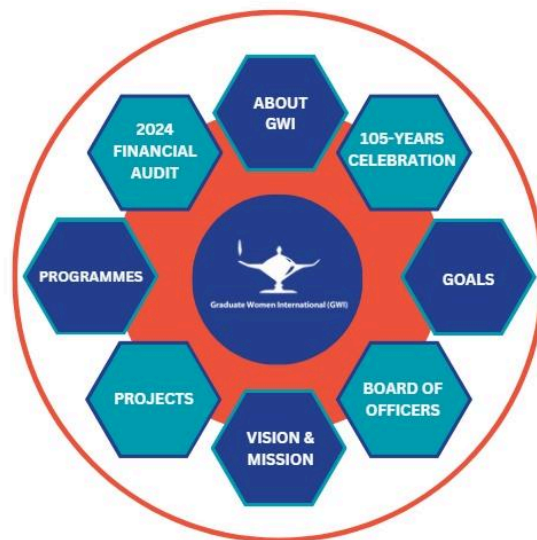




## GW I UPDATE –7 May 2025

### Annual Report 2024



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### — Graduate Women International (GWI) News —

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#### **GW I releases 2024 Annual Report**

GW I is pleased to announce the release of its 2024 Annual Report. The report features a 2024 Year-at-a-Glance, key updates on GW I projects, and a forward-looking perspective on continued advocacy for safe access to lifelong learning opportunities for women and girls. In a year marked by mounting pressures on civil society and limited resources for non-governmental organizations, GW I has carried on with determination, driven by the more than century-long commitment and resilience of its leadership, international membership network of graduate women, and stakeholders. We invite members and supporters to read the report and reflect on our shared achievements. Click [HERE](#) to access the report.

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### — GW I Member News —

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#### **From Strength to Strength: Conversations on Women’s Leadership**

GW I members and guests are invited to join an intergenerational Peer-to-Peer Conversation hosted by Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Moncton and CFUW E-Club on Thursday, 29 May at 17:00 CEST (11:00 ET). This session will highlight the lifetime of leadership

achievement in business non-profit and volunteer milestone experiences in leadership with insights from Pat Patton and Hafsa Siddiqui.

Pat Patton has a lifetime of leadership achievement in business, non-profit, and volunteer initiatives. Pat has proven herself a visionary and caring leader in her career: as director of human resources of an international world college including developing a healing and reconciliation plan for survivors of historical misconduct, as national lead for Indigenous Relations for Canada's plan for its long-term management of high-level nuclear waste, as the leader of sales and marketing for a Canadian national hotel chain, and in her work in psychiatric, long-term care, rehabilitation hospitals and community family services. Pat has also been a tireless volunteer in her community in the arts and business including as founding President and Director successfully raising \$13.5 million for a community Performing Arts Centre, as a member of the GWI Governance Committee, and as a Board member of the UWC Vancouver, the CFUW Finance Committee and International Relations Committee and as the lead of the CFUW International Service Project Subcommittee. Pat leads the GWI Supporters Network Organizational Group, connecting Canadian clubs that support GWI.

Hafsa Siddiqui is a young member and PhD student in Neuroscience, Psychological Science Program, Lakehead University and a Research Associate with the Dr. Gilles Arcand Centre for Health Equity at the Northern Ontario School for Medicine University. With an educational background in finance, psychology, and management, Hafsa's research focuses on a broad range of areas, including cognitive neuroscience, mental health, and health systems transformation. Hafsa has previously worked in leadership roles at various health institutions in Thunder Bay. She is an active community volunteer who enjoys working with community-based initiatives that improve the health and well-being of her community. **Click [HERE](#) to register. Please see the flyer at the end of the Update.**

### **GWI Independent Member Network kicks off Challenges to Women's Empowerment series**

On 28 April, the GWI Independent Member Network (IMN) hosted the first in a webinar series titled "*Challenges to Women's Empowerment: Causes and Remedies*," featuring presentations by Ariani Narwastujati (Indonesia) S.Pd.,S.S., M.Pd and Willet L. Salue (Liberia), Program Coordinator at ActionAid Liberia, "Community Health Challenges and their Effect on Women and Girls". The session was opened by IMN Convener Sahar Gamal and brought together GWI Independent Members for an eye-opening cross-cultural exchange.

Narwastujati spoke on the barriers female students face across Indonesia's many islands, highlighting challenges such as economic insecurity, gender bias, and lack of access to education and public services in rural areas. Her presentation emphasized the importance of critical thinking, non-formal education, and opportunities for cultural exchange to empower women to pursue leadership and independence.

Salue addressed the widespread impact of poor health infrastructure, limited access to sexual and reproductive health services, and the ongoing crisis of gender-based violence. She illustrated how early marriage, poor sanitation in schools, and cultural taboos severely restrict girls' ability to stay in school and exercise bodily autonomy. Her presentation called for

community-led advocacy, stronger legal protection, and adolescent-focused empowerment programs. If you missed the webinar, GWI invites members and guests to listen to these exceptional presentations found on the GWI Vimeo channel [HERE](#). ***GWI congratulates the IMN for kicking off this 4-part webinar series.***

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## — GWI at the United Nations —

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### **Girl Goals: What Has Changed for Girls? Adolescent girls right over 30 Years**

In conjunction with the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, GWI United Nations Representative in New York, Dr. Maureen Byrne, contributed a comprehensive summary of a session and the report *Girl Goals: What Has Changed for Girls? Adolescent girls right over 30 Years*, issued by UNICEF, UN Women, and Plan International. The report outlines gains and persistent gaps in adolescent girls' education, economic security, health, and protection from violence since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. While secondary school completion for girls has increased globally from 36% to 61%, disparities remain significant, especially in conflict-affected areas and among the most economically disadvantaged. The number of girls out of school has decreased by 39%, yet in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, girls are still more likely than boys to be excluded from education. GWI continues to advocate for gender parity in secondary education, expanded access to tertiary education, and policy measures that support lifelong learning for women and girls. GWI warmly thanks Dr. Byrne for her contribution and for highlighting the data and implications of this report. Access the full report [HERE](#).

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## — Give the Gift of Education —

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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!**

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## — Did you know? —

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May 12 is marked annually around the world in honor of the birthday of Maryam Mirzakhani, an Iranian mathematician renowned for her groundbreaking work in geometry and dynamical

systems. She was born on May 12, 1977, in Tehran and passed away at the age of 40 in 2017. Maryam Mirzakhani made history by being the first woman to receive the Fields Medal, often referred to as the "Nobel Prize of Mathematics." She was honored for her work on the dynamics and geometry of Riemann surfaces and their moduli spaces.

Mirzakhani's legacy transformed the field of mathematics and helped countless women and girls see themselves as leaders in STEM. Among those she inspired is Maryna Viazovska, a Ukrainian mathematician and professor based in Switzerland, who became only the second woman to receive the Fields Medal. She was recognized for solving a long-standing mathematical puzzle: how to pack spheres together in the most efficient way. While the concept is simple in three dimensions, Viazovska discovered the optimal arrangement in eight dimensions—a breakthrough that revealed deep links between geometry, algebra, and physics.



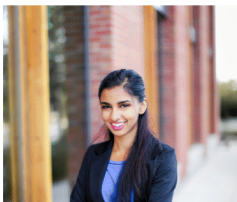
## **From Strength to Strength: Conversations on Women's Leadership**

**Thursday, May 29, 5:00 PM CEST (11:00 ET)**

**Join us for a GWI Peer-to-Peer Conversation hosted by CFUW Moncton and  
CFUW E-Club**



**Pat Patton, specialist in engagement and dialogue, 40+ years of leadership in business, not-for-profit and volunteer organizations. Member GWI Governance Committee, CFUW Finance Committee and CFUW International Relations.**



**Hafsa Siddiqui: PhD Student, Neuroscience, Psychological Science Program, Lakehead University and Research Associate at the Northern Ontario School for Medicine University.**



**Register**



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## — Dates and Events —

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28 May	Menstrual Hygiene Day
12 June	World Day Against Child Labour
19 June	International Day for Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
20 June	GWI Hegg Hoffet Program webinar, Zoom
11-13 September	GWI 35th Triennial General Assembly, Lusaka, Zambia

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**

7-9, Chemin de Balexert, CH-1291, Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland

E-mail: [gwi@graduatewomen.org](mailto:gwi@graduatewomen.org) Website: [www.graduatewomen.org](http://www.graduatewomen.org)

