



GW I UPDATE – 26 February 2025



Top left: Graduate Women International (GWI) Teachers for Rural Futures Scholar. Top right: Patrice Wellesley-Cole, GWI President. Bottom left: Mildred Asmah, GWI VP Projects. Bottom right: Dorothy Vaughn, pioneering computer programmer and NASA first Black woman supervisor.

— Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

GW I celebrates Black History Month

In 2025, the United Nations is commemorating Black History Month by offering a special Black History Tour at its headquarters. This tour provides a unique perspective on how the lives of people of African descent have shaped the missions of the United Nations. This year, the theme of Black History Month, ***“African Americans and Labor”***, was developed by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History and is intended to encourage reflection on Black people’s work and workplaces from past to present.

Throughout the month of February, GWI is celebrating Black History Month with special social media posts. GWI encourages following our social media channels, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#) where we honor inspirational Black women. This month is also an opportunity to celebrate Patrice Wellesley-Cole, GWI’s first Black president. She strongly believes that ***“highlighting Black culture and history in education improves diversity and understanding between nations and helps to eradicate ignorance and discrimination”***. GWI also pays tribute to Addie L. Wyatt, a leader in the United States Labor movement leader, civil rights activist, and the first Black woman to hold a senior office in an American labor union, at both local and international level. GWI also pays tribute to Dorothy Vaughn, a pioneering computer programmer, who became NASA’s first Black woman supervisor. She paved the way for Black women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) by breaking racial and gender barriers at NASA.

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women Civil Society Engagement Event: Reviewing 30 Years of the Beijing Platform for Action

On 4 February, GWI participated in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Civil Society Engagement Event, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The discussion highlighted the need for renewed commitment to gender equality and revitalization of the CSW process.

Speakers emphasized that despite progress, systemic barriers persist in education, healthcare, economic participation, and political representation. Civil society continues to play a crucial role in holding governments accountable and shaping international frameworks.

The UK Civil Society Alliance stressed the importance of tracking commitments beyond annual meetings, calling for year-round engagement, stronger intersectionality in policy discussions, and improved implementation mechanisms.

Looking ahead, civil society advocates for better integration of CSW discussions into broader United Nations processes, stronger accountability mechanisms, and increased investment in women's rights organizations. The consensus was clear: **Beijing+30 must not be a symbolic anniversary but a catalyst for real change in global gender equality efforts. GWI remains committed to ensuring CSW outcomes translate into tangible policy actions and will continue to advocate for sustained engagement in this critical process.**

Heritage Fundraising Wall

The virtual Heritage Fundraising wall that commemorates 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 purchased a brick, helping us surpass the campaign goal of 10,000 Swiss Francs. Additional support is needed, and we invite you to join the wall with a purchase today. To make your donations, click [HERE](#).

— GWI Member News —

Global Warming is Here Again: How Do We Know?

On 11 February, GWI hosted with the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) E-Club "*Global Warming is Here Again: How Do We Know?*" webinar in recognition of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. The webinar featured a keynote address by Pauline Witzke, a geologist with over 40 years of experience in environmental geology, along with insights from esteemed speakers Dr. Kazuko Hase, Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW), Dr. Genevieve Adukpo, Ghana Association of University Women (GAUW), and Jeanette Mergens, Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW). Discussions centered on climate science, environmental research, and the role of women in driving scientific advancements. For those who missed the event or wish to revisit the conversation, the recording is available [HERE](#). **GWI appreciate those who participated and look forward to welcoming you to future discussions!**

Applications are now open for the CFUW International Service Projects

Each year CFUW club raises funds for an international project or program to empower women and girls in the global south. The next cycle is now open to begin 1 May 2025 for two years, with the funds raised by the club directly donated to the organization throughout the year. Applications are open till 14 March 2025, to find out more and apply click [HERE](#).

— GWI at the United Nations —

GWJ participates in Committee of the Elimination of Discrimination against Women discussion on Advancing Gender Equality through the General Recommendation 41

On 17 February, GWJ participated in a pivotal session in Geneva discussing the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women's (CEDAW) latest General Recommendation 41 on Gender Stereotypes. This event underscored the critical role of international legal frameworks in addressing gender biases that hinder women's full enjoyment of their rights across political, economic, and social spheres.

The session emphasized that gender stereotypes remain a pervasive barrier to achieving substantive equality, influencing everything from access to justice to employment, education, and political participation. "Gender stereotypes are not merely societal nuisances; they are deep-rooted causes of discrimination that affect women and girls in profound ways," said keynote speaker **Dr. Natalia Kanem**, United Nations Population Fund Executive Director. Experts and advocates highlighted how stereotypes not only shape societal expectations but also reinforce legal and institutional discrimination. Particular attention was given to the intersectional impact of stereotypes, recognizing that factors such as race, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, and migration status can compound gender-based discrimination.

Throughout the discussion, speakers stressed the need for stronger state accountability, legal reforms, and public awareness campaigns to dismantle harmful gender norms. GWJ remains committed to advocating for policies that challenge these stereotypes, empower women and girls, and uphold the principles of the CEDAW.

This session reaffirmed the urgency of our collective efforts to educate, empower, and advocate for gender equality worldwide. **GWJ thank all participants and look forward to continued engagement in shaping a world free of gender-based discrimination.**

— Commission on the Status of Women 69th Session —

GWJ Cosponsors Geneva CSW 69th session (CSW69) Consultation Day

The NGO CSW Geneva invites you to join an interactive and informational CSW69 Consultation

Day on 4 March, 4-6 pm Central European Time (CET). Under the theme, Harnessing Civil Society to Implement the Beijing Platform for Action, world class speakers from NGOs, youth organizations, the United Nations, and government will share their expertise. Participants will engage in insightful discussions, exchange ideas, and explore innovative solutions for advancing the Beijing Platform for Action. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a transformative conversation. To register click [HERE](#). See the flyer at the bottom of the Update.

GWI to host three parallel events for the CSW69

GWI is organizing three Parallel Events during CSW69; two parallel events will be virtual and one taking place in-person.

Organized by the Education Committee this Parallel Event, titled, Education: Only Way to Solve Old and Modern Antifeminisms, will be held in-person 12 March 2025, 12:30 – 2:00 pm EST, Drew Room, Church Center for the United Nations, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017: The event will showcase video messages from child brides who will share their lived experiences. This will fuel a discussion on educational strategies for making a difference to influence related sociopolitical structures such as culture, religion, and poverty.

Organized by the GWI Young Member Network this Parallel Event titled, Empowering Young Women for Sustainable Development: Progress and Future, will be held 19 March 2025, 12:30-2:00 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) (Virtual): The interactive event will showcase the progress and challenges affecting the achievements of gender equality for the full realization of Agenda 2030. With case studies focusing on aspects of leadership development, digital spaces and AI, period poverty, environment. Gaps and challenges will be addressed providing the innovative solutions from an expert panel of young women from across the globe. There will be opportunities for audience interaction via breakout sessions, opinion polls and Q&A. **Register in advance for this event [HERE](#).**

The Women in Power and Leadership Accelerating Advancement Towards Gender Equity Parallel Event will be held 20 March 2025, 12:30 – 2:00 pm EST (Virtual):

Women remain under-represented in leadership roles across all sectors: politics, business, government, and international organizations. Women leaders bring diverse perspectives and drive inclusive, foster innovation and sustainable policies, yet embedded barriers hinder their access to pivotal roles of decision-making and power nor reach mass representation. Join the event to hear from distinguished leaders from around the world. **See flyer indicating speakers at the bottom of the Update. Register in advance for this event [HERE](#).**

GWI CAMEUS region hosts CSW69 Parallel Event Recognizing Qualifications For Employment Of Women Migrating To North America

This Parallel Event, to be held 18 March 12:30-2:30 EST, will explore challenges female migrants face in having their previously acquired skills, education and experience recognized. Panellists will focus on this challenge as it relates to issues of gender, education and emotional health. Register in advance for this event [HERE](#). See the bottom of the Update for the flyer and speakers.

Let's go Virtual

GWI encourages those unable to attend in person to register for the online CSW69 Forum and follow Side Events online. The virtual environment allows everyone to participate in the CSW69, offering opportunities to explore hundreds of events and connect with thousands of participants, including events organized by GWI and many organized by GWI affiliates. Meet with fellow NFA members or colleagues to watch the sessions live or at a convenient time. Then, follow with discussion and advocacy planning. **For more information and to register check out the flyer below.**

GWI written statement for the CSW69

GWI submits CSW69 written statement headlined, *"Graduate Women International and Statement Cosponsors Mark 30 Years of the Beijing Platform for Action with Calls for Enhanced Digital Education Access and Modern AI Strategies."* Calling on member states to support the need for careful AI implementation to ensure that technological advancement does not reinforce systemic inequalities. **Please read the full statement [HERE](#).**

— Give the Gift of Education —

Girls Education for Brighter Futures is a programme that funds global education, gender equality and women's empowerment projects around the world. The closure of schools and universities during COVID threatened girls' education worldwide. With your donations, this programme can, through different projects, make a profound impact on young girls' lives by ensuring they can access education and the resources they need to succeed. The latest initiative, "Training Adolescents, Teachers, and Parents in Luuka District in Making Reusable Sanitary Pads", funded by the Bina Roy Partners in Development project, is helping to improve the personal health of women and girls, teaching them skills that provide new sources of income, and increasing school retention rates for girls in the Luuka District, in Eastern Uganda. GWI invites you to click [HERE](#) to learn more about this project and is grateful to all the generous support of the Girls Education for Brighter Futures Post-Covid 19 programme. To contribute towards more of these causes click [HERE](#). Thank you for making such a difference!

— Did you know? —



Suzanne Nette, Graduate Women International Intern

GWI welcomes the new intern Suzanne Nette

My name is Suzanne Nette, I am doing a master's degree in international relations and political strategies in France. I graduated from the University of Lyon 2, where I obtained a degree in applied languages in English and Spanish. I am passionate about foreign languages and cultures and always wanted to work in an international and multicultural environment. Throughout my studies, I developed a strong interest in social issues and feminism, and had the opportunity to volunteer in local organizations, such as the French Red Cross. I acquired knowledge about local humanitarian actions, and participated in the promotion of various missions. These experiences made me want to be

involved at a strategic level, by working in an international NGO and made me realize, as a woman and a student, how privileged I am to be born in a country where I can exercise my fundamental rights. That is why I chose to intern at Graduate Women International. I am delighted to contribute to its important work of empowering women and girls through education and advocating for gender equality. I am excited to learn more about the development sector and acquire new skills while collaborating with women around the world. **GWI is excited to have Suzanne Nette as a new member of our team and wish her much success in this new chapter.**

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 69TH SESSION

CSW69

LET'S GO VIRTUAL

Not attending CSW69 in person, then how
about a get-together?

ORGANIZE A WATCH PARTY
WITH YOUR FELLOW NFA
OR COLLEAGUES!



Register for the NGO
CSW69 Forum
HERE!



Access the live stream
HERE!

10-21

MARCH 2025

The CSW offers a virtual environment that allows everyone to participate in the various sessions. This year's CSW offers **more than 800 events** with speakers from all over the world to **review the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including three parallel events organized by GWI**. Click **HERE** to register for GWI parallel events.




@GRADUATEWOMENINTERNATIONAL


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RECOGNIZING QUALIFICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN MIGRATING TO NORTH AMERICA

Exploring challenges female migrants face in having their previously acquired skills, education and experience recognized. Our panellists will focus on this challenge as it relates to issues of gender, education and emotional health.

 Tuesday, March 18, 2025

 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM ET

VIRTUAL [Join here on Zoom](#)

PRESENTED BY CAMEUS,

AN ALLIANCE OF CFUW-
FCFDU (CANADA), FEMU
(MEXICO), & WG-USA



AN NGO CSW VIRTUAL PARALLEL EVENT



Deana Hatcher

A former Registrar of Teachers, teacher advocate and forever a learner. An Administrative Officer at the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association.



Sodaba Saeedi

A doctor from Afghanistan currently studying to be a nurse, as an intermediate step to becoming certified in Canada.



Teyebah Nazarian

An architect and lecturer in architecture and urban design. She immigrated to the USA from Afghanistan.



Ana Marcela Pérez Sánchez

A feminist activist from Colombia, who is currently in Mexico doing her PhD research in social science.



Aída Chávez Zapata

Global Partnerships Manager at Talent Beyond Boundaries.

Commission on the Status of Women 69th session

Consultation Day Geneva

*Harnessing Civil Society to Implement the Beijing
Platform for Action*

TUESDAY, 4 MARCH 2025
4-6:00 PM CET
ZOOM



REGISTER NOW

We invite you to join our interactive and informational session with dynamic speakers from NGOs, youth organizations, the United Nations, and government! Engage in insightful discussions, exchange ideas, and explore innovative solutions for advancing the Beijing Platform for Action. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a transformative conversation.



Women in Power and Leadership: Accelerating Advancement Towards Gender Equity

Thurs, Mar 20, 2025, at 12.30 pm EST/ 9.30 am PST [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER TO JOIN](#)

Full link provided below if copy-paste is needed



Keynote Speaker
Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN Initiator, as Security Council President - led 1325

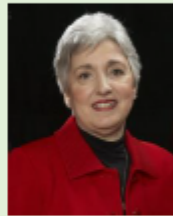


Hon. Deputy Executive Director
Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda Integrating Gender Lens to Macroeconomic Policy



Moderator
Shaila Rao Mistry
CEO Founder STEM-Institute, VP Advocacy. Graduate Women International

Eleanor Smeal
Founder and President of Feminist Majority



Irene Natividad,
President Global of Women, Globe Women Research and Educational Institute

Why are women still under-represented in high leadership roles across all sectors: politics, business, government, and global organizations? To ensure Women's leadership is the norm, rather than an exception, we must expose intersectional factors shaping public perceptions and address systemic obstacles. To promote equitable access to leadership and build pathways to a gender-responsive future, we need to dismantle exclusionary barriers and advocate for policy reforms. Join us to hear perspectives from our **Keynote Speaker, H.E UN Deputy Executive Director** and other distinguished High Global Leaders

Our Initiatives - We invite you to join us in the following:

- ❖ Beijing +30 UNECE Geneva Report - an insightful Reflection of Gains and Losses
- ❖ Advocacy Without Borders: Advocacy Influences at Work - GWI initiative
- ❖ Resolution on Artificial Intelligence and impact on decision making – GWI/WG-USA

Click or Copy link to register

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsde-hqD8uGdJsDslnKBLNlX7UlgFtTK#/registration>

— Dates and Events —

24 February - 4 April	58th Session of the Human Rights Council
8 March	International Women's Day
10-21 March	CSW69
10 March	GWI's Breakfast Briefing
12 March	GWI's Social Dinner
13 March	GWI's Breakfast Briefing
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
22 March	World Water Day
6 April	International Day of Sports for Development and Peace
11-13 September	GWI 35th Triennial General Assembly

Follow us on social media!



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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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