



Indian Federation of University Women's Associations

AFFILIATED TO GRADUATE WOMEN INTERNATIONAL



President's Address

IFUWA is completing the second year of this Triennium. For the past one year keeping to the vision and mission of IFUWA, we have had quality and impressive Webinars dealt by eminent resource persons concerning, education, health, workplace and such - all issues that empower women to think and perform better.

I convey my sincere thanks to the cooperation of the conveners who have worked along with me. Appreciate their sincerity, dedication and untiring efforts for the same. It was also the participating members who made each event a grand success.

We have succeeded in introducing amendments to our Constitution making it more meaningful and futuristic in keeping with the ideals of our association. Our social media is robust and vibrant and encompasses details of our works.

Close participatory performance has been achieved whilst working with GWI's Organizational Development Plans and members coming together in Webinars planned by other NFAs have been on the rise. IFUWA has provided opportunities and platforms for members to interact at various forums helping to advance their vision and ideas as a Way Forward strategy for IFUWA.

More is left to be done in the days to come, and I am certain that IFUWA will produce much with the united effort of all to bring glory to our association.

Ranjana Banerjee
President



Editor's Note

Dear friends,

We are now producing the third E-newsletter of IFUWA. All the IFUWA newsletters have been in the digital format till date. The E-newsletters have either been sent by email or have been uploaded on the IFUWA Website.

The pandemic helped us to digitise our communication channels effectively. The digital format of the E-newsletter allows us greater manoeuvrability as we can utilise more space at ease. The IFUWA Website is fully functional and has been well received from all quarters. It has a Downloads Page which allows download of relevant items for your use and reference.

The IFUWA Facebook page has more than 200 members as on date. The IFUWA Events on You Tube which has more than 50 views on most of the uploaded videos, has a few subscribers as well.

Last but not the least, I share an interesting quote of Walt Disney with you. He says, 'Of all of our inventions for mass communication, pictures still speak the most universally understood language'.

I would, therefore, like to wrap up with a request. When you mail your contributions for the IFUWA E-newsletter, remember the Walt Disney quote. Do look for and send good images alongwith the relevant captions. It makes a lot of difference to the reader, in terms of understanding of the context of the matter.

Happy reading!

Purobi Ghosh Mohan
Convener - Communication

GWI News

38th Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Human Rights Council, a unique process based on equal treatment for all countries, involves a periodic review of the human rights records of all 193 United Nations Member States. It provides an opportunity to all member States to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to overcome challenges to the enjoyment of human rights. UPR Working Group held its 38th Session from May 3 to 14, 2021, where three GWI National Federations and Associations (NFA), namely Paraguay, Sierra Leone and Singapore, were under review.

Paraguay was recommended, to accelerate its efforts in the inclusion of indigenous, Afro-Paraguayan population and children with disabilities in schools. Also to 'Revoke Ministry of Education and Science resolution no. 29664', which prohibits public education materials on gender equality, reproductive rights, sexuality and non-discrimination.

Sierra Leone was encouraged to pursue its efforts to improve access to education for all girls, especially by ensuring the inclusion of pregnant girls. It also recommended elimination of female genital mutilation and early as well as forced marriages.

Singapore was notably urged to include in its Constitution a definition of discrimination against women, and to pursue its efforts to combat Gender Based Violence. In the field of education, it was recommended to continue strengthening access to quality and inclusive education.

International Day of Peace

Ahead of the International Day of Peace and to conclude its 'Connecting Across Generations' Webinar series, on September 18, 2021, GWI Young Members Network (YMN) its fourth and final Webinar on 'International Day of Peace: Celebrations across Generations'. The Webinar focused on the concept of peace and the significant role education plays in peace processes. The Webinar concluded as the GWI lamp was lit, to call for peace globally and highlight how education especially for women and girls, plays a key role in shaping a culture of peace.

Girls not Brides - Power to Girls Virtual Festival

Girls Not Brides hosted their 'Power to Girls Virtual Festival' in celebration of the launch of their Power to Girls campaign. On September 30, 2021 GWI participated in the Girls Not Brides 'Power to Girls:

Solutions to End Child Marriage' Webinar. A group of inspiring panellists discussed the way forward. Keeping girls in school was one of the key areas of focus during the Webinar, as evidence shows that staying in school decreases a girl's likelihood of being a child bride. On an average, the likelihood of a girl marrying as a child is 6% less for every additional year she stays in secondary education.

GWI releases 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence Toolkit

In honor of the 16 days of activism against Gender Based Violence, which commenced on November 25, 2021, GWI crafted and released a 2021 toolkit to help inspire and promote activism around the globe. Advocacy comes in many different forms, and the GWI toolkit exists to help individuals find a method that works best for them.

'Women of Courage' Webinar co-hosted with Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) welcomed Renowned Speaker Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford

On December 23, 2021, CFUW North Vancouver and CFUW Abbotsford invited GWI members all around the world to gather for a Webinar called 'Women of Courage - A conversation with Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford'. Dr. Ashford is the past Co-President of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), and past President of Physicians for Global Survival (Canada). Nearly 100 GWI members from 13 National Federations and Associations around the world and 25 CFUW Clubs came together for informative and inspirational peer-to-peer discussion with Dr. Ashford, in recognition of the UN International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

GWI announces 34th Triennial General Assembly and Conference Dates

GWI announced that the 34th Triennial General Assembly and Conference will be held 100% virtually between 11-13 November 2022. GWI congratulated and welcomed IFUWA as the host National Federation and Association (NFA). This conference will tackle globally relevant education and funding issues central to GWI's mission: empowering girls and women through quality education to the highest levels. Additional focus will be aimed towards the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 4, Quality Education - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

SWAYAMSIDDHA Project

Swayamsiddha is an online Series of Talks on 'Empowering Women to be Self-sufficient', presented by experienced facilitators. Based on the result of findings of a Survey conducted to analyse stress and resilience of graduate working women during the pandemic crisis, the IFUWA Projects Committee initiated the Series to discuss and deliberate upon the findings.

Session on Nutrition

The first Session began on September 03, 2021, with Dr Suchitra Roy, member of UWA Pune. This Session was based on concepts covering nutrition, malnutrition, consequences of deficiency of macro and micro nutrients, and ways to ameliorate the deficiency changes owing to through dietary improvisation in urban populations.

Emphasis was being laid on maternal diet and nutrition and the consequences of compromised maternal diet on the health of the foetus with its long-term impact, based on scientific and logical details. Other nutrition related concepts were also discussed citing live examples, making the topic interesting and interactive.



Session on Yoga as a Tool to Manage Stress



This Session was taken by Yoga trainer and Practitioner Ms Rajyalakshmi Rao on October 22, 2021. The Session started with a technique called Conditioning & Preparedness, that dealt with completion of tasks undertaken. The speaker helped participants perform this technique with instructions. She then went on to explain what Stress is, its causes, types and symptoms. She said that prolonged stress could lead to serious health issues and Yoga was one of the many ways to manage stress. She talked on

leading a yogic lifestyle and a brief insight into Astanga Yoga (the eight limbed path of Yoga).

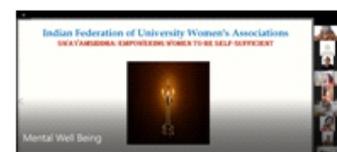
The Session had a few Pranayama and Meditation techniques demonstrated by Ms Ketaki R Rao, for daily practice.

Session on Handling your thinking traps

Conducted by Dr P Vijayalakshmi, a Psychiatrist from Vijayawada, this Session was held on November 20, 2021. Thinking traps or irrational thoughts have been found to be the reason for anxiety and depression, leading to poor communication and fractured relationships. The session was meant to enhance resilience of women, by empowering them with tools to tackle such thinking traps.

Dr Vijayalakshmi started with the different turbulent states of mind that a person maybe in which prevents one from seeing a situation as it is. These turbulent mind states were fidgety mind (monkey mind), the dull mind (donkey mind), the partially restless mind (butterfly mind) and the balanced mind (candle mind). She went on to explain that one needs the balanced mind to recognise thinking traps.

The participants were taken through the Modified Jacobson's progressive muscle relaxation technique, to calm the minds and to bring them to a balanced state of mind. The fight-or-flight response was also explained.

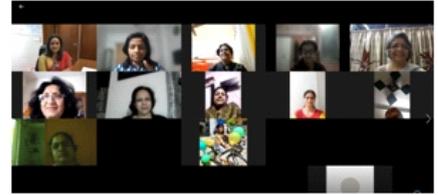


SWAYAMSIDDHA Project

Session on Financial Landscape - Post Pandemic

This recently held Session on December 17, 2021 was facilitated by Ms Roopa Venkatkrishnan, Director - Sapient Wealth Advisors and Brokers Pvt Ltd.

The makers of the traditional society had created a system wherein the female members were assigned with the responsibility of taking care of the household affairs and their male counterparts were supposed to earn money for livelihood. Over time, this practice has witnessed remarkable transformation. Now it's time that one talks of equality and equity. However, when it comes to being frontrunners in managing finances, male members take the lead. Ms Roopa Venkatkrishnan said that they felt the need to empower women by creating awareness about management of finances.



She began her talk by defining the financial landscape with components like protection planning, investment planning and retirement planning. She made the participants conscious of the importance of savings and wisely choosing different avenues of investment, keeping in mind the inflationary trend prevalent in the country.

She further emphasised the need to set a Financial Goal and have a feasible plan to achieve it. She added that 'financial independence does not lead to financial security'. In order to achieve the latter, one needs to set up a proper roadmap. She described 8 financial prudent habits that one needs to adopt to ensure financial stability. Those habits should comprise a monthly budget, maintaining a dedicated savings or contingency account, not missing out on EMI's, abstaining from impulse purchases, buying decision based on return value, taking advantage of festive offers, undertaking periodic maintenance and planning for long term.

Ms Venkatakrishnan provided the pandemic checklist which should include one's financial and other asset details, important document details, passwords required for digital transactions, etc., and the importance of keeping the family informed of the checklist.



Malati S Kalmadi
Convenor Projects

UWA Calcutta

The UWAC lost many of the stalwarts in the past year who left indelible foot prints for us to follow. A memorial service was held on June 02, 2021, in remembrance of our following legendary Past Presidents -

Prof. Chitra Ghosh, Past President UWAC (1975-1977), IFUWA and IFUW

Mrs. Krishna Mukherjee, Past President (1983-1985)

Ms. Prathama Sen, Past President (2001-2003)

Ms. Shyamali Dey, Past President, (2009-2011)

Ms. Shyamali Dey, Past President, (2009-2011)



The Children Celebrating Christmas Carnival at Society 5 O. One year of the Teacher's salary has been donated by UWAC at Society 5 O school.

Happenings

A camp was organised on menstrual health and hygiene on September 11, 2021. Free sanitary napkins and food packets were distributed at Society 5 O, Thakurpukur.



At the Menstrual Health and Hygiene camp

To commemorate the Human Rights Day, UWAC organised a Talk on December 22, 2021. The eminent speaker was Dr. Subhrangsu Shekhar Chatterji, Head of the Department of Law, University of Calcutta, former Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Calcutta, former Secretary, Faculty Council of Post Graduate Studies in Law, University of Calcutta, former Vice Chancellor of Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University and Ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, West Bengal.

UWA Dehradun

At Apna Ghar

UWA Dehradun donated room heaters, sanitisers, masks and sweets to the inmates of 'Apna Ghar', Badripur on the occasion of Children's Day and the Day of Elimination of Violence against Women. The Apna Ghar houses girls from impoverished backgrounds, orphans, girls subjected to atrocities, etc. They are given quality education in different schools. Computer training as well as other skills are imparted to them. The inmates gave a musical and dance performance at the function.



UWA Dehradun members with the excited children

Surindar Kalra (Patron), Dr Daljit Kaur (Chairperson), Mohini Sharma (President), Veena Sharma (Secretary), Shevata Rai Talwar (Association Representative, Publicity Convenor) and other senior members of UWA were present to motivate the inmates.

UWA Dehradun gets new members

UWA Dehradun established in 1963 and having completed its Golden Jubilee some years ago, recently decided to get into a membership drive for new members who would be willing to align themselves with the UWA aims and objectives.

It was an onerous task but the team succeeded in bringing many new members into the fold. Some of them, Principals and lecturers of institutions, agreed to join the UWA on their own, after witnessing the commitment of the existing members to such a noble cause.



Dehradun activities at a glance



Shevata Rai Talwar
AR, UWA Dehradun
Secretary UWAsia

Happenings

UWA Madras

Talks

Dr D K Hema Hari, founder of Bharat Gyan, spoke on 'The Role of Women from Ancient Wisdom' on January 27, 2021. Dr J Vasanthakumar, Member RC of Chennai Prime & POSH Committee member, Trainer, spoke on 'Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women' on 27 February 2021. Both the Talks had sizeable attendance of students from the college.

Women's Day Celebrations

Women's Day was celebrated by UWA Madras and Dr MGR Janaki College of Arts and Science for Women, Chennai on March 08, 2021, which was streamed live on YouTube. Dr Latha Rajendran, President, UWAM and Secretary & Correspondent of Dr MGR Janaki College, Chennai welcomed the gathering. The inaugural address was delivered by Dr Sudha Seshayyan, Vice-Chancellor, The Tamilnadu Dr MGR Medical University, Chennai. She spoke on promotion of qualities of women, such as empathy, good will, energy, compassion, tolerance, patience and resilience. She also emphasised on the importance of personal health and hygiene for women. She emphasised that women should be aware of their legal rights.

Dr. Rajeevalochana Parthasarathy, Consultant Nephrologist, Madras Medical Mission, Chennai then delivered a talk on 'Women and Kidney Health'. She spoke of chronic kidney disease, its risk factors, impact and preventive measures. She emphasised that early detection is the key for successful management of kidney disease in women.

The second speaker was Mr. Ajay Singh, Advocate and Co-Founder, Jaagriti Foundation, Chennai. He spoke on 'Gender Equality and Women's Legal Rights in modern era'. He elaborated on economic participation, opportunities, education, attainment, health and survival, political involvement and legal rights of women

and equality. He spoke of online and offline women's rights, their safety, laws against acid attack, rape victims and eve teasing.

World Environment Day Celebrations

University Women's Association, Madras, organised various competitions to commemorate the World Environment Day on June 05, 2021. The events included Mono-acting, Art out of Waste, Photography and 3D Posters Competitions themed 'Mother Nature'.

More than 150 students between the age group of 15 and 20 participated in all the events. The events were judged by the faculty of Dr MGR Janaki College for Women, Chennai. The winners were acknowledged and e-certificates were presented to them.

Centenary Celebrations

As part of the centenary celebrations, the UWAM organised a Webinar on 'Challenges for Women in the Covid Era' on August 28, 2021. The inaugural address was given by Hon'ble Justice Dr. Anita Sumanth, Madras High Court, Chennai.

Eminent women spoke on various issues pertaining to the challenges faced by women in the Covid times. Dr. Rekha Shetty, Managing Director, Farstar Distribution Network Ltd., Chennai spoke about the 'Transformation of Women into Entrepreneurs' during Covid Times. Dr Vijayalakshmi, Former Head, Medical Sciences, NIEPMD, Chennai, spoke on 'Challenges faced by Women due to Disabilities during Pandemic'. Dr Geetha Premkumar, Director, Vector Indojanix Pvt. Ltd.

In order to address the psychological impact on teachers due to lockdown UWAM, organised a three-day Workshop on 'Simple Yogasanas' for destressing. Dr Selvarani, Yoga Instructor and Physical Trainer of Dr MGR Janaki College for Women, Chennai, taught simple yogasanas to the participants, which will help to relax and go on with the daily activities. More than 70 teachers and students from different colleges of Chennai participated in this Workshop.



Yoga Camp

Happenings

UWAM, organised a one-day online workshop on 'Basic computing' on August 28, 2021. Dr Uma Shankari, Head, Department of Computer Applications, Dr MGR Janaki College for Women was the resource person. 35 participants from various non academic sections participated. Basic computing operations like MS Word, MS Excel were taught online. Drafting emails was also taught.



Basic computing



Participants at the Talk by a banker on loan process

Opportunity sometimes comes in the garb of crisis. Many young women have used the lockdown to realise their dreams to become an entrepreneur. More than 20 potential entrepreneurs participated and benefited from a Talk organised by UWAM on September 11, 2021. The Loan Operation Manager Mr Shashi Kumar, Canara Bank Adyar branch, explained the process involved in the documentation for acquiring loan to start small scale business.

To inculcate the importance of Nutrition every year, Green Health Club of Dr. MGR Janaki College conducted competition based on the topic 'Nutrient rich foods and herbal plants of medicinal value'. Several students participated and displayed the food products with nutritive value and their health benefits.



Green camp

UWAM members proudly present their Centenary emblem



Left to right :
Dr Apitha, Dr Booma, Dr Latha Rajendran,
Mrs Mythili Sundar, Dr Lakshmi Balaji

With online teaching becoming the order of the day during the lockdown, UWAM organised a three day 'Faculty Development Program' for school teachers on Online Teaching methods titled 'Embarking on an E-learning Journey' on June 3-5, 2021. Mrs. Vithyaa Raajmanikam, Ms. M Hemavathy, Ms. E Kanimozhi, Ms. K Shanthi and Ms. S Sushma faculty members from the department of Computer Science, Dr. MGR Janaki College for Women handled sessions on Preparation, Engagement and Evaluation strategies.



Vaijyanthi Mukkala
AR, UWA Madras

Happenings

UWA Nagpur

AnandDaan

UWA Nagpur and LAD College for Women organised 'AnandDaan' for the inmates of PremDaan – a Home for the Aged, on October 08, 2021. AnandDaan aims at spreading happiness. The post-graduate students of Human Development actively participated and prepared a small entertainment program for the inmates of the Home for the Aged. The entertainment program started with a dance, followed by quiz and distribution of handmade bookmarks to the inmates. Then came the game circus and again a photo frame made by post-graduate students of Human Development was distributed. The last item was a small skit, which reflected the sentiment 'age is merely a number'.



AnandDaan



AnandDaan

Tie & Dye Workshop for Intellectually Challenged Adults

UWA Nagpur, PG Dept of Fashion Design, LAD College for Women and SVK Shikshan Sanstha, an NGO, organised a free tie & dye workshop on December 16, 2021. This was for the intellectually challenged beneficiaries of SVK Shikshan Sanstha under the guidance of Dr. Harsha Jharia, CAO, Women's Education Society. The objective was to create an enabling environment and inclusive society which respects the dignity of persons with disabilities, especially intellectually challenged adults. The intellectually challenged teenagers were trained for different types of tying methods of the fabric to create different designs in tie & dye. They made dupatta, scarves and t-shirts. This Workshop was aimed at getting the intellectually challenged adults to become economically independent.



Tie & Dye Workshop for Intellectually Challenged Adults



Harsha Jharia
AR, UWA Nagpur

UWA Pune

UWA Pune was awarded with the Nav Durga Sakti Award by the Pune Municipal Corporation. Four of its members were recognised for their contribution towards Women Empowerment. They were Neelam Sharma, Shyamala Desai, Uma Sharma and Pramila Dham.



President Neelam Jagdale receiving Award on behalf of team

Happenings

To keep members connected, the Open House & Membership Development Committee organised an Open House event of WhatsApp 'Fun n Masti' on October 13, 2021 which was enjoyed by members.



Consulting with Dr. Vasanthi Patwardhan

Sucharita and Chandrang activities, which were stopped due to Covid, restarted production of sanitary pads.

UWA Pune Member Dr Vasanti Patwardan, MD - Gynecologist & Obstetrician, Specialist in Child Development, School & Family counseling gave a talk to Hostel girls on 'Women Health'. 25 Hostel girls were present on this occasion.

Topics discussed were PCOD (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome), premenstrual symptoms, menstrual period cycle, contraceptive devices and other related matters.

Having received a good response from the Counseling Session of Dr. Patwardhan with the girls of our Women's hostel, the activity of DILASA - a counseling unit of UWAP was initiated. Dr. Vasanthi Patwardhan conducted a one-on-one voluntary session of counseling with five of the hostel girls on December 11, 2021.

This facility of counseling, would further be extended to all UWA members and their lady family members in future.

Online activities continue in the Environmental cell WhatsApp group. That includes sharing zoom call links to various webinars, information about some special species of plants and animals, certain measures one can take to curb the current pollution situations, etc.

UWA Vadodara

A Nature Walk was organised on September 26, 2021, in Kamati Baug. Although it was early in the morning, a large no. of members had the enthusiasm to participate in the Walk. It was conducted by Dr Jitendra Gavali, Director, Community Science Centre. Dr Gavali made the Walk really interesting and thoroughly enjoyable for the participants.

A memento was presented to Dr. Gavali. The Walk ended with delicious tea, maska buns and sevnamras.



Nature Walk

During Navratri, on October 13, 2021, members met for an evening of garba. Garba was performed to lilting garba songs and members thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

Aarti was performed by members at the end of the day and the festive evening wrapped up with snacks and lemonade.



Ms Sonal Kotak gave a very interesting and informative talk on Financial Planning and Investment on December 18, 2021. She spoke about different fields of investment especially for senior citizen ladies. The talk was very interactive and Ms Kotak answered all the audience questions with ease. It was well attended by our members.

Amita Shah presented a memento to Ms Kotak at the end of the talk.

Amita Shah presenting Memento to Sonal Kotak

Happenings

WGU (Bombay)

The Scholarship Awards function 2021 – 2022 was held on December 11, 2021. Scholarships were awarded to 68 students for higher studies in different streams such as Engineering, Medicine, Accounting, etc., general streams like Science, Arts, Commerce, for professional course in Nursing and Diploma in Patisserie. The Scholarship Committee has handed over additional scholarships to 20 girl students pursuing various fields of education and further education.



WGU members and staff at the Scholarship Awards function



Teachers' Day celebrations

Teachers' Day was celebrated on September 06, 2021 by the WGU Study Centre. After an inspirational tribute paid to Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the teachers of Balwadi, Study Centre and Computer Centre were felicitated. The celebrations were followed by lunch.

To help WGU members safely navigate financial transactions digitally, the Computer Centre Committee designed and launched an interactive three Week's course in February 2021, for 'Online Banking and Cashless Transactions,' with practical demonstrations. Each training module was followed by an in-depth question and answer session.

In 2021-2022, the Consumer & Civic Affairs Committee members conducted informative sessions with WGU members volunteering as Speakers on various enlightening topics conducted on the digital platform, every month.

On the June 24, 2021, 'Happiness Ration Kits' were distributed to all needy families in the vicinity, in collaboration with Finolex Pipes along with 'Give with Dignity' CSR Partner Mukul Madhav Foundation.



Ration kits being distributed



At the Christmas party celebrations

The Balwadi Committee distributed notebooks, drawing books and color pencils to all the small children who were a part of the Balwadi as an ongoing activity.

Diwali was celebrated in WGU on October 29, 2021. Cash prizes were given to three winners for Best Diya and Greeting Card.

The Programme and Fund Raising Committee has conducted physical Christmas Party on December 17, 2021 with Chief Guest WGU Brand Ambassador Simran Ahuja, Miss India 2013 and International Celebrity Anchor and with Scholarship Committee.

The Programme and Fund Raising Committee is now registered for CSR with the Government of India, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Office of the Registrar of Companies.



Merlyn Vasudev Monteiro
AR, WGU

EVENTS

Gender Perspectives : Egalitarianism or Discrimination

Indian Federation of University Women's Associations had an informative and captivating session with Justice (Retd) Roshan Dalvi on September 29, 2021 on the digital platform, on the above theme.

Justice Dalvi eloquently explained that the status of women and their position are defined by the Society as is perceived by it from the domestic, professional, corporate, financial and emotional perspectives. She lucidly explained that however much we have progressed in the 21st century, the basic mind set towards women in any sector remains negatively biased. Roshan deliberated on the idea that in actual cases of war, conflict and violence, it is the women and children, more so the young girl children, who are the worst affected victims and sufferers, but the credit in victory goes to the man. Social and domestic applause for women is a rare incidence as against men who attain it as his privilege. What is worse that came out strongly in her research on Gender Perspectives is that globally, education is a fundamental right and the basic requirement for sustainable living was far less for girls as compared to boys.

She elaborated on the real perception of women in urban or rural areas, organised or unorganised sectors - irrespective as to whether the nation is under developed or developing. It is a perceptible, factual global phenomenon that the contribution of women remains largely unrecognised and underestimated by the Society.



Justice Roshan Dalvi



Session on Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens : Legal Implications and Moral Obligations

IFUWA held an interactive informative Session with Advocate Rabin Majumder of Supreme Court on the above subject. The Resource Person dealt extensively with the rights and provisions of laws for senior citizens, aimed at giving them a dignified happy and respectable living.

Advocate Majumder explained that the Government has various laws laid down for the protection of senior citizens. However, there is a lack of awareness of existence of such laws amongst citizens. Moreover, in many instances, senior citizens lead compromised lives due to several apprehensions. One such apprehension being that the children would turn hostile if the relation in question started exercising his or her rights, despite being aware of such legal measures.

Advocate Majumder discussed the Senior Citizens Act, Food Security Act, Domestic Violence Act, 2005, including offence of verbal abuses and civil wrongs. He also touched upon the Tortious Acts, Indian Penal Code for offences like torture, physical hurt, etc., and the remedies thereof.

He informed that the provisions of the Senior Citizens Act also provides for maintenance of the Senior parents and relations and the responsibilities towards them. In situations where there are no children or blood relatives, the State Government has powers to assist the Senior Citizen with his/her daily necessities.



Session of great significance

Food Adulteration Testing and its Redressal Mechanisms

IFUWA organised an online Session on January 29, 2022 on 'Food Adulteration Testing and its Redressal Mechanisms', a subject of immense significance at all times. It is necessary for people to be well versed with the quality and purity of what they consume through food each day.

Prof. Amrita Bagga, a senior member of the University Women's Association (UWA), Pune was the Master of Ceremonies for the Session.

The Session started with the rendition of a prayer by Dr. Kalyani Bondre, member of UWA Pune, for the well-being of the entire humanity during these pandemic times. It was followed with a word of welcome by Dr. Ranjana Banerjee, President IFUWA.

EVENTS

Resource person Dr. Sitaram Dixit, besides being a member of the Governing Body of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), including Foods & Drugs Divisional Council of India, an eminent person in the field of food adulteration, is presently the 'Chairman of Consumer Guidance Society of India (CGSI)'.

Dr. Dixit's lecture, supported with numerous slides, gave us newer insights into the highly increased levels of food adulteration pan India in the present times. It was an eye opener Session to learn the extent to which artificial colouring of vegetables, use of poisonous chemicals for making fruits and vegetables ripen faster, extensive use of contaminated water being added to milk, in the open

markets and agricultural farms in India. The resultant factor is the rise of human physical deformity and the multiplication of near fatal diseases. He presented slides to help members understand the steps to identify the degree of adulteration.

The IFUWA website has uploaded a Manual prepared by Dr Dixit explaining at length the different materials used for adulteration and procedures of identification.

The floor was finally thrown open for questions and exchange of information. The Session concluded with a formal Vote of

Thanks by the IFUWA Vice President Mrs Gomathy Venkateshwar.



Spell bound members
for an informative Session

MILESTONES



Ex-President of University Women's Association of Nagpur, **Dr. Ujwala Chakradeo**, has been appointed Vice Chancellor of SNDT Women's University, Mumbai. Dr. Chakradeo was the Professor and Principal of W.E.S. Smt. Manoramabai Mundle College of Architecture, Nagpur. She had been teaching Architecture since 1985.

Ujwala had conducted special lectures on heritage of India to architects of South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique and Swaziland. She had been instrumental in starting the M. Arch course in Architecture Education at Nagpur University.

IFUWA wishes Dr Ujwala Chakradeo a very successful tenure at SNDT.

Prof. V Bharathi Harishankar, member of UWA Madras and IFUWA, has taken charge as the Vice Chancellor of Avinashilingam University for Women, Coimbatore.

Prof Harishankar has been actively associated with the two NGOs. She is the Treasurer of UWAsia and has been the immediate past Secretary of UWA Madras. A recognised postcolonial studies scholar, she was instrumental in setting up of the Gender Lab for Diversity and Inclusiveness Education (GLIDE), the first of its kind in the country, in collaboration with Sutherland Global Services at the University of Madras.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London, Prof. Bharathi Harishankar has to her credit, 118 publications including books, edited volumes, textbooks, articles and translations in national and international journals. Prior to this appointment, she has held several administrative positions at the University of Madras such as Head of Women's Studies, the Director of IQAC, Director HRDC at the University of Madras, Dean of Student Affairs, Director of Internal Quality Assurance Cell and Member of the Syndicate.

IFUWA congratulates Prof Bharathi Harishankar on her giant step forward and wishes her the very best with her future assignments.



Members' Corner

Gender Dynamics in Disaster Risk and Resilience

The world is not the same for everyone and there is a pervasive structural inequality that dominates life situation and becomes prominent at the times of crises, such as a disaster. Earthquakes, tsunami and a pandemic are circumstances that underline the acute vulnerability of the marginalized women in a society as much wrought by war and violence. From life expectancy to education, health, safety, job security and nutrition, women are disproportionately impacted by disasters, including natural calamities and pandemics. Irrespective of age, their exposure to risks and vulnerability are amplified by the presence of underlying risk drivers, including gender inequality and by their lack of agency and leadership in disaster resilience efforts.

History and media have both foregrounded the plight of women and children in such situations; however, as mothers and care givers they do not submit easily. Women, historically have been in charge of sustenance of their families and reproduce the members of society, both biologically as well as culturally. This function has enabled them to develop qualities of adaptation and resilience that serves toward survival of the human species. Although men are generally projected as the stronger and the protective partner, it is always women, who contribute towards survival of their children and protection of the domesticity which extends itself to the larger community. Feminine activities are sociable in nature and in extenuating circumstances like a disaster, women make collective and supportive efforts of sustenance. Their deep concern for survival is altruistic, directed towards the home and the group and never purely for the self.

Relative to the gender stereotypes separately and unequally assigned to men and women, men will be granted individualistic means of resilience support that

are compatible with the society's constructed (and established) masculine qualities: increased involvement in disaster-based decision-making practices, training in physical strength of resisting various disaster consequences, housing and shelter, financial support, and employment opportunities. However, women will be granted collectivistic means of resilience support, that are conservationist and compatible with feminine qualities: nutritional supplies for their families, emotional support on how to preserve the stability and social order of their families, psychological first-aids to the affected family members and contribution towards the general well-being of the family. When all institutional mechanisms fail or break down, empathetic and shared support system helps individuals to get over the isolation and anxiety that prevents leading to a break down. Sisterhood and empathy have bound women across the world in peaceful and productive activities against male cooperation in domination and aggression.

In a world on the brink of extinction from anthropogenic activities, through overt exploitation of nature, war and destructive technologies, masculine values with their emphasis on domination and destruction seem to be a less viable option than feminine values of nurture and care. These are important issues and questions needing deliberation and thought, if we wish to save our species from an ignoble exit from this planet.



Ranjana Banerjee
President

Membership Development: Challenges and opportunities

The single most important prerequisite for any organisation to keep going is its strong base of active, participative and dedicated membership, and IFUWA is no exception. Although our basic mission - the empowerment of women through education - remains unchanged, the profile of today's young women is changing very fast. Due to their financial needs and rising aspirations, more and more women are seeking employment, whether full time or part time.

This state of affairs presents challenges as well as creates new opportunities for our membership development efforts. The first part of this paradoxical statement is that as more and more young members get involved in their jobs

and career building, they find less and less time to become active members of IFUWA. But it is equally true that because of their new knowledge and rich experiences gained on the job, it would be a great opportunity for IFUWA to tap this potential. Infact, IFUWA is already working on these lines through its virtual programs on varied topics and the results are very promising.

An imaginative program in which I am personally involved, is the creation of the GWI Membership Marketplace. It is a virtual platform and has two streams. Peer to Peer and NFA to NFA. As the names suggest, the first one is where one person, like a teacher, shares her knowledge and skills and interested individual members from across the world can join to learn from her. Under this, the language teaching classes and IT orientation, both, have been successfully conducted.

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The second stream is where two or more NFAs come together to work on a project. While working together towards achieving a common goal the resources get pooled and due to the synergy, the impact is much bigger and wider. The India –Egypt partnership program on 'Sexual Harassment at Workplace', and the project of 'Afghan Peace Negotiations: Their Perilous Significance for Women in Afghanistan' between Canada and the Netherlands, have been completed. Both have been much appreciated by members all over the world.

Another year-long project in which several countries are involved is the 'Spanish Speaking Culture Club'. This was initiated by Spain and countries like Bolivia, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay have joined.

The Meet and Greet sessions between two or more countries are most popular among the ones conducted under NFA to NFA stream. Moreover, during such informal chats some project ideas also emerge. The Hygiene project between a Canadian club and UWA Pune is one such example. Another Meet and Greet meeting initiated by the British Federation during our most critical time of this pandemic was heart warming for the IFUWA members. It

was a great reassuring feeling for us Indians to know that members in other countries are with us in our difficult times.

Yet another type of program that can be conducted under NFA to NFA stream is the 'Study Tours'. In the current situation one can organise them online only, with the help of colorful photos, videos and lively descriptions. So it is really a creative challenge.

As the Convener of the GWI Membership Marketplace NFA to NFA stream, I most earnestly feel that we should make full use of this wonderful opportunity provided by this novel platform, and in the process, also build life long friendships with members from different countries.



Dr Meera Bondre

Vice President, UWAsia

Convener - GWI Membership Committee

Convener Membership Marketplace, NFA to NFA Stream

IT HIT HARDER



This journey of pandemic and lockdown lasted for two and a half years. I authored my first book 'Challenged in the time of lockdown' during the first wave, which was well appreciated by the readers. I took up to writing my second book titled 'IT HIT HARDER', during the second wave and the third wave of the pandemic, to showcase experiences and challenges faced by people globally.

My sole intention for writing my second book on the pandemic was to know and understand how people within their limited resources, irrespective of their age, caste, creed, gender, religion, economic conditions, have faced the challenges and have started taking baby steps to come up back to the normal life with confidence and positivity, to take life as it comes.

This book is a tribute to all the corona warriors as without them it wouldn't have been possible for us to be at home during lockdown in our comfort zones. It is really so disheartening that some of our dear close ones and loved ones have also left us.

I have chosen 22 eminent personalities, from different walks of life, be it doctors working in the hospital, hospital superintendent, artist, lawyers, celebrities, media heads, politicians, academician, scientist, chartered accountants, engineers, business executives, developers to share their experiences and the challenges that they faced and overcame during this wave of pandemic.



Gauri Chhabria

President, WGU

Members' Corner

To A Mother : Dare to Dance the Tides

You know a dream is like a river, ever changing as it flows.

And a dreamer's just a vessel that must follow where it goes.

Trying to learn from what's behind you and never knowing what's in store

Makes each day a constant battle just to stay between the shores.

And I will sail my vessel 'til the river runs dry.

Like a bird upon the wind, these waters are my sky.

I'll never reach my destination if I never try,

So I will sail my vessel 'til the river runs dry.

Too many times we stand aside and let the water slip away.

To what we put off 'til tomorrow has now become today.

So don't you sit upon the shore and say you're satisfied.

Choose to chance the rapids and dare to dance the tides.

... Garth Brooks

I am certainly not asking anyone to walk on water. Nor am I asking to build any special talents to service special needs. It just takes a tough heart, and a little time and understanding on our part.

Our lives are not determined by what happens to us but by how we react to what happens, not by what life brings to us, but by the attitude we bring to life. A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events, and outcomes. It is a catalyst, a spark that creates extraordinary results.

A few years ago, I was asked by an NGO to counsel a mother whose child was stricken with encephalitis a few months earlier. When I reached the NGO I was pleasantly surprised to find their premises a cheerful place with lots of special needs children playing gleefully in the hall. Most of the places I have visited were in comparison dull, gloomy places staffed by stern doctors and therapists. I was, to say the least, impressed even before I met my 'patient'.

My session with any parent of a special child starts with what Edward Teller has said: 'When you come to the end of all the light you know, and it's time to step into the darkness of the unknown, faith is in knowing that one of two things shall happen: either you will be given something solid to stand on or you will be taught to fly'. So was it with this particular mother too.

As I said some things work on faith. Especially things like tutoring your special needs child in rejection, which comes often enough in its lifetime. With people being what they are, insensitivity pervades everything around us. This is the first lesson that I teach all parents to train their child in turn. In all that I underwent as a differently abled person, the most infuriating thing that I came across was rejection. It is almost as if I was given a thick skin just to ward off this feeling. Even after few decades I cannot reconcile rejection without getting irritated.

If you know a differently abled adult, treat her as an adult. Don't pamper her or shower her with unnecessary attention, it would only make her uncomfortable. She knows what she can handle: she will ask you for the help she needs. If you have a differently abled child, help her grow into an independent, thinking adult. Steer her in the right direction – like my parents did to make me a successful person.

- Don't be disheartened and never ever dishearten your child. It is always possible to salvage a bad situation.
- Be optimistic and work to instil that optimism in your child.
- Do not confine your child to your home. Take her out with you when you can. Don't be afraid of other people's stares. Learn to ignore them and help your child to develop a thick skin against such inconsequential incidents. This will strengthen the child emotionally and enable her to cope with rejection later in life better.
- Let your child discover her own strengths – so that she is not dependent on you for everything. Thirty years from now you may not be able, or around, to do things for her. As the chains break, one by one, you will see an independent and confident human being gradually emerge.
- Education plays an important part in any child's life, especially if the child is differently abled. A good schooling and college education, if the child can cope with them, are essential to enable her to pursue a career. Or let her train in a skill that will later allow her to be financially independent.
- Counselling is essential. As the child grows, she will feel anger as she perceives that she is different from others. Get professional advice on how to deal with and dissipate that anger as soon as possible.

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- Today the one thing that I really, really cannot do is snip the nails of my right hand. So I ask one of my friends to do the needful. That's all. But then I have had very good training. And you can give your child that too. You just have to make your child a little tougher, a little better than the rest. And instil pride and joy in her soul to love and live life on her own terms.

Another lesson that I firmly believe in is that our hearts are more resilient than we give them credit for. This fist sized organ can bear a lot more pain than we think it can – it never tires of pumping life into us until we give up on it. So we need to learn from our hearts that one should be resilient and not give up, especially on one's own – the self and the child that needs you.

As time goes by one sees a lot of improvements and additions to therapies that are available to cater to special children. As told to me by a therapist recently, I would not be so severely affected in a limb like I am if I had encephalitis today. I sincerely wish that a mosquito bite never turns another baby's and its family's lives upside down like mine did. To understand that a special child needs care is one thing, but to accept that it also requires the same amount of love and attention as any other child is what most parents' lack. I wish that all the special children had parents like mine, who not only loved me for myself but encouraged me to take flight from the nest once I had grown wings.

Life is a series of changes. Some of us want to hold onto the past and keep things the way they were. However, when we resist change, we close the doors of potential opportunity. The sooner we say good riddance to the old ways, the sooner we can open the door to new possibilities. Resolve to give yourself more credit. The more you like and respect yourself, the more readily you will try new things and succeed at new challenges. The whole notion in life is to try new things, meet new people, and move on to bigger and better things. Be enthusiastic about the future and make it happen.

To keep our faces toward change, and behave like free spirits in the presence of fate, is strength indefeatable.

... Helen Keller



Sharmila Divatia
UWA Vadodara

Autumn of Life

I stand all Alone Today,
weathered, withered
with all my leaves Gone
My trunk shorn.

I gave you my fruit and shelter,
I Burnt Myself to give you shade-
from the harsh world into my green glade.
Distant Dreams, not DEJURE was yours,

YET!

Today, I stand bereft of
all my Glory,
My woe begone Progeny-
Oh! unkind progeny!
I Yearn, only for a little
bit of your LOVE.....

My Tooth less smile,
my moisture begotten eyes,
my wrinkled skin,
A Necropolis now.
I miss none-----
But you my errant son
and dear dear grandson.

Your twinkling eyes,
beauty undefined,
non stop prattle-
Oh! my Darling daughter
-My DEISM.
I AM THE SAME.
You needed me Then.
I need you Now!
It was YOUR CHILDHOOD then,
It is the Return of the
PRODIGAL now.



Shevata Rai Talwar

Members' Corner

IFUWA Central Committee 2020-2023

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