**February 2015**

**FAWCO UPDATE**

**FAWCO is Empowering Women**

FAWCO has a new tagline - changed from serving Americans overseas and the international community since 1931 to empowering women worldwide since 1931. The legacy of FAWCO and its rich history supporting women across the globe, assisting in cross cultural communication and helping people in need can now state its success in empowering women in one important tagline.

FAWCO has inspired its clubs and members to unite, exchange and empower women for decades. FAWCO, which is mostly made up of women, has advocated for Americans living overseas for over 80 years. Yet, in the last four years, FAWCO's global issues orientation has focused more on the issues affecting women around the world. This started with the concrete definition of its work at the UN "to improve the lives of women and girls in the areas of education, environment, health and human rights" to the realignment of the global issues task forces and the Foundation programs. The focus on women is also seen in the current Target Program Human Rights for Women and in the even more recent motto and theme for this year's annual conference entitled the Eternal Woman. It makes sense to update the tagline to help reflect FAWCO's clarity and focus on women.

**FAWCO Gives Members the Opportunity to Travel to Rwanda to Support Women**

Interested in women's' issues? Baffled by the problems surrounding women in parts of Africa?  Open to experience life a different way?  FAWCO is offering members an opportunity to do precisely that by inviting members to travel to Rwanda for a one of a kind educational experience.

Rwanda has become a model for the involvement of women in all levels of government. Women have been at the heart of the country's recovery, and currently over 60% of the Parliament is made up of women. The Human Rights Task Force is exploring the possibility of offering a first of its kind educational trip to Rwanda, which is anticipated to take place sometime in early summer 2015. The Human Rights Task Force is trying to assess interest.  If you are interested in learning more about this initiative or to state you interest in attending, please contact Therese Hartwell at[**peaceandconflict@fawco.org**](mailto:peaceandconflict@fawco.org) as soon as possible.

**FAWCO Invites Members to Attend the UN Commission on the Status of Women**

The FAWCO delegation will be attending the CSW59, the 59th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, March 9-20, 2015. The focus will be on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including current challenges that affect the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. On this special occasion, FAWCO has 20 spaces for members to attend.  For more information click [**here**](http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015) or contact [**unliaison@fawco.org**](mailto:unliaison@fawco.org).

**January 2015**

**THE ETERNAL WOMAN IS BACKING YOU: FAWCO`S 2015 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE AND TARGET PROJECT UPDATE**

Every year FAWCO has a worldwide conference uniting women across the globe.  The 2015 Biennial Conference will be held in Rome, Italy and will be hosted by the American Women’s Association of Rome (AWAR). This year’s theme is entitled ``The Eternal Woman: Equality, Protection and Empowerment`` and will take place in March 2015. Many topics, themes and events are planned for this year`s conference. The FAWCO annual general meeting will take place. Local and international speakers will present information on tax and banking, digital media and other important club related topics. A special panel of experts will address the issue of Human Rights for Women and Girls along with UN Women. An update on FAWCO’s fundraising efforts for Free the Girls, the Target Project: Human Rights for Women will also be presented.

In March 2013, **Human Rights for Women** – *Protecting the Rights and Improving the Lives of Women and Girls Worldwide,* was announced as the overarching theme for the FAWCO Target Program 2013 - 2016.  The Target Program is comprised of two parts: Target Education/Awareness and the Target Project. The Education/AwarenessProgramfocuses on women's rights as human rights, specifically in the areas of political empowerment, economic empowerment, peace and security, and ending violence against women. Last year, FAWCO Member Clubs voted for the winning Target Project, Free the Girls. Free the Girls works with former victims of sex trafficking in Africa and Latin America, helping them rebuild their lives through economic empowerment.

Following the Target Project announcement, the FAWCO Foundation launched the Backing Women Fundraising Campaign with the unveiling of Christian de Laubadere’s painting, the inspiration for the [Backing Women campaign](http://www.fawcofoundation.org/fundraising-tools/backing-women.html). The original painting will be auctioned at the FAWCO Biennial Conference in Rome. This event is a must-see event at the conference.

Also at the conference, the FAWCO Foundation (the philanthropic arm of FAWCO) will provide updates on their four core programmes: Education Awards, Development Grants, NEEED Scholarships and the FAWCO Target Project. They will announce the 2015 Education Award and Development Grant recipients and host the traditional fun-raising event conference known as Foundation Night.  Last year, the theme of Foundation Night was Around the World in 80 Bids. This evening was full of festivities that allowed conference members to participate in a live auction, silent auction and high-end raffle to raise money for the FAWCO Foundation`s core programs. The theme of this year’s Foundation Night is Three Coins in a Fountain Make a Splash and invites attendees to dress up as famous historical figures throughout time. This event is sure to bring a lot of fun to all who attend.  
  
The conference is attended by over 100 representatives from FAWCO's member clubs from around the world. If you are thinking of attending or wanting to learn more visit [www.fawco.org](http://www.fawco.org/) or contact [conferece2015@fawco.org](mailto:conferece2015@fawco.org) for more information.