FAWCO Youth Program: a continued success

By Barbara Buhling (AWC Dusseldorf) and Robin Goldsby (AIWC Cologne), Co-Chairs, FAWCO Youth Program

Cultural Volunteers: Shanghai 2014

For the program’s second year, 14 FAWCO youth volunteers travelled to China for a week hosted by AWC Shanghai. The FAWCO Youth program is seeking to raise the awareness in today’s youth of the world around them and to support them in becoming responsible global citizens. As Jacob Barnes wrote, “I got to help those in need first hand, getting to see both the direct benefits of our work and the wide smiles of the children we were helping…”.

The FAWCO youth volunteers were moved by the plight of the children and the staggering need for volunteers. Ben Maher (AWC Dublin), pictured.

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FAWCO’s First Youth Ambassador: Julia Meloy Goldsby

Around the FAWCO world in 365 days! Julia Meloy Goldsby has logged a lot of miles in her quest to inform FAWCO clubs about opportunities for teenagers. She has assisted with volunteer programs and regional meetings, conducted workshops, and has gotten to know many of the dynamic women involved in the day-to-day organization of FAWCO member clubs.

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FAWCO is a network of independent American and international volunteer organizations representing private-sector American citizens overseas. Founded in 1931, FAWCO is a non-partisan, not-for-profit U.S. corporation with over 64 Member Clubs representing nearly 12,000 individuals throughout the world. A recognized non-governmental organization (NGO) since 1995, FAWCO was granted special consultative status to the Economic and Social Council of the UN in 1997.

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President’s Message

By My-Linh Kunst (AWC Berlin), FAWCO President 2011-15

I have had the honor to serve as FAWCO President for four years and to contribute to its continued success. I marvel at the tremendous change the organization has experienced and am grateful for the passion and hard work of its volunteers.

In this short period of time, FAWCO has become leaner, more focused, more consequent and future-oriented.

**FAWCO has become leaner** by leveraging new technology to better support our member clubs: club workshops through webinars, club sharing through the online Best Practice library, club updates through the online Member Club profiles and club membership through an online Membership Renewal system. We also institutionalized internal processes with the creation of administrative handbooks available online.

**More focus, more consequence in global issues!**

We became more focused by narrowing the mission of our global issues work to “improving the lives of women and girls in the areas of education, environment, health and human rights”. We have successfully mobilized our global network to contribute to two multi-year Target projects: 1) building water wells in Cambodia and 2) empowering sex trafficking survivors to get back on their feet. We sponsored a high-level UN Human Rights Council Panel and co-chaired the Geneva Commission on the Status of Women. As a result, FAWCO has gained more visibility and credibility in the United Nations network.

**FAWCO has become future-oriented.** We have engaged our youth in volunteerism and global issues and given them the opportunity to experience the world with the support of the FAWCO global family.

To quote Valia Mitsaki (FAWCO UN Youth Rep in New York, from AWO Greece) “FAWCO has helped me understand that in this universe I don’t only exist as an individual but also as part of the worldwide community with a basic goal to sustain the well-being of my world and the people in it.”

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**Biennial Conference 2015**

The FAWCO Biennial Conference will take place in Rome on March 25-28, 2015 with the theme The Eternal Woman: Equality, Protection, Empowerment. In addition to FAWCO business and club interactions, we will have conversations about the progress of human rights for women and what we, as civil society, can do to impact change. Go to www.fawco.org and click on the Conference logo to register.

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Target Program assists Free The Girls Expansion to El Salvador

Carmen had just turned 13 when her mother began selling her, along with her three younger sisters. At the age of 14, she gave birth to her son, Miguel, a pregnancy that resulted from her being trafficked.

Her father eventually rescued Carmen and her siblings and her mother is now in jail. The extended family is now living in a small mud house near San Salvador and Carmen and her father are the main providers.

Carmen, now 17 years old, discovered Free The Girls through their program partner, Mission to El Salvador. Prior to joining the Free The Girls program, Carmen earned very little money performing odd jobs and selling small items, such as soap. When she met with the in country staff, she began to cry when the program of selling second hand bras was explained to her. Carmen, like most women in the program, has found her own style as a salesperson and entrepreneur.

Through the financial support of the FAWCO Target Program, Free The Girls has been able to develop their infrastructure to support expansion beyond their initial program in Mozambique to Uganda and El Salvador. In country staff are available to women like Carmen, to coach them in business practices, to encourage them through challenges and to replenish their inventory.

Carmen recognizes that selling bras is safer and healthier for her. It is providing a stable income, allows her to work for herself and set her own hours and sales goals. She earns money that allows her to care for Miguel and help support her extended family. One day she wants to have a better life for her son and buy her own house.

Backing Women

Artwork
Renowned French artist and Shanghai resident, Christian de Laubadère, whose collection of works, “The Necks”, depict the nape of the neck as a powerful symbol of strength and femininity has donated an original work to the FAWCO Target Project. The artist paints on paper and canvas using lead pencils, black smoke (sfumato), charcoal and other media, as well as textiles collected from China and France. The painting will be auctioned online and at the FAWCO Conference, March 25-28, 2015, with all proceeds going to support the Target Project Free The Girls.

Backing Women Online Boutique
The FAWCO Foundation’s Online Boutique offers a variety of gift items inspired by the Backing Women painting. Created exclusively for us by women owned and operated small businesses, all profits from the product line will benefit the FAWCO Target Project Free The Girls. To date the Boutique has contributed over $57,000

Organize a FAWCO Target Project Fundraiser!
There are plenty of ways to help and contribute to our worldwide campaign, Free The Girls! Help us to change the fate of many underprivileged women into a better life where hope, respect and dignity are restored!

Consult our website to find all sorts of fundraising ideas!
http://www.fawcofoundation.org/fundraising-tools/fundraising.html
By Sara von Moos (AWC Bern), FAWCO UN Liaison

Beijing+20 Geneva NGO Forum for UNECE Regional Review

“We are in a particular moment in history that is worse than when the BPfA was adopted in 1995. We need to insist on gender parity. We need to be angrier – no more Miss Nice.”

UN Women Executive Director, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

History was made at the United Nations in Geneva when over 700 women’s advocates from the 56 countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region gathered at the Palais des Nations from 3-5 Nov, 2014 to review progress made on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).

Over the three days, Forum delegates examined the 12 critical areas of concern, recognizing advances made on women’s rights and gender equality in the 20 years since the 1995 Beijing 4th World Conference on Women, discussing the existing gaps and challenges, and pointing out critical emerging issues impacting women and girls that have been brought on by our changing world.

While it is generally agreed that the women’s movement has been stagnant in the last years, it quickly became evident that Forum delegates felt there has been a definite backward trend, a sentiment confirmed by the UNECE: “Since 1995 progress has been stagnant, uneven and with a reversal of gains in some areas.”

The underlying cause of this reversal of gains is attributed to the recent financial crisis. Austerity measure responses to the global economic downturn have resulted in unprecedented unemployment, drastic cuts to public expenditures, and household-level social and economic insecurity, disproportionately impacting women and girls.

Measures dealing with the financial crisis have been largely gender insensitive and have thus resulted in higher unemployment for women than men, less educational opportunities, reduced access to healthcare and social services, plus a pervasive violence against women, which is further perpetuated through technology and social media.

According to statistics shared at the Forum, it will take 81 years to achieve gender equality with current affirmative action measures. Deeply disturbed by this notion, UN Women Executive Director, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, said, “We are in a particular moment in history that is worse than when the BPfA was adopted in 1995. We need to insist on gender parity. We need to be angrier – no more Miss Nice.”

UN Women Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Ingibjorg Gisladottir expressed similar sentiments, saying that women need to continue to be “bold, wise, firm, cooperative and persistent,” but that it is time for women to also “be disobedient, because obedience has not worked.”

Furthermore, it was agreed that advocacy language must be changed and that it must be made stronger in order to describe justly what in effect is needed, including less process, more implementation and full accountability.

Forum delegates were energized by UN Women ED’s call to action and key messages echoing a more assertive advocacy position on women’s rights. The Forum outcome document, the ‘Geneva NGO Forum Beijing+20 Declaration,’ an 11-page document with detailed recommendations outlining what women and girls need and want – “a world free of violence; a world of peace, where democracy thrives and women can enjoy and exercise their full rights as citizens,” was received with delight by Forum delegates, who now have a strong advocacy and lobbying instrument as they return to their home countries and continue to build on the momentum which was created in Geneva.

The Forum Declaration was presented by NGO CSW Geneva President and Forum Chair, Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, the next day, at the opening of the UNECE inter-governmental review meeting to an emotive slide presentation of the Forum. Member States showed their solidarity with a strong round of applause and after two days of conducting their own review (6-7 Nov.), incorporated some of the Forum Declaration language into their own outcome document. A victory indeed for civil society, as we move forward toward CSW59 and the Post-2015 agenda!

As Vice-President of the NGO CSW Geneva, FAWCO was one of the key organizers of the Forum. FAWCO also actively participated

Three FAWCO members held the important role of rapporteur at the forum. (pictured 2nd Vice President Sallie Chaballier)
By Julia Goldsby, FAWCO Youth Ambassador

A Youth’s Perspective: Beijing +20 Geneva NGO Forum for UNECE Regional Review

Between October 27th and November 5th I interned for one week at the United Nations in Geneva, preparing for the NGO Forum Beijing+20 UN ECE Regional Review.

What does an UN intern do anyway at an event like this? Quick answer: Everything!

I packed 600 welcome bags for the participants. I ran the Twitter feed for some of the roundtable discussions, helped with technical problems, schlepped 300 liters of water, assisted with the delivery of a Steinway grand piano, served as a one woman reception committee for a photographer named Giancarlo, and shopped at the Swiss version of Costco for chocolate and apples.

Volunteering as an intern enabled me to attend the conference and have the full UN experience! There’s something about being at the United Nations that makes a person feel important. People walk differently through these historic corridors. Just being there made me feel like I have a voice worth hearing.

Imagine six hundred women trying to get their badges, get registered, and find a seat next to their other NGO peers on the first day. Chaotic, but we were there for a purpose: “Act, advance and achieve women’s rights.”

The roundtable discussion which had the most impact on me was called “The Girl Child”. “Girls are often treated as inferior and are socialized to put themselves last, thus undermining their self-esteem. Discrimination and neglect in childhood can initiate a lifelong downward spiral of deprivation and exclusion from the social mainstream.” (BPfA) During this panel discussion the speakers identified additional measures for increased empowerment for protection of the girl child.

I’m 18 years old and still have one foot in childhood. I’m at that interesting stage in life where I’m not yet a full-fledged woman, but I’m certainly not a child. I could relate in my personal life to many of the discussion points about gender stereotyping and cyber bullying. I was shocked to learn that 60 million girls are sexually assaulted on their way to school every year. I was horrified to learn that 15 million girls every year become child brides. I was happy to see that some organizations and human rights groups are taking action to empower girls around the world.

As we learned in the panel discussion: “Ignoring violence against girls is the same as accepting it.” And if girls are not feeling empowered, how can they have a voice? I was the youngest participant at the Forum. In the future I hope more young women will take a stand to act, advance and achieve women’s and girls’ rights.

What can women and girls achieve? Quick answer: Everything, if given a chance.

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FAWCO Youth Ambassador

The FAWCO Youth Ambassador program is for teens taking a gap year between high school and college. The FAWCO global family is in a unique position to support members’ children to spend the year exploring the world, discovering themselves along the way. The FYA program offers our young adults a chance to experience new cultures, learn about the world, and do hands-on volunteer work while contributing to our member clubs. “These (FAWCO) women are such role models—through them I am learning so much about different cultures. I’m discovering more about myself and what I want to do with my life.”

Julia, who is 18, started her journey in Shanghai with the Cultural Volunteers. She then flew to AWC Seoul for two weeks of cultural exchange. After a pit stop in Berlin to meet with My-Linh Kunst, Julia headed to AWC Dublin, then on to the Region 1 Meeting in Central Scotland. After that she was off to Oslo, Norway for the Region 2 Meeting, then headed to Bern, Switzerland to assist in several events for AWC Bern. Julia was kept busy in November as well when she volunteered with UN Liaison Sara von Moos at the 2014 United Nations NGO Forum in Geneva. From Switzerland she traveled to Germany where she made a FAWCO Youth presentation at AIWC Cologne and helped with the Region 5 meeting in Hamburg. Her last stop in 2014 was France where she assisted the AAWE Paris with their Annual Holiday Bazaar. Starting in January, Julia plans to visit FAWCO clubs in Morocco, Doha, Dubai, Rome, and Athens, as well as including a trip to FAUSA territory New York.

Julia, who hopes to attend film school someday, is documenting each stop on her journey with photography and video. Visit the FAWCO website to learn more. “My FYA year,” says Julia, “is a real life-changer for me. FAWCO is amazing.”

in the Forum with 16 members in attendance, three of which held the important role of rapporteur: Sallie Chaballier (AAWE Paris), Paula Daeppen (AWC Zurich), Laurie Richardson (AWA Vienna); and most notably, the closing ceremony musical performance by mother and daughter team Robin, Co-Chair, FAWCO Youth Program and Julia Goldsby, FAWCO Youth Ambassador, (AIWC Cologne) who composed a beautiful and inspiring Forum theme song titled “Maybe It’s You.”

To read the Beijing+20 Geneva NGO Forum Declaration, see the live performance of “Maybe It’s You,” and watch a touching slide show of the Forum produced by Julia Goldsby, go to http://beijing20.ngocsw-geneva.ch.
Waiting for Godot?

By Lucy Laederich (AAWE Paris), FAWCO US Liaison

The last few months have been, for Americans living abroad, a time of waiting. Waiting for elections our compatriots were probably tired to death of, and more importantly, waiting for the effects of FATCA to begin to “kick in”. Some of us waited too long, and lost our opportunity to vote in the November mid-terms; others waited for any of a number of reasons to file our FBARs and/or US taxes and are now worrying about the consequences.

Ballot request over the FAWCO-OVF website

This article was written before the election, however, results collected from the FAWCO-OVF registration and ballot request site, reflected a lack of interest in what should have been regarded as crucial elections. It is possible that people turned to other sites to request their ballots, but more likely that despite the regular reminders from Voting from Overseas Chair, Mary Stewart Burgher, FAWCO members were as disenchanted with Congress and as pessimistic about the chances for positive change as the domestic electorate.

Among those who did request their ballot through FAWCO, 75% were long-term residents overseas (does this reflect the overall FAWCO US citizen breakdown, or are long-term residents more committed to having a voice in choosing their government?). 36% have voted both in the United States and from overseas, while a full 47.5% have voted only from abroad (giving much the same ⅔ – ⅓ breakdown as above) and 1% were first-time voters.

Voters residing in 15 different countries used the website, including Saudi Arabia, China and the United Arab Emirates.

Loss of financial services

FATCA reporting, closed bank accounts in the US and abroad and fears of non-compliance with US tax and FBAR reporting top the list of major concerns of overseas Americans this year. Not only did foreign financial institutions (FFIs) start collecting information on their “U.S. person” customers (U.S. citizens + green card holders and U.S. residents) in July, but at the same time that penalties were being announced for failure to file an FBAR (Foreign Bank Account Report), it became “mandatory” to file electronically posing significant problems for many. FAWCO members were urged to contribute to two surveys conducted by our partner organization AARO, as well as one conducted by Democrats Abroad. AARO found that most bank account closures abroad were simply attributed to “no longer servicing U.S. customers”. This, in most cases, reflects a simple business decision. Complying with FATCA reporting rules...
will cost too much in terms of additional human and software resources or that the bank’s investments in the United States are considerable enough that potential loss due to the punitive 30% withholding outweighs potential gains from their U.S. customers.

Account closures in the United States were often ascribed to the “Patriot Act” and “Know Your Customer” rules and commonly concerned brokerage and savings accounts, leaving overseas residents in limbo as to what to do with their life savings. Unfortunately, a little like Godot, FAWCO has no good answer, though with its partners, it is trying to build up a list of “friendly” banks willing to deal with overseas residents.

**FBAR and e-filing**

While the FBAR has been required since 1970, it is only recently that the Treasury Department has begun to threaten penalties for non-compliance (up to 50% of each unreported account each year of non-compliance). What concerns us is our members’ recent success (or lack thereof) with the now-mandatory e-filing of the FBAR.

The FAWCO population is diverse and scattered. Some members live in tech-savvy western European countries; others in places where electricity and internet access are far from assured. Postal service is unsure and the potential for identity theft is a real concern. We should have been delighted that, starting this year, we are strongly urged or required to “e-file” our FBARs and tax forms, but uncertain internet access tempers that delight.

Many FAWCO members are not young tech-savvy people in the workforce (see voting population, above); the fact that recent Adobe software was required meant that many members were technically unable to complete the form, while others were challenged by the time needed and the implicit trust in internet security required.

We are pleased that our members contributed to the FBAR survey which will be forwarded to those designing future forms and to legislators who believe that filling out the FBAR takes, on average, 50 minutes!

While calls for “Residence Based Taxation” (rather than the current U.S. system of taxing on the basis of citizenship) have great merit, RBT would not eliminate FATCA-related problems of account closures and onerous reporting requirements. We must continue to provide Washington with every available proof of 1) our good-faith efforts to comply with U.S. legislation and 2) the undue burdens that FATCA places on our members.

Becket’s characters wait in vain for Godot… On the one hand, we in FAWCO must not just sit and wait for things to happen (and for Congress to transform itself); on the other hand, patience may be needed before things become easier for Americans with financial assets abroad and for overseas Americans trying to maintain assets in their home country.

(continued from page 1)

**FAWCO Cultural Volunteers**

The teens between the ages of 15-18 were from Austria, Dubai, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Germany, Qatar and Switzerland. The teens volunteered in four different charities: Shining Star Orphanage for Blind Children, Renewal Center for Homeless Migrants in Shanghai, The YouDao Center for Migrant Children and Heart to Heart Shanghai.

Although each FAWCO volunteer had a preferred charity, they were all moved by the plight of the children and the staggering need for volunteers.

As part of the program, the teens were asked to jointly prepare a video presenting their project and to individually write about the trip in their own words. Sariah Roberts summed it up beautifully in her poem:

... They are people and places
With stories and lives just like us.
Just that they need a little more help
From people like us.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of Angela Anderson, who ran the program in Shanghai, and Carol Kamphius, who set up the charitable side, the week was full of sightseeing, volunteering and fun. The enthusiastic feedback included “fantastic”, “life-changing” and “best decision I have ever made”. As Lucas Kimmig so aptly wrote, “I will never forget the incredible human beings I met on the journey, nor the lessons it taught me”.

(continued from page 1)

**FAWCO UN Youth Representative**

Throughout the three-day events, we were regularly involved in workshops, discussing topics such as networking, the Post-2015 Development Goals, and the importance of increasing international education. I found these workshops particularly fascinating, as I was able to converse with young people from across the globe, and was exposed to opinions I had never previously considered.

We also had the privilege of listening to a number of expert panels, discussing the issues that youth will face in the future, such as education, conflict in the Middle East, and social entrepreneurship. These panels offered valuable information on how young people can engage the international community and also presented a number of standout speakers. Particularly impressive was Maria Myers, creator of the charity Pretty Purposeful, which raises money for surgeries for women in Sierra Leone that have suffered from fistula, and injury caused by a combination of childbirth and malnutrition. Equally impressive was Sam Sussman, Co-Director of EXTEND, an organization that offers 5-day study trips to Palestine for Jewish youths on Birth Right.

Overall, the experience was incredibly rewarding. I would like to thank everyone at FAWCO who helped me through this process. Your support was greatly appreciated. I would also encourage the youth of FAWCO to get involved in programs like this. They are excellent and will give you a chance to add to the dialogue of our generation.
 REGION 1: The Tree of Life

“The Tree of Life” Region 1 meeting was held on September 26 and 27, 2014 in Edinburgh, Scotland, hosted by the American Women’s Club of Central Scotland. Our first path on “The Tree of Life” was a morning tour of the Royal Botanic Gardens followed by lunch at the Garden Restaurant. We then proceeded to the Augustine United Church, our venue for the meeting. FAWCO Youth Ambassador Julia Goldsby led a photography workshop, and then gave us an assignment to explore the topic of feminism through photos as we walked around Edinburgh for two hours. Upon returning, the AWCCS had a feast prepared. Our photos were downloaded from the afternoon hike around Edinburgh, and we enjoyed viewing different perspectives on feminism through photography. Julia Goldsby concluded the evening with a presentation on the FAWCO Youth Program.

On Saturday morning, after wake-up coffee and delicious home-made muffins and fruit, we embarked on a walking tour of the Edinburgh Royal Mile led by Karen MacCormick, an AWCCS member. After a potluck lunch served by the AWCCS, Eileen Green-Doyle, FAWCO Region 1 Coordinator, greeted everyone and introduced Sallie Chaballier, FAWCO 2nd VP for Member Clubs, who gave an overview of FAWCO, its activities and history. Tahitia McCabe, a member of the AWCCS, and the Association of Professional Genealogists, gave a workshop on Genealogy for Beginners. Amy Moar, another AWCCS member, gave an illustrated talk on the Study and Performance of Music.

Our next speaker was Michele Hendrikse Du Bois, The FAWCO Foundation President, who spoke about what The FAWCO Foundation has to offer to our club members and their children, such as Development Grants, Education Awards, and club fundraising support. She also spoke about the NEEEEED Scholarship program for women in Burkina Faso, and the Target Project fundraising campaign “Backing Women” to support the Target Project, Free The Girls. Our last speaker was Johanna Dishongh, Target Program Chair. Free The Girls has been able to expand their program from Mozambique to Uganda and El Salvador with FAWCO’s assistance. Through our raffle drawing, Region 1 raised $420 for Free The Girls.

REGION 2: Come Out and Play!

Freyr, the Norse god who rules over the rain and the shining of the sun, seemed to be in a rather capricious mood the weekend of October 10-12, when over 35 participants met in Oslo to play, to learn, and to share. The weekend started with a lovely wine and tapas evening. Everyone was having such a wonderful time socializing that the optional evening out in Oslo was quickly forgotten, although rumor has it that some of the women talked to the wee hours of Saturday morning!

Bleary eyed participants were therefore welcomed with coffee/tea and fresh fruit as they entered The Norwegian Open-Air Museum. The first session was opened by Sallie Chaballier, (FAWCO 2nd VP) with a introduction to FAWCO. The FAWCO Youth Ambassador, Julia Goldsby, followed with a presentation about the FAWCO Youth Programs. The first guest speaker of the morning, was two time AWCO Scholarship winner, Audun Myskja, MD who talked about using music to help with physical movement in all stages of life. After a coffee break, it was playtime, where participants were paired up to solve a puzzle. Following this brain activity came our second guest speaker, writer and musician Robin Meloy Goldsby, who provided a writing workshop for our participants. After a delicious lunch, showcasing Norwegian food, and a quick walk to the Stave Church on the museum grounds, the afternoon session was opened by My-Linh Kunst (FAWCO President) who spoke about FAWCO’s involvement with the UN. The third guest speaker of the day was Katie Coughlin speaking about the “Right to Play”, along with her trials and tribulations of trying to establish a Children’s Museum in Oslo. The day ended with presentations about the FAWCO Foundation and the Target Project, provided by Michele Hendrikse Du Bois, The FAWCO Foundation President, and Johanna Dishongh, Target Program Chair, respectively. Saturday’s dinner brought together all the participants to the Oslo club’s regular meeting location and club room where everyone was treated to a three course American style meal. Scrapbooks and posters from previous AWCO club activities adorned the room which gave everyone a chance to see what Oslo has done in the past.

Sunday morning dawned wet with pouring rain trying in vain to dampen the spirits of those participating in “The Amazing Mini Race”, a walking tour of downtown Oslo. The bedraggled group ended up at Oslo Steinway Gallery, the venue for the Free The Girls fundraiser and last event of the conference.

By Eileen Green-Doyle (AWC Dublin), FAWCO Region 1 Coordinator

By Kristin Haanaes (AWC Oslo), FAWCO Rep (outgoing)
By Emily Van Eerten (AWC The Hague), FAWCO Rep

**Region 4: Reach Out Lift Up!**

The AWC The Hague welcomed nearly 50 Region 4 women in November to “Reach Out – Lift Up”. The program started on Friday evening with a working session for a beloved project of many FAWCO clubs – Heart Pillows. The evening continued with a presentation from three Hague teens, Darcy van Eerten, Renger van Eerten and Sariah Roberts, who had participated as FAWCO Youth Cultural Volunteers in Dubai and Shanghai, and wrapped up with an Indonesian Rijsttafel buffet, a Hague specialty.

Saturday’s sessions got off to an invigorating start with a brisk walking tour through the International Zone surrounding The Hague clubhouse. The clubs then got right to work “Reaching Out” with workshops on Shared Communications, Activities, Dreams and how best to bring FAWCO Fever to Region 4 clubs. FAWCO Reports from FAWCO 2nd VP, Sallie Chaballier (AAWE Paris), FAWCO Target Project Chair, Johanna Dishongh (AWC The Hague) and FAWCO Foundation President, Michele Hendrikse DuBois (Munich IWC) brought the participants up to date on the latest FAWCO news.

Guest Speaker David Ellero, from Europol, gave an informative talk about his work combating human trafficking in Europe, and reminded us all that this was in fact, merely a modern term for slavery. Afternoon sessions included a panel discussion from the group of FAWCO women who were just back from the Geneva NGO Forum for Beijing +20 UN ECE Regional Review, plus Helen Hootsmans, a member of the AWC Amsterdam who had attended the original meeting in Beijing 20 years ago. Afternoon workshops explored the “Lifting Up” theme, focusing on membership satisfaction, recruiting volunteers and the integration of US and international members.

Dinner at an Italian restaurant capped the day and helped spark excitement for the upcoming conference in Rome. For those who stayed the night, Hague member and art historian Jane Choy gave an insightful and delightful tour of the treasures of the Mauritshuis Museum on Sunday morning.

By Tracy Moede (AWC Hamburg), FAWCO Rep

**Region 5: Living Globally**

Each year in November the clubs of Region 5 meet to discuss the latest FAWCO achievements, projects and various club issues as well as to exchange information and experiences between the region’s clubs. Also on the program is a cultural introduction to the host city.

Previous locations have been Munich (2010), Berlin (2011), Augsburg (2012) and Cologne (2013). This year Hamburg, the vibrant Hanseatic City is where we met.

Over 35 participants from 8 clubs, our FAWCO President and 2nd VP plus guests from Copenhagen, The Hague and Rome attended the meeting. A warm welcome in the Arcotel in the historical neighborhood of St. Georg was followed with a finger food meal social hour and an entertaining evening which included a presentation by each club about what makes their club so much fun and a Yule Club exchange of gifts from each Region 5 club city.

The Saturday program included a discussion on dual citizenship and a panel discussion on education in Germany for multi-lingual students. Saturday afternoon was for Fun! Region 5 is known for being able to combine the business of FAWCO and the fun of being together in a group of dynamic women. To this end, three wonderful tours in Hamburg were planned and led by members of the AWCH, which included a tour of the City Hall, the St. Michael Church, and a bus tour of the city. The evening was highlighted by dinner and a show at the Hansa Variété.

On Sunday, the FAWCO President, My-Linh Kunst, presented the new Target Program, Free the Girls, as well as talked about FAWCO’s role at the UN. She also introduced the next FAWCO conference in March 2015 and made everyone eager to join the fun in Rome. Sallie Chaballier, 2nd VP, presented information about FAWCO while Michele Hendrikse DuBois, The FAWCO Foundation President, explained TFF to the FAWCO newbies. During the wrap up, Region 5 clubs had time to discuss changing club demographics and other club concerns. Region 5 once again succeeded in mixing business and pleasure!
By Angie Abersold

**AWC Bern Anniversary**

In a word, AWC Bern’s Fall Ball Birthday Bash, which took place on September 13th, was a “SUCCESS.” Over 50 of us enjoyed the evening in a luxurious salon at the Hotel Bellevue, the elegant Art Nouveau building that is the Swiss government’s official guesthouse. What a terrific opportunity to see old friends and make new ones.

By Laurie Richardson

**AWA Vienna Celebrates Golden Jubilee**

On November 6, AWA Vienna celebrated 50 years (since they recommenced activities after World War II in 1964) with a gala reception hosted by the City of Vienna in the beautiful Town Hall. Over 130 guests toasted AWA Vienna’s accomplishments. The Mayor of Vienna was represented by Ms. Tanja Wehseley, a member of the Vienna City Council.

In honor of their 50th anniversary, and continuing the tradition of charitable giving to support women in need in the community, AWA made a donation of 5,000 Euros to Frauenhaeuser Wien (Vienna Women’s Shelters).

AWA’s history actually goes back to 1924, 90 years ago, and includes being one of the FAWCO founding clubs in 1931. In her speech on AWA’s history, former President and FAWCO Rep Laurie Richardson summarized that AWA was about “... making friends, adapting to new places, learning about our adopted home and its culture, sharing experiences, working together, having fun, and supporting worthy causes. We always have been, and continue to be women helping women.”

By Melissa Mash

**AW Surrey Fundraiser for Free the Girls**

Layla’s Restaurant is Esher was the setting on October 1st for the AW Surrey fundraiser for FAWCO’s Target Program Free The Girls. As people walked down the busy sidewalk, they were greeted with an array of beautiful bras hanging from the restaurant’s canopy. The bartenders and waiters all wore bras over their uniforms and gave everyone a good giggle and got them into the spirit of the evening.

Over 80 people turned up for the event, many of them outside the AWS community. Anyone who brought three bras to donate was given a button which they could hand in at the bar for a free drink. FAWCO Rep, Melissa Mash, collected 225 bras at the door! Layla’s owner and AWS member, Ashley Sanli, had wonderful raffle prizes which were drawn throughout the evening. The proceeds from the raffle and donations totalled £700 (over $1,100).

By Kristin Haanæs

**AWC Oslo Benefit Concert**

On October 12th and in conjunction with the Regional 2 meeting, AWC Oslo held 2 benefit concerts at Steinway Gallery Oslo for the Target Project. Robin Goldsby, with some help from her daughter Julia, presented “An Afternoon of Piano Music and Stories” to two very appreciative audiences. The proceeds from Robin’s CD sales and the ticket sales for the events totaled $2400!

FAWCO members can help with the Ebola outbreak in a very specific way. Donate to FAWCO Disaster Relief Fund by January 15th to help medica mondiale Liberia (one of our Target Project finalists) provide sanitary materials and protective gears and solidarity packs. They need funding! Go to www.fawco.org and click on the “Disaster Relief” button.

By Laurie Richardson

**AWA Vienna Celebrates Golden Jubilee**

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By Angie Abersold

**AWC Bern Anniversary**

In a word, AWC Bern’s Fall Ball Birthday Bash, which took place on September 13th, was a “SUCCESS.” Over 50 of us enjoyed the evening in a luxurious salon at the Hotel Bellevue, the elegant Art Nouveau building that is the Swiss government’s official guesthouse. What a terrific opportunity to see old friends and make new ones.

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Many circumstances can send expatriates back to live in the USA: assignments end, grandchildren are born, divorces happen or parents need long-term care. Living overseas changes you in incalculable ways. Furthermore, the US has changed while you have been away. Your earlier visits abroad were not the same as living there, your trips back home are not the same as living in the States. That’s why, when you return home to North America, you’ve got a friend in FAUSA. We are FAWCO’s Alumnae Association.

Through our FAUSA Membership, we are part of a network of returned expats who understand the challenges of going home and who share the experience of being part of two worlds. We are also active participants in FAWCO and FAWCO Foundation Programs. We traditionally bring the largest contingent to FAWCO conferences and we have an ongoing commitment to support both specific Foundation Development Education Grants. We are proud that FAUSA member, Beth Sanders, a gifted artist, was the winner this year of the FAWCO Foundation Skill Enhancement Award.

Our Membership is spread far and wide across North America. Some regions are more active and arrange regular meetings and events. Other areas are less populated with FAUSA members. We are putting together a “grow your region” kit to help attract new members in those regions. This follows our Getaway in Colorado where several active regions shared their secrets to success. We also voted on adding a cost-saving 5-year membership option as a way to retain more members.

Our Getaways are a chance for all members to reunite and explore an area of the US. This year, we had a fun-filled Getaway and Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs at the Garden of the Gods Club. The weather? We had some sunshine, some rain, fog and, for those who climbed to higher altitudes, snow! Undeterred, we toured the Garden of the Gods, Cripple Creek and Manitou Springs in open air jeeps. Our featured speakers were Kimba Langas and Melissa Swearington of Free the Girls.

At the Getaway, our second annual FAUSA Philanthropy Grant, proposed and selected by our members, was awarded to fund an internship to San Francisco SafeHouse which helps formerly prostituted women develop the practical skills needed for success in the contemporary job market. The Internship Program helps build a woman’s economic security and self-sufficiency. It allows a woman who may never have held a real job to become employable. SafeHouse will be our banner project for a full year gaining more attention from our membership. In addition to the $2,000 Grant, SafeHouse will receive any grant funds raised during the course of the year.

Our first Grant project, The Girls Prevention Program, a counseling program for girls at risk of Human Trafficking, was given the $2,000 Grant at the Getaway last year in Cincinnati. Approximately $1,500 additional dollars were collected for this project over the year including a $500 donation from The FAWCO Foundation which was presented in Colorado by FAWCO Foundation Fundraising Chair and FAUSA Member, Suzanne Wheeler.

With philanthropy a FAUSA cornerstone, we are continuing to investigate changing our designation from a 401c4 to a tax-free 401c3, in line with the designation of both FAWCO and the FAWCO Foundation. Our goals remain to actively support FAWCO and to offer our membership better support and activities. We look forward to participating in the UN meetings and activities in March, bringing a sizable group of FAUSA members to next year’s FAWCO conference in Rome, presenting a FAUSA workshop and our highlights magazine. Our next Getaway crosses the border to the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. An active year lies ahead for FAUSA.
By Michele Hendrikse Du Bois (Munich IWC), The FAWCO Foundation President

The FAWCO Foundation’s sole purpose isto put into action FAWCO’s stated interest in the global community by specifically aiding charitable, scientific and educational programs and supporting the rights of women and children throughout the world. For over 45 years, The FAWCO Foundation has stayed true to this purpose.

2015 FAWCO FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

The FAWCO Foundation supports four core programs: Education Awards, Development Grants, NEEED Scholarships and the FAWCO Target Project. The FAWCO Foundation’s newest Member Award: Women in Technology follows related recognize a FAWCO or FAUSA member majoring in Information Technology or related fields. The FAWCO Foundation has also increased the amount of the Dual Culture Award to $3,000. In total, for 2015, The FAWCO Foundation will offer $30,000 in Education Awards and $36,000 in Development Grants.

2015 DEVELOPMENT GRANTS:
The Development Grant program includes eight grants all of which target an area of global concern in keeping with the UN Millennium Development Goals. The Development Grant program is open to all FAWCO clubs and to FAUSA, each of which can propose two of their charitable projects. These $4,500 grants can provide immediate financial relief in a difficult economic situation for organizations dedicated to helping underprivileged populations throughout the world.

Environment:
FAUSA Water Runs Through It
AWC Shanghai A World of Possibilities
Health:
Critical Health Concerns, fully sponsored by an anonymous FAWCO Member Club
The Coughlan Family Foundation Prevention of Infectious Disease
Education:
AW of Surrey Hope Through Education
Pam Dahlgren Educating Africa’s Children
Human Rights:
American Women of the Eastern Province Skills for Life sponsored in part by AIWC Florence
Around the Corner, A World Away sponsored in part by Julie Mowat, Laurence and Margaret Hilditch, and AIWC Genoa in memory of Carol Bordoni

2015 EDUCATION AWARDS PROGRAM:
for children and grandchildren of FAWCO & FAUSA members:
VIOLA WHEELER ARTS AWARD $4,000
HUMANITIES AWARD $3,500 Sponsored in part by AAWE, in memory of Gertrude de Gallai
AWG PARIS AWARD FOR YOUNG WOMEN $3,500
SCIENCES AWARD $3,500 Sponsored in part by AWC Zurich and AIWC Genoa in memory of Frieda Bacigalupo Natali
DUAL CULTURAL AWARD $3,000 Sponsored in part by Donna Erismann and AWC Bern, in memory of Suzanne Erismann

For FAWCO and FAUSA Members
AWC BASEL AWARD FOR UNIVERSITY DEGREE STUDY PROGRAMS $5,000
Sponsored by Shirley Keamey
FAUSA SKILLS ENHANCEMENT AWARD $4,000
WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY AWARD $3,500

Guidelines, eligibility information, applications and nominating forms can be found on The Foundation’s website, www.fawcofoundation.org.

NEEED Scholarship Program The FAWCO Foundation continues our partnership with The Friends of Burkina Faso and NEEED (Nimbus, Enfance, Environnement, Education et Developpement, a local non-profit organization in Northern Burkina Faso) to provide post-secondary scholarships to young village women in this African country. Our 2014 donation of $41,878 will provide three 3-year state midwifery scholarships, three 2-year primary teacher scholarships, and three 3-year University scholarships.

NEW in 2015 - Online Auction to support The FAWCO Foundation’s programs!
The auction opens March 1, 2015 and is open to the public. Visit The Foundation’s website www.fawcofoundation.org to view and bid on the items offered including the “Backing Women” painting by Christian De Laubadère.

www.iGive.com
Have you been thinking of making a donation to The FAWCO Foundation? You can shop online and at the same time and AT NO ADDITIONAL cost to you, make a donation to the FAWCO Foundation. The FAWCO Foundation is registered as a “cause” on www.iGive.com, the first online shopping mall “committed to turning everyday online shopping into donations for worthy causes at no cost to shoppers or the causes they support.” To make online shopping work for The FAWCO Foundation, please register with iGive.com. Visit our website at www.fawcofoundation.org and follow the link to register and select The FAWCO Foundation as your cause. Then start shopping! A percentage of the purchase amount (before shipping and taxes) will be calculated and sent to The FAWCO Foundation.

The FAWCO Foundation is the philanthropic arm of FAWCO. It is a 501(c) (3) not for profit organization registered in the State of Missouri. Direct donations to The Foundation are tax exempt to the fullest extent allowed by law. For more information please contact info@fawcofoundation.org.

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