



# THE FORUM

EMPOWERING WOMEN WORLDWIDE SINCE 1931

Winter 2015

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## FAWCO YOUTH:

*Cultural Volunteers Program - The Mumbai Experience*

By Barbara Bühling (AWC Düsseldorf), FAWCO Youth Program Chair

The FAWCO Youth Cultural Volunteers Program flourished in its third year when sixteen Youth Volunteers travelled to Mumbai for a week hosted by AWC Mumbai. Feedback included words like “amazing”, “life-changing” and “eye-opening”. As volunteer Ben Maher wrote, “I’ve come away with friends for life, a deeper understanding of the world I live in and a thirst for even more enlightenment and adventure”.



The FAWCO Youth program encourages teens to become responsible global citizens.

The FAWCO Youth program raises global awareness in today’s youth of the world and encourages them to become responsible global citizens. Teens volunteered in four charities: VOICE (Voluntary Organization in Community Enterprise) which helps street children find a future; Mann Center for Individuals with Special Needs, an organization dedicated to people with special needs; Foundation for Mother and Child Health (FMCH), whose goal is to combat malnutrition through education and support; and URJA, an NGO whose work is to prevent the trafficking of young girls.

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## Rwanda: the FAWCO Strength of a Woman Tour

By Therese Hartwell (AW Eastern Province), FAWCO Human Rights Task Force Chair

Two decades after its horrific genocide, Rwanda has set a global example through its recovery, due in large part to the involvement of women. In October 2015, the FAWCO Human Rights Task Force (HRTF) offered a first-of-its-kind Strength of a Woman tour of Rwanda.



Participants of the HRTF tour explored women's political empowerment and human rights in Rwanda, pictured here with women from the NGO AVEGA.

Although Rwanda has experienced an amazing recovery, the trauma still impacts the lives of many women. The FAWCO delegation visited genocide memorials in Kigali, Nyamata and Murambi which contain graphic reminders of the violence: a cross used to bludgeon people to death; heaps of clothing belonging to the dead; skeletons of women raped to death or babies in their mothers’ arms. Despite this horrific suffering, women found a way to survive and recover with the assistance of non-governmental organizations.

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Founded in 1931, FAWCO is a global women’s NGO (Non-Governmental Organization), an international network of independent volunteer clubs and associations comprising 65 member clubs in 35 countries worldwide, with a total membership of around 12,000. Since 1997, FAWCO has held special consultative status to the UN Economic and Social Council.

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Monica joining rural women in agricultural activities with Azizi Life, Rwanda

By Monica Jubayli (AWC Lebanon), FAWCO President 2015-17

For the last two and a half years, FAWCO and its Target Program have been focused on Human Rights for Women, and what a job we have done! FAWCO clubs and individuals, The FAWCO Foundation and FAUSA have worked together to raise \$130,000 thus far for the Target Project, Free The Girls. At the end of October, the *Rwanda - The Strength of a Woman Tour* (sponsored by the Human Rights Task Force) was truly inspirational for FAWCO participants, including me!

international community. How FAWCO can best get that message across has been the work of the Rebranding Task Force.

I am proud of the dedicated people who make all of these things happen and FAWCO the organization that it is. An organization is only as good as its volunteers. It is due to their efforts that FAWCO has successfully raised both awareness and funds to support the projects promoting Human Rights for Women.

## Interim Meeting 2016



FAWCO will be holding its first-ever Interim Meeting over 48 hours in March 2016 at the Lufthansa Meeting Center, Frankfurt, Germany. Dates available online to registered users of the FAWCO website.

Go to [www.fawco.org](http://www.fawco.org) and click on the Conference logo to register.

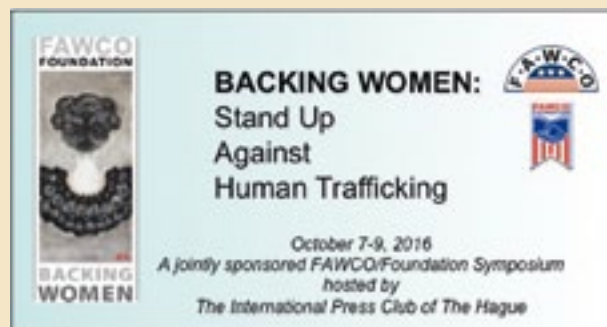
Friday Evening Working Session, Welcome Cocktails and Dinner.

Meetings and Workshops, Saturday and Sunday.  
Foundation Night on Saturday Evening.

Another pressing human rights issue is the refugee crisis in Europe. FAWCO's UN Team is helping clubs to understand the issues and stay current with opportunities to participate in humanitarian efforts. FAWCO and The FAWCO Foundation are currently preparing for a jointly sponsored Symposium dedicated to the sustainable rescue of victims of human trafficking, to be held next October. FAWCO is proud of its work to promote women's human rights and could not do it without the support of its volunteers.

This is what FAWCO does. FAWCO is unique as a global gateway with the infrastructure to give each of us the chance a chance to participate. FAWCO informs and engages its clubs to be involved in issues, be they global, local or US. Our members encompass the values of personal commitment, an American spirit and a global view, addressing global issues and building friendships across the

## FAWCO and The FAWCO Foundation Want You to Save the Date, October 7 - 9, 2016



FAWCO and The FAWCO Foundation are pleased to announce a jointly sponsored Symposium dedicated to the sustainable rescue of victims of human trafficking to be held October 7-9, 2016. The Symposium will be held at the International Press Club of The Hague. This Symposium will be open to the public as well as to FAWCO club members. We are currently designing the Symposium to include education and awareness of human trafficking as a critical world issue. Our goal is to provide motivation and tools for participants to become everyday heroes by backing women. We see a future for survivors to return to their communities with

their dignity, health, and job skills. With this Symposium, we will raise FAWCO's international profile as an organization connecting women to build a better world.

**Why open the Symposium to the public? We feel that it is time for FAWCO to reach out to organizations, activists, governments, the press, and most importantly, potential new members with what we have learned from our philanthropy projects: each one of us can make a difference. Together we make change. The Symposium will be organized by Johanna Dishongh (AWC The Hague) and Mary Adams (AWC The Hague) who are seeking volunteers to be involved in the Symposium's organization.**

## US Issues: where do we come from and where are we going?

By Lucy Laederich (AAWE Paris), FAWCO US Liaison

Sometimes I realize it is important, for Americans living abroad, to put away the concerns about what we do not have and how far we have yet to go, and focus on how far we have come.

I came to live abroad in 1970. At the time, those of us who did not own property in the United States were unable to vote. When my first child was born, I was almost unable to declare him as an American citizen because I was "missing" two months' residency in the United States. FAWCO was closely involved in resolving those two issues... and many more since.

In 1973, former FAWCO President Sonja Minçbere and the founder of AARO and AAWE, Phyllis Michaux, came up with the now-famous tea-bag campaign - members protesting "taxation without representation". More mail flooded Washington on that issue than on any other in recent times and in 1975, overseas Americans were given the right to vote in federal elections. Also at that time, a child born abroad to an American and a non-American could have US nationality if the American parent had spent 10 years in the United States, including 5 after the age of 14. In part because of the obvious discrimination against young parents, the law was changed in 1986 to "five years including two after the age of 14", largely due to the efforts of the FAWCO/AARO citizenship experts.

Since then, FAWCO has been an important player, in a number of victories: the *Help America Vote Act* in 2002 followed by the *MOVE (Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment) Act* of 2007; the *Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act (UMOVA)* of 2010, working its way through state legislatures (now enacted in 15 states plus the District of Columbia); the *Rockefeller Act* of 1993 allowing US citizens to work in embassies and consulates abroad; further improvements relating to transmission of citizenship - to children adopted abroad and to children whose parents do not meet the residency requirements but who obtained citizenship through their parent(s) abroad; and the creation of the *Americans Abroad Caucus* in 2007.

Most recently, overseas Americans have felt unfairly treated by the IRS subsequent to passage of the *Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA)* of 2010. While FAWCO and its partners have not made it go away, they were certainly a factor in the raising of the FATCA reporting threshold from \$50,000 to \$200,000, and have been consulted on the most deleterious effects of FATCA on law-abiding (and very often unsuspecting) US citizens abroad.

In March of this year the Senate Finance Committee requested comments from the public to help in crafting tax reform. Of 347 submissions were made to the international working group, nearly three-quarters dealt with the international taxation of individuals - citizenship-based taxation, FATCA, and the Foreign Bank Account Report (FBAR). The co-chairs urged the Chairman and Ranking Member to consider the concerns they heard from overseas Americans.

Since 2002, FAWCO representatives have gone to Washington for "Overseas Americans Week" to represent the concerns of FAWCO members worldwide. Civility in Congress may have

decreased in that time, but awareness of "oh yes, the Americans living abroad" has definitely increased!

### 2016 the year of "overseas American awareness"

We need to reject the common notion that because we live overseas, our opinions will be ignored and our votes don't matter. I would like to suggest that:

- 1) We make *2016 the year of "overseas American awareness"*: write to your legislators and tell them what you think (don't forget to thank them when they do something you like!) or pick up the phone and leave a message. One Michigan University study found that being contacted by constituents "increases the probability of supporting (a piece of) legislation by about 12 percentage points".
- 2) We *register to vote/request our ballots* on January 1 of the coming (and every) year.

Requesting your ballot via the dedicated, user-friendly FAWCO-OVF website will give us statistics on the number of voters in different countries - in different states - living abroad temporarily or permanently - voting for the first time, etc. While we have no access to personal information, we do get statistics which are valuable when we meet voting officials in Washington, so we encourage you to use that website.

I would like for us all first, to remember how far we have come since FAWCO's early days and second, to remember that each of us is responsible for continuing those efforts. Nothing will happen if we do not make it happen: *in 2016, make your voice heard by contacting your legislators and by voting!*

## Fulfill a New Year's resolution on January 1 - register to vote in 2016!

By Mary Stewart Burgher, (AWC Denmark), Voting from Overseas Committee Chair

Overseas US voters must register in every year in which they wish to vote, and there will be elections for President, Congress and state and local offices in November 2016. Ensure your participation by registering to vote as soon as the New Year dawns. Fill out the form online, at either our dedicated FAWCO site - FAWCO military and overseas voter services (<https://fawco.overseasvotefoundation.org/vote/home.htm>) - or that of the Federal Voting Assistance Program (see the section for overseas citizen voters (<http://www.fvap.gov/citizen-voter>)). A convenient link at the bottom left of the FAWCO home page will take you right to the OVF site.

Start the New Year right: register to vote. Your country needs to hear from you.







## \$130,00, and Still Counting, Raised for Free The Girls

By Johanna Dishongh (AWC The Hague), Target Chair

The FAWCO Target Program, Human Rights for Women is now in the final leg of its three-year run. Education and awareness of the issue, with a particular focus on human trafficking, is ongoing through the regional conferences. Guest speakers have reiterated the difficulties of obtaining sustainable rescue for survivors due to their lack of education and employable skills. This makes the work of Free The Girls, FAWCO's Target Project, even more relevant.

Partnering with existing after-care facilities, Free The Girls provides women with skills necessary to set up micro enterprises in the second-hand clothing industry. With one-on-one training, women become proficient in inventory management, budgeting and financial planning, skills which can be transferred to the employment market. With FAWCO's financial support, Free The Girls has been able to expand their initial programs in Mozambique and Uganda to El Salvador. They continue to investigate additional program requests for viability. Through November 2015, FAWCO member clubs, with the support of The FAWCO Foundation, have raised almost US\$ 130,000 for Free The Girls and these efforts will continue through February 2016.



### NEW MATCHING GRANT "\$3000"!

Up until to 31 December 2015, The FAWCO Foundation is pleased to announce that we are donating \$3000 to MATCH your individual donations dollar-for-dollar!

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#### Rwanda: the FAWCO Strength of a Woman Tour

The Women for Women Community Center in Kayonza provides skills training for marginalized women. In fact, it is built with bricks purchased from a local cooperative of women who learned brick making at the Center! The AVEGA Widows Association addresses the needs of genocide widows, particularly aging widows. At Azizi Life the delegation learned about the daily life of rural women by joining in agricultural activities, while at Nyamirambo Women's Center, the group explored life in an urban neighborhood. During these visits participants shopped for handicrafts, a common way for the women to earn income.

Ironically, this terrible genocide provided an opportunity for women to take an active role in government. The post-genocide Constitution requires at least 30% of governmental positions be held by women. Over 60% of the Rwandan Parliament is female—the highest percentage in the world. The FAWCO delegation met with prominent women from the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, the Gender Monitoring Office and the Human Rights Commission to learn how women were included in the post-war peace process and how gender issues will continue to be monitored.

The founder of the Rwanda Men's Resource Center dined with the group to discuss the impact of changing gender roles and the importance of including males in efforts for gender equality. The group shared another dinner with representatives of Open a Door, an organization matching promising Rwandan female students with mentors in the US who help them apply to US colleges, seek scholarships and adjust to life in the States.



The FAWCO group met with two gender experts who are also genocide survivors. One woman stunned the group with her research findings on women genocide perpetrators, their motivations and subsequent regrets. The other scholar researched genocidal rape with a focus on women who elected to keep their children when impregnated. She invited the delegation to visit these marginalized women—one of the most moving experiences of the trip. The women of Rwanda are a testimony to the resiliency of the human spirit and women's involvement post-conflict.

Representatives from the Rwandan Ministry of Gender and the Rwandan Gender Monitoring Office

## FAWCO Supports Refugee Relief

By Laurie Richardson (AWA Vienna), FAWCO UN Liaison and Therese Hartwell (AW Eastern Province), FAWCO Human Rights Task Force Chair

Over 200,000 Syrians have been killed in the four and a half year Syrian civil war. Violence has forced more than four million people to flee the country, creating a refugee crisis in neighboring Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey. FAWCO clubs in Lebanon, Greece and Italy have been affected for several years, but in recent months, the influx of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants coming from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and other countries in conflict has arrived in Europe. FAWCO members are involved in contributing to policy development and in providing hands-on support in action.

Grace Christovasilis (AWO Greece) is FAWCO's representative to the UN High Commission for Refugees field office, and in New York, Jane Politi (AWA Rome) represents FAWCO as a member of the NGO Committee on Migration. FAWCO has signed on to the Committee on Migration's statements on the refugee situation, including "Providing Education and Care for Syria's Littlest Refugees".

In September 2015, FAWCO clubs expressed increasing concern about the refugee crisis, and the UN NGO Team and Human Rights Task Force responded, compiling information and resources on global organizations to support, as well as suggestions for ways clubs can assist with hands-on volunteering or in-kind donations at the local level.

#### Background: Since early 2014, FAWCO members support refugees

The FAWCO Human Rights Task Force and UN NGO Team have supported refugees since the FAWCO International Conference in Brussels in March 2014. A representative of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Emily Takehashi, spoke about the growing numbers of refugees and the difficulties of women and children in flight and in camps. FAWCO club members from the Middle East came together to get more involved. In December 2014, Region 9's meeting in Amman, Jordan connected members with hands-on opportunities to volunteer with the Collateral Repair Project (CRP) serving refugees from Syria and Iraq. Region 9 members brought in-kind donations of handicraft and needlework supplies for economic empowerment projects for refugee women, and donated funds to support the expansion of CRP's community center. AW Eastern Province applied for a 2015 FAWCO Foundation Development Grant (DG) - which they were awarded



Red Cross shelter, Burgenland, Austria

Photos: Laurie Richardson



Refugees Welcome, at the Hauptbahnhof in Vienna, Austria

in March - for books, fees, uniforms, and school supplies for 45 refugee children.

The meeting included a panel discussion with experts from the US Embassy, UNHCR, Doctors Without Borders, Norwegian Refugee Council, CRP, Mercy Corps, the Syrian American Medical Society and Family Kitchen and featured group volunteer projects involving cleaning, organizing and making the CRP's community center more effective. Participating clubs collected art supplies, donated funds to purchase supplies and funded CRP's expansion into additional space for the community center's increasing activities.

#### What Can FAWCO Clubs Do? Partnering with Local Groups

AWC Lebanon organized clothing drives for needy refugees; buying food parcels and sending them to refugee camps; visiting the camps and donating mattresses, mats, blankets and gas burners.

AWO Greece is sharing information on local grassroots organizations helping refugees from Turkey and supporting the work of the UNHCR through public relations and communication.

AWA Vienna organized a winter coat collection delivering coats and warm clothing to a local organization serving refugees arriving at train stations.

AWC Amsterdam supports the Women's Refugee Commission, dedicated to improving the lives and protecting the rights of displaced women, children and young people.

Munich International Women's Club donated €500 to a refugee camp where members are actively volunteering, to purchase shoes, clothing, and school supplies for 20 refugee children attending school in Bavaria.

AWA Rome reported on local charities working to help refugees arriving by Mediterranean routes, including the Migrant Offshore Aid Station, a private charity providing assistance to people in distress while crossing the Mediterranean in unsafe vessels. Médecins Sans Frontières has three rescue ships in the Mediterranean; on one day alone they rescue as many as 1,500 people.

#### Speaking Out: Advocacy

FAWCO has suggested that our members exercise their rights by signing, sharing and promoting petitions calling for humane refugee policies that save lives and protect people fleeing from war, persecution and hunger.



## Bridging Cultures Workshop Between Cologne and Kisumu

By Arandeep D. Degun (AIWC Cologne); edited by Carol-Lyn McKelvey (AIWC Cologne)



Workshop participants from Kisumu, Kenya

The Bridging Cultures Workshop consisted of four successful 45-minute Skype sessions. Having great IT specialists present at the IBA (Cologne, Germany) and the Aga Khan School (Kisumu, Kenya) certainly helped. A total of 13 students were involved in the whole workshop. We soon realized that the adage “Less is More” was certainly apt. Fewer participants allowed more time to focus on quality and connection through comments.

Bright and enthusiastic 11–14 year old students - four from the Cologne International School (IFK) and nine from the Aga Khan School (Kisumu), questioned each other on personal likes

and dislikes, school life, family life, hobbies, activities, cultural issues and celebrations. Finally, they touched on social and global challenges faced by their countries. As students questioned each other on family life and daily routine in Kenya and Germany, they were pleasantly surprised by the many similarities in their lives and interests. Larissa, for example, was thrilled to learn that one of her peers in Kenya plays the violin, just as she does. An interesting and exciting “Show & Tell” session involved the participants presenting local artifacts. Michelle brought a picture by a local artist in Kisumu depicting young pregnant girls in uniforms, thus highlighting a social challenge faced by girls. She added that awareness has helped decrease this problem in the rural areas and the young girls are encouraged to give priority to education. Other global challenges faced were also briefly discussed.

Students from both sides are interested in continuing communicating in the future and have requested an exchange of e-mail and WhatsApp contacts. We have encouraged responsible communication and hope that this continuing learning experience will help transform students’ ability to think, analyze, reflect and evaluate in a way that will impact their future far beyond the classroom. A great collaboration between all the project facilitators, educators, participants, parents and donors in Kisumu and Cologne has made this bridging of cultures feasible.



Ciara visiting with two girls at VOICE.



Cultural Volunteers at Opening Tea with their AWC Mumbai hostesses.

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FAWCO Youth Program

The teens between the ages of 15-18 were from Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, Germany and Nigeria. Thanks to the tireless efforts of the Mumbai Club President, Meenakshi Advani, and her enthusiastic and capable team, the week was full of sightseeing, volunteering and fun.

The teens had an opportunity to tour Mumbai coming away with strong impressions of the vast discrepancy between rich and poor and the overwhelming masses of people living in the city. Moved by the plight of the children and the staggering need for volunteers, the group was surprised by the happiness of the people, despite the simplicity of their circumstances. The group shared volunteer Emma Bonjer’s thoughts, “Everything I experienced made me realize that .... I want to give back to underprivileged people who live in cities like Mumbai.”

The teens jointly prepared a video on their project and individually wrote about the trip. Isha Gupta summed up her observations beautifully: “One of the points that truly changed my ideas came from the founder of URJA ...who pointed out how we find it easy to give our sympathy [and help] to these people ... but sometimes what we don’t see is that we get so much in return....when I saw the sunny smiles of the little girls at VOICE and the jubilant whoops of the dancing kids at MANN, I got what he meant”.

## REGION 3: *A Taste of Bordeaux*

By Deborah Lillian (AAWE Paris) FAWCO Rep

The Garonne curled in a smile of welcome and Bordeaux proved itself to be the perfect venue for our Region 3 Meeting. FAWCO club members came from distant points, including The Hague, Antwerp, Dubai, Dublin, and Frankfurt. Our newest members from Spain were represented as well as the small-but-mighty AWG Languedoc-Roussillon.

One of the goals of this meeting was to inspire local women to create a FAWCO club. We did have members of the American Bordeaux community with us, some even volunteering for helpful roles. We were lucky to have many FAWCO celebrities on hand: President Monica Jubayli, The FAWCO Foundation President Patti Meek, Vice Presidents Sallie Chaballier, Leslie Collingridge, and Johanna Dishongh all gave comprehensive presentations. Patti’s information on Region 3 as a recipient of multiple Development Grants and Education Awards had a profound impact. We learned that \$126,500 has been awarded to our clubs. Kudos, especially, to AWG-Languedoc Roussillon, whose charities received \$16,500 in Development Grants!

Nan de Laubadère and Suzanne Wheeler spoke to us about FAUSA, the anchor for those of us who return to the States and experience FAWCO withdrawal. Sallie Chaballier gave an in-depth review of FAWCO’s involvement in the United Nations, with specific reference to the Commission on the Status of Women, which took place last March. Johanna Dishongh’s remarks on the Target Program were presented with her usual infectious energy, and we all rallied for the home stretch of Free The Girls.

Our keynote speaker, Lorraine Koonce, a staunch advocate for the prevention of violence against women, addressed the topic of Gender Inequality in Education. She informed us that, of the world’s 875 million illiterate adults, two thirds are women, “illiteracy has a female face”. Globally, 10 million more girls are out of school than boys. After a traditional Bordelais lunch, we resumed with a dynamic presentation by Lucy Laederich, covering a thorny subject: US taxes. Enlightening us on latest developments, such as the FATCA form. Afterwards, Calen Higgins of AIWC-Frankfurt led an inviting invitation to next year’s FAWCO Interim Meeting.

Our afternoon was less “business,” but no less instructive. We participated in a Leadership Workshop, facilitated by AAWE member and Executive Coach Jane Mobbille, and a presentation by Hela Soula from Bordeaux Walking Tours, explaining the history of Bordeaux. Sunday morning saw many of us strolling the city, whether guided by conference attendee Linda Martin on a market “Foodies” tour or a “Bordeaux Classique” tour led by Jennifer Faugère, a local American blogger. Altogether, the FAWCO Region 3 Meeting provided all of us with more than “a taste” of Bordeaux.

## REGION 4: *“Leaves the Ladder Standing” for its Members!*

By Susan Ailleris (AWC Amsterdam) Region 4 Coordinator

On October 2-4 FAWCO Region 4 (Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg) held its Meeting in Waterloo, 200 years after the famous battle. The meeting was hosted by AWC Brussels with the theme “Leave the Ladder Standing: Women Together Reaching New Heights”, words uttered by US Ambassador to the UN Betty King in her 2013 address to the Bern FAWCO conference. After one has achieved something, she leaves the ladder so the next person can start where she left off.

We heard an impressive presentation by Anne Reunis, the 15-year-old daughter of AWC Antwerp member Marja Reunis-de Rechter, with stories of her trip to India with the FAWCO Youth Program. It’s hard to picture a room of 20 women with lots of catching up to do, silent as they listened to this bright, interesting teen.

Day two commenced with Stacy Shedivy presenting the Ladder of Inference, a great communication tool, which fit beautifully with our theme. Later in the afternoon, two hour-long breakout sessions let us discuss the hot issues in smaller groups.



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#### REGION 4: "Leaves the Ladder Standing" for its Members!

We heard Phil Lane and Emma Gooding of Stop the Traffik, a global movement of activists giving time and energy to build resilient communities and prevent human trafficking. "Global" means India, but it also means down the road in Belgium.

The second guest speaker, Sylvie Bianchi, represented the The Samila Foundation, an organization created to make the fight against trafficking a European priority. Sylvie shared her experiences in Iraq meeting with female victims of the Islamic State. The speakers' different perspectives both underlined the importance of helping victims who have been freed. This is precisely where our own Target Project, Free the Girls, steps in, as Johanna Dishongh pointed out: empowering women, providing them with skills, breaking the cycle.

Region 4 had six FAWCO and The FAWCO Foundation Board members take the podium in our discussions. FAWCO President Monica Jubayli, 1st VP Sallie Chaballier, 2nd VP Leslie Collingridge, 3rd VP (and Target Chair) Johanna Dishongh attended, as well as the FAWCO Foundation President, Patti Meek and VP of Fundraising, Mary Adams.

Great conversations continued during the social events of the weekend; shopping at the Backing Women boutique, and at the AWCB clubhouse, dinner (mussels in Brussels for some; a magnificent steak for others ... And let's not forget the fabulous birthday dance for two very special attendees) as well as an amazing visit to the recently renovated Waterloo Battlefield Museum.

### Region 5: Crosses the "Bridges to the International Woman"

By Karen Van Antwerp and Jen Todd (AWC Düsseldorf) Region 5 Regional Meeting Co-Chairs

The Region 5 Meeting began on Friday evening, November 6th, with a buffet-style dinner in the SAS Radisson Blu in downtown Duesseldorf. The goal of the night was to introduce the favored charities of each club, as well as to provide a chance for members from different clubs to meet and catch up.



Barbara Buehling, AWCD President and Charmaine Kemeny, AWCD FAWCO Rep assured the group they were in for a treat this weekend. A third welcome came from Ve Mellinghaus, the AWCD Charities Coordinator, as she began the presentations on the club charities. Region 5 clubs in attendance included Munich IWC, AIWC Cologne, AIWC Frankfurt Taunus Rhein-Main, AWC Duesseldorf, AWC Hamburg and AWC Berlin. Other clubs, not in Region 5, represented were AWC Dublin, AWC The Hague and AAWWE Paris.

The meeting continued on Saturday with "Not In My Backyard", a two-part presentation featuring Andrea Hitzke of the Dortmunder Mitternachtmission, e.V. on human trafficking and Ursula Habrich and Daniela Schligten, from Frauen Beratungstelle Neuss, e.V., on how a woman finds herself a victim of domestic abuse. The focus was on women and sex trafficking in Germany. The speakers addressed how their organizations help these women, emotionally and legally, to get out of the trade and begin a new life.

Later, Belinda Steiert and Christian Schmidt presented "Expatriate Women's Finances." Ms. Steiert, a German attorney and AWCD member, spoke on divorce for expatriate women and Mr. Schmidt, a tax expert, focused on taxes and how they impact expatriate women. After lunch Jenny Taylor, AWCD member, lead a group to the MedienHafen for an outdoor architectural tour. Charmaine Kemeny, Elaine Terlinden and Anita Khemani (all AWCD members) hosted a group for shopping on the Ko and Jen Todd, AWCD, took a group to the Japanese EKO House for a tour. Meanwhile Barbara Buehling, AWCD President, hosted Dr. Yvonne Koch for a discussion on her life as a holocaust survivor.

The last day, there were presentations by Leslie Collingridge, FAWCO 2nd Vice President, on the functions and focus of the FAWCO Board and Patti Meek, The FAWCO Foundation President, on the purpose of The FAWCO Foundation. Mary Adams presented news of a proposed symposium on Human Trafficking next October in The Hague. We enjoyed a presentation by FAWCO Youth Program cultural volunteers who participated in the 2015 Mumbai trip. Angelika McLaren, Region 5 Coordinator, announced that AWC Berlin would be the venue for the 2016 Regional. The concluding event was a luncheon in the hotel restaurant where members were able to say their goodbyes and talk about registering for the FAWCO Interim Meeting in March of 2016.

### REGION 6: "Every Woman CAN Make a Difference"

By Kathleen Simon (AWC Bern) Region 6 Regional Coordinator

Festivities began Thursday evening at the AWC Zurich Clubhouse for an evening of Swiss wine tasting with wine expert Kristin Fuchs. The candlelit evening, in aid of the FAWCO Target Project Free the Girls, raised CHF 730.



Friday started with a panel discussion "Insights into FAWCO" with Leslie Collingridge (Chilterns AWC), FAWCO 2nd VP for Member Clubs, sharing her new video presentation. Lucy Laederich (AAWE Paris), FAWCO US Liaison, shared her expert knowledge giving us the confidence to know we have a significant voice in Washington. Mary Adams (AWC The Hague), The FAWCO Foundation VP for Fundraising, explained how FAWCO and The FAWCO Foundation work in harmony to make a difference.

Following lunch in the clubhouse, Sheila Ohlund, from Grove Financial Services GmbH, gave each of us the task to "trade" a surprise gift. After trading, did we think we had been conned or had we been altruistic? Were we happier now with the final gift of our trading adventure? The exercise gave us insights into how women make financial decisions. David Fritz, Head of Communication for BioVision Foundation for Ecological Development, presented "Nourish the People-Nurture the Planet" which showed thriving communities growing food in difficult landscapes with simple techniques. Johanna Dishongh (AWC The Hague), FAWCO 3rd VP and Target Program Chair, then shared a video on how women ended up victims of trafficking and how even women from our own communities can find themselves unwillingly deceived.

Saturday opened with Paula Daeppen, UN NGO Rep, who spoke of FAWCO's support for the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Paula stressed the importance of starting a dialogue between the Target Project and the UN NGO Reps' efforts on human rights. The US is the only nation that has not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Paula asked the US Liaison to draw up a letter for club members to send to US Senators, stressing how important it is to all of us. Fellow UN Geneva Rep, Anne Riz (AWC Bern), recently elected Treasurer of the UN Geneva NGO Committee on the Status of Women, detailed the UN's efforts on women's health. Participants then viewed a video from the FAWCO Youth Program held in Shanghai last year.

The final presentation was from Edwin Schmidheiny, President and Creative Director, Accent Brand Consultants AG, Zurich. As advisor to the Rebranding FAWCO Task Force, Edwin shared the branding position and confirmed that the team had submitted a selected logo design to the FAWCO Board.



Kathleen Simon (center) with Edwin and Sanja Schmidheiny of Accent Brand Consultants.

After a delicious clubhouse lunch, Leslie Collingridge taught workshop participants how to take photographs and use their laptops to turn them into film, while other participants were treated to a workshop on "Raising Your Game, Leveraging Cultural Competence" by Elizabeth Vennekens Kelly, Cross Cultural Consultant, Antwerp. We talked of experiences that confused us or embarrassed us and Elizabeth involved us in experiments to deal with the complexities of living and working in cultures not our own. The conference ended with a city tour by professional tour guide, Katrin Gygax, followed by a dinner in one of the Zürich guildhouses.



**AIWA of Marrakech and FAWCO Region 7**  
January 2016  
Theme: The Power of Education

The American International Women's Association of Marrakech is excited and honored to host the Region 7 Regional Meeting right here in our Red City, Marrakech. There is much to share about our wonderful city and we look forward to doing just that with all of you in January!

Contact [rc7@fawco.org](mailto:rc7@fawco.org) for dates and details.



## AWC Toronto Team Building Workshop

By Mary Lou Laramée, AWC Toronto President

When you have a 13-member Board of Directors of a 98 year-old club, with five of the newly-elected Board members brand new, then it is time to seek some advice on how to build a team who can both honor the wisdom and experience of long-time members, as well as embrace the enthusiasm and new ideas of those who are new to a Board position or even to the club.

### Setting Goals

We recognized some key pieces that we needed to include in a Team Building Workshop:

1. A positive atmosphere, where everyone felt comfortable expressing their opinions.
2. The need to know each other and ourselves.
3. We wanted to bring our Board together and build consensus in setting objectives for the year ahead.

Before the meeting, I asked each member to take a free online personality test: <http://www.my-personality-test.com/personality-type/?gclid=CNSai9mRzccCFQqQaQodRpoKfg>. We chose a date and meeting place most accessible to all 13 members. Before that meeting we held a transition meeting with outgoing Board members in order to transfer information and to celebrate their work by asking what did they feel they had accomplished and what would they have done differently.

### The Day of the Workshop (Agenda)

1. Welcome and greetings...who are we? This resulted in conversation and some surprises. We learned we had a diverse background of experiences, including driving an ice cream truck, a finalist in a Mrs. America contest and a TV game show contestant.
2. We brought our personality test results and learned about the personality traits of each person. More importantly, we each were able to identify some traits in ourselves which would help us understand how we work with others.
3. The group agreed upon Rules of Discussion for our meetings such as: come prepared, listen actively, respect and trust one another, and use "soft eyes" when hearing others' opinions.
4. Looking at the big picture we discussed and wrote down ideas of what we wanted our club to accomplish this year. Members were asked to vote for their top three choices.
5. We all had to agree on the choice we made and all had to affirm that choice.

Our goal this year is to reach out to each and every member and to Connect, Communicate, and Collaborate in building our membership, our service and our club activities.

We followed with lunch and a brief business meeting. It was a great day and we feel we learned a lot about each other. This workshop builds relationships, and in that lies the building of a successful year. Gratitude to Celeste Brown and FAWCO for offering this opportunity.

**FAUSA-FAWCO Alumnae USA**— is a vibrant and growing association of individuals who share the common experience of having lived abroad and who have returned to North America.

### Why Join FAUSA?

People who have lived outside their own country see the world through different eyes from those who haven't had that opportunity. Our experiences are quite different, our friends more diverse, we (and our children) are likely to speak another language or two, and we are familiar with other cultures, through residency or travel. In short, our perspective has changed. As a FAUSA member, you can:

#### Be understood.

FAUSA is a network of global citizens who have returned to the US, Canada, and Puerto Rico who share your experience of having lived outside our borders. They have felt the feelings that you may be experiencing since you returned, and would like to provide the support and information you may need.

#### Stay connected or reconnect.

Membership is the perfect way to stay connected or to reconnect to that important international side of your life and with the friends you made overseas. Members are eligible to participate in FAWCO activities, including the annual FAWCO Conference.

#### Meet and greet and give back.

FAUSA holds its Annual Meeting every Fall, in a different part of the United States. It is both a business meeting and a social event, with a program geared for fun! There, you're likely to see old friends from overseas and will make new ones who have shared similar experiences.



**WELCOME HOME!** ...if you're just returning from living overseas.  
**WELCOME BACK!** ...if you've already moved back and want to stay connected to or reconnect with your friends abroad and to make new ones who speak our "language."

## FAUSA Fell for Niagara Falls

By Janet Darrow, FAUSA President

It was fitting that the well-traveled FAUSA members took their Getaway and annual meeting across the border to Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada. Former FAUSA Board member Yolanda Henry was the Getaway Coordinator.

Incoming and outgoing board members and FAUSA counselors arrived early at the charming Oban Inn for a productive Thursday morning board meeting. Attendees trickled and dropped off treasures for the Silent Auction, as well as bras for our third annual Free The Girls bra drive. (FAUSA members collected about 700 bras this year.)



Our opening night cocktail featured honored guest British Major General Sir Isaac Brock, hero of the War of 1812, disguised in the form of Scott Finlay, the Program Coordinator for the Niagara National Historical Sites of Canada. We tried on British Uniforms and learned about the significance of the War of 1812. The group played the party game Two Truths and a Lie, which garnered interesting facts such as that one of our members has been a spy; or was that a lie? Some of us were treated to an amazing wine tasting of the crisp and delicious local wines.

Friday morning began with a morning networking meeting, breaking into small groups to discuss how to build our membership. Suggestions included better communication with FAWCO member clubs, getting lists of people returning to America and sending out repatriation information and an invitation to join FAUSA. The FAUSA members present were empowered to do their part by approaching friends and engaging repatriates that they meet in their neighborhoods.

Fortified by an invigorating meeting and coffee, we trundled onto a double decker bus for a trip to Niagara Falls. Donning red plastic ponchos, we boarded a Hornblower Yacht and got a close up view of the power and majesty of the Falls. Some of us walked behind the Falls for a unique vantage point. We lunched at the Queenston Heights Restaurant with a view of the Niagara River.

Saturday began with our featured speaker, Sarah Maloney, the entertaining and knowledgeable representative of the Niagara Historical Museum, who presented some of the interesting historical figures of the area. Our general meeting was kicked off by a warm letter from FAWCO President Monica Jubayli. We then had a tour of the new FAUSA web site given by our web developer, Debbie Hastings, via computer from her home in Maine. Perhaps other guest speakers can visit us that way next year? Ellie Badanes introduced us to our new presence on Pinterest, Kathy Coughlan presented The FAWCO Foundation and we learned about the Cities for CEDAW program. A committee was formed to initiate changes necessary for making our bylaws 501(c)(3)-compliant. We revisited the idea of offering a lifetime FAUSA membership, which was passed. Our new slate of officers was elected and our new FAUSA Philanthropic Grant winner, *École Paradis des Indiens*, was announced.

Our final evening was our fundraising night at Jackson Triggs winery. We were treated to a tour, ending up in the cellar where we enjoyed



a four-course meal with wine pairings while buying raffle tickets and bidding on silent auction items. It was a joyful end to our Getaway and a culmination of fun, friendship, good work, exploration of North America and inspiring ideas. The 2016 Getaway will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona.

FAUSA exists as a virtual alumnae association for former FAWCO club members who return to the North America. Information is available on our website [www.fausa.org](http://www.fausa.org) or FAUSA President Janet Darrow, [president@fausa.org](mailto:president@fausa.org), would be happy to answer questions directly.

Close up view of the power and majesty of the Falls



By Patti Meek, (AWC Dublin)  
The FAWCO Foundation President

The FAWCO Foundation's sole purpose is to 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 almost 50 years, The FAWCO Foundation has stayed true to this purpose.

## 2016 FAWCO FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

The FAWCO Foundation raises and administers funds to support our core programs: Education Awards, Development Grants, the FAWCO Target Project and, for a final few months, NEEED Scholarships. For 2016, The FAWCO Foundation has decided to increase the amount of all of our Education Awards to \$4,000, except for the University Degree Study Programs award, which remains at \$5,000. This year we will be offering \$33,000 in Education Awards and \$36,000 in Development Grants.

## 2016 DEVELOPMENT GRANTS:

The Development Grants program includes eight grants, all of which target an area of global concern in keeping with the UN Sustainable 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 fund projects that make an immediate impact and lead to success for the people and projects the grants support.

### Environment:

AWC Shanghai **Mother Earth**

### Health:

**Critical Health Concerns**, sponsored in part by Renuka Matthews

The Coughlan Family Foundation **Prevention of Infectious Disease**

### Education:

AW of Surrey **Hope Through Education**

Pam Dahlgren **Educating Africa's Children**

### Human Rights:

**Breaking the Cycle**, American Women of the Eastern Province sponsored in part by AILO Florence

FAUSA **Displaced Women and Children**

**Safe Haven**

## 2016 EDUCATION AWARDS PROGRAM:

for children and grandchildren of FAWCO & FAUSA members:

VIOLA WHEELER **ARTS AWARD** \$4,000

**HUMANITIES AWARD** \$4,000 Sponsored in part by AAWE in memory of Gertrude de Gallaix

**AWG PARIS IT AWARD FOR YOUNG WOMEN** \$4,000

**SCIENCES AWARD** \$4,000 Sponsored in part by AIWC Genoa in memory of Frieda Bacigalupo Natali

**DUAL CULTURAL AWARD** \$4,000 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 Kearney

FAUSA **SKILLS ENHANCEMENT AWARD** \$4,000

**WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY AWARD** in honor of AWA Dubai's 21 years serving the international community in Dubai \$4000

Guidelines, eligibility information, applications and nominating forms can be found on The Foundation's website, [www.fawcofoundation.org](http://www.fawcofoundation.org).

**NEEED Scholarship Program** After six gratifying years, The FAWCO Foundation will be winding up our NEEED Scholarship program in March of 2016. 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) allowed us to provide post-secondary school scholarships to young village women in this African country. Our NEEED Scholarships enabled girls to qualify as Primary Teachers, Nurses, and Midwives or to undertake university studies. Through the generosity of our donors, The FAWCO Foundation has provided 38 young women with tuition and school fees, books, supplies and living expenses for the entire period of their studies. At the FAWCO Interim Meeting, we hope to celebrate the success of this program and recognize the donors who supported it.

[www.iGive.com](http://www.iGive.com)

The holiday season is almost upon us! Do you live abroad and need a great way to shop for your family and friends in America without incurring overseas shipping? Shop online at over 1600 stores who are "committed to turning everyday online shopping into donations for worthy causes at no cost to shoppers or the causes they support." This online mall has a huge variety of stores from Home Depot to Bed Bath and Beyond; from Dillard's to Neiman Marcus; from sporting goods to pet stores. Do you want to send a special holiday bouquet? Check out the florists!

The FAWCO Foundation is registered as a "cause" on [www.iGive.com](http://www.iGive.com). Visit our website at [www.fawcofoundation.org](http://www.fawcofoundation.org) and follow the link to register. Then start shopping! A percentage of the purchase amount (before shipping and taxes) will be calculated and sent to The FAWCO Foundation at no cost to you.



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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](mailto:info@fawcofoundation.org).