to be an intern at GWI and be part of an organisation that supports my personal growth, offering an environment to learn invaluable skills, gain knowledge, and connect with other women and GWI members. I am dedicated to contributing my skills and aspirations to be a valuable asset to GWI in the support of women's education and advocating for gender equity.

— Dates and events —

24 October	United Nations Day
24 October	YMN Mentoring Series ¾
28-30 October	10th session Expert Mechanism on Right to Development
31 October	OHCHR Social Forum
17 November	International Students' Day
25 November	YMN Mentoring Series 4/4
10-21 March 2025	CSW69
10 - 13 Sept 2025	GWJ 35th General Assembly and Conference, Location: TBD

– Women featured in the cover photo –

Patrice Wellesley Cole, President of GWJ
Anne Negre, President of UWE
Provost Linda Doyle, first woman Provost of Trinity College
Mary McAleese, former President of Ireland
Mary Morrissey, former IrFUW President
Deirdre Ahern, former President of Trinity Women Graduates
Gráinne Keane, Vice President of UWE
Ciara McAuliffe, President UCC Women Graduates
Gisele Scanlon, Annette Durkan, Bernadette Doyle, and Colette Grant, event organisers

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Empowering women and girls through lifelong education for leadership, decision-making and peace.

GWJ, 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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Register today to join the Graduate Women International Young Member Network (YMN) Mentoring Series!

Join the YMN on 24 October 2024 to celebrate United Nations Day. This second session of the 2024 Mentorship Series will offer presentation and discussion about careers at the United Nations.

REGISTER

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwtdu2tpjkoGtSraR2UBgqApU8xSnrM3iIO>



For the second session, the YMN is honored to welcome Cecilia Schirmeister. Cecilia is a Representative to the United Nations for the Baha'i International Community. She covers the youth, social development, and climate change discourse at the United Nations. She also serves on the Executive for the NGO Committee on Social Development, and as Chair of that NGO Committee's subcommittee on the World Social Summit. Cecilia's professional background spans project management, public affairs, research, and communications work related to development at the international, national, and local levels. She looks forward to sharing her experiences leading up to, and now during, her term of service working in the United Nations community, and welcomes participation from the audience about working in NGOs, on United Nations processes, in careers in international relations, and the like.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THIRD SESSION

(Details of topic, mentor and registration will be available soon.)



25 NOVEMBER 2024

Orange Day! E-learning and Gender Studies

All young women are welcome to join and benefit from this wonderful initiative hosted by the GWI YMN.

A certificate of attendance will be provided for each session.



graduatewomen.org



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