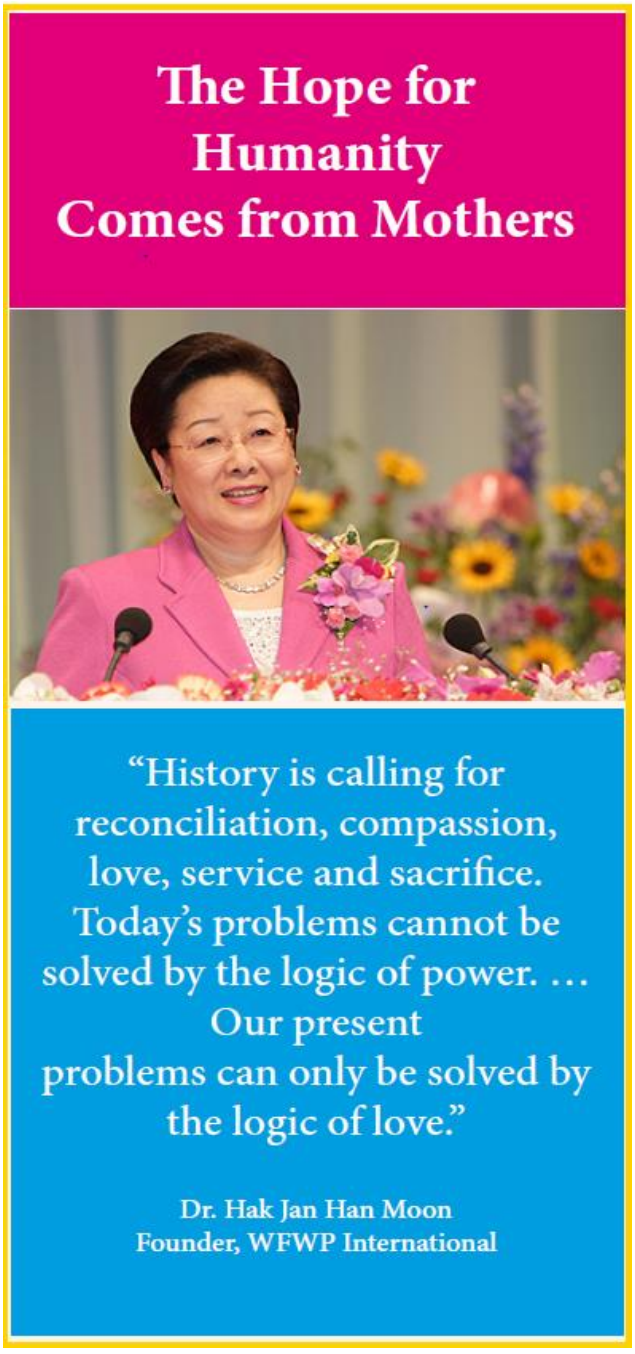
OCEANIA / S.E. ASIA WFWP NEWSLETTER

Issue 3 | 2022



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WFWP is committed to:

- Serving communities – Service projects within Australia & the Pacific Islands.
- Strengthening the family – Workshops, forums, seminars, and conferences.
- Bridge of Peace - Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past.
- Global Women's Peace Network (GWPN) – A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development.

Feature Column: WFWP And Me

Memories by Alice Anthonia Hou
Celebrating 30 Years of WFWP International Service

Honiara | The Solomon Islands

My name is Alice Anthonia Hou. I am 45 years old, married with three daughters and Vice President of WFWP Solomon Islands.

I first joined WFWP in 2000 as a young volunteer accompanied by the remaining Japanese WFWP Sisters after the rest had been evacuated back to Japan due to the social unrest in Solomon Islands.

A year before, in 1999, I was invited by WFWP to one of their family music concerts which attracted a huge crowd in Honiara. I was inspired by the members' radiant smiles and gentle bow greetings as the crowd was ushered into the hall. I felt such a great power to see them as women and mothers working together to provide such family gatherings for free.

One year later in early 2000, I found myself as a young WFWP volunteer. I was constantly moving with the Japanese members, holding peace seminars during the height of the ethnic tension in Solomon Islands. Many people left the city to their hometown but a few of us clung to the hope of peace during chaos and disaster. My role as a volunteer sound simple but it was very valuable. I was able to meet the Head of State, Minister of the Crown, and Governor-General with the WFWP title, even at such a young age and just graduating from college.



Nine years later, in 2009, I was officially appointed as WFWP Solomon Islands Chapter President. I held the position until 2015. I was elected again as Vice President in 2020.

Those years with WFWP, especially 2009-2015, were the golden years of my life. Those were the years I discovered what it means to "live by the logic of love". I found extraordinary inner strength, self-worth, dignity, empowerment, and courage. I found how to live for the sake of others, with self-denial and a loving

heart. I made many friends and many new networks and connections.



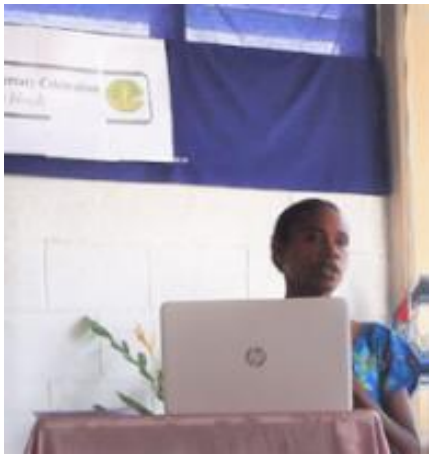
Alice Hou, back right. Next to Alice is Selina Galo (current President of WFWP Solomon Islands.

When I was officially appointed in early 2009, I quit my job and offered myself 100% to volunteer for the cause. I believed my heart was greater than myself and my family. It was during these seven challenging years that I discovered what it means to "live for the sake others", and the meaning of women's dignity, empowered women, women of courage, Mother of Peace, "sincerity moves heaven" and the importance of women leadership in peace-building. To me, all these are not theories to preach but qualities to discover in oneself. I made many mistakes, but also many improvements, and all these built more strengths.

I shared widely the mission and vision of WFWP and our Chapter's contribution to world peace initiatives through creating events and seminars to promote our work and encouraging women-led initiatives like our New Hope Academy kindergarten project and sewing classes for members.

With the leadership, foundation, and principal practices of WFWP, I was able to get recognised in both the National and provincial levels. I am currently serving in 6 boards: Vice Chair of Development Service Exchange (NGO Umbrella Body in SI), President for Guadalcanal Council of Women, Member of the Guadalcanal Provincial Education Board, Guadalcanal Province Town

Planning and Development Board, Chairlady for New Hope Academy, and Vice President for WFWP SI Chapter.



I gained many of my life experiences and lessons during my time as WFWP SI Chapter president. I owe all of this to Father and Mother Moon for the founding ideals of WFWP and its guiding principles which continue to mould me into who I am today. They became my inner strength to face each unfolding day.

Happy 30th Anniversary WFWP international.

Written by Alice Anthonia Hou, WFWP Vice President, representing Solomon Islands.



Australia

GWPN Assembly
Theme: Leadership Advancing a Culture of Heart

August 6th | Victoria, Australia

photos can be found on the WFWP Australia Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/wfwpaustralia/

Overview

- A forum of transformative leadership for established and emerging leaders, with a focus on leadership of the heart.
- Global Women Peace Ambassador awards honour the leadership, achievements, and service of individuals for the benefit of others who stand on the common ground of universal moral principles, promoting reconciliation, overcoming barriers, and building peaceful communities.
- Fifty-five guests, including eight VIPS.





What a fabulous afternoon we had at the GWPN Assembly. The face-2-face gathering was a big plus after being online last year.

Inspirational speakers shared their leadership knowledge, skills, and experiences to a very receptive audience of established and emerging leaders.

Good food, and networking opportunities such as 'table talk' and Q&A allowed time to connect and share our thoughts. Door prizes, a fun ice-breaker activity, and a declaration signing connected us from the start. Below are some highlights.



Opening address

Anne Bellavance - TOPIC: A New Perspective on Leadership: living for the sake of others.



Anne is the President of WFWP Australia, and a WFWP International Vice-president representing Oceania & S.E. Asia. She has been a Not-for-Profit pioneer and volunteer for 43 years within Australia, the U.S. and Canada.

When we consider the principle of 'Living for the Sake of Others', the most positive life view would be where we think beyond ourselves to care for humanity, the physical environment, the nation, society, one's family, one's partner and children. By living in such a way, you discover happiness within. Happiness is possible only in a relationship with others because nothing exists for its own sake.

If you follow a worldview that supports only your own interest, you cannot lead or solve problems. It may appear that a selfish life benefits the individual, but ultimately it is a life of self-destruction. To realise we exist for the sake of others is the great achievement that changes our lives. When we realise that our life is not ours alone but is meant to be for the sake of the other, we begin to follow a path different from the one we were on. To be a good leader a person must think of the problems encountered as his own and have the pioneering spirit that is needed for finding difficult solutions.

A leader's value comes from acting on behalf of the people, NOT from the exercise of leading. As a leader in your career, your community, and your family, by upholding this principle of 'Living for the Sake of Others' you'll find that you will always bring success, and your leadership will always be sought after. You become a leader advancing a 'Culture of Heart'.

Presenters

Beck Mitchell - TOPIC: Qualities of heart-led leadership.

An experienced youth worker, Beck has spent the past 17 years as Executive Officer at Bridge Builders Youth Charity. She has her own Podcast called 'Run with Soul' and is an endurance athlete, who specialises in Ultra Marathon events.



Beck spoke about the important values that make great leaders. The values are self-belief, the power of putting our minds to something, having our own voices, and having something to offer the world. Beck advised that comparing ourselves to others is something we need to overcome as women; we should believe in ourselves, our talents, our skills. The best thing leaders can do is to believe in themselves, then start influencing others to do the same. As women, we have an innate ability to connect with another person and understand each other. If we truly connect with the people we want to engage, and they connect with us as leaders, we can create an amazing vision for the future. Truly understanding one another is the key.

Beck shared a personal anecdote about her marathon race in Antarctica, where she emphasised how resilience makes great leaders. The cold, blinding vision, and endurance of this race brought her to the breaking point, where she realised that one more step allows us to see we have the capability within to be successful. Women are capable of more than what they think; we are capable of being leaders, and we face things in life that prepare us for what's coming next. It is important to communicate as a leader and understanding one another. To bring people together and cast a vision, we need to follow through with our words – and act.

Dr Juliana Mutum - TOPIC: Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Leadership

Juliana is Grants and Employment Support Head at SisterWorks.

Dr Mutum opened with a discussion on how women are underrepresented in high-ranking, professional positions in Australia. In Australia, we measure leadership with big personalities and have great aptitude as public speakers and debaters. However, living up to this mainstream leadership archetype can be daunting, especially for women who have arrived as migrants. Dr Mutum shared her experiences when she was young and, in her profession, wanting to fit in despite her difference and being constantly worried about her ethnicity. She stressed that perceptions of leadership are linked to our cultural backgrounds and spoke to the reality of identities and self-worth of women being torn down.



She called to action that there needs to be a deeper, tailored support for diverse migrant women into leadership pathways, and address the inequalities that exist within career development practices. Dr Mutum acknowledged the importance of mentoring. But sponsorship is even better. Sponsoring is a complimentary process for instrumental support for someone's career, far more effective in achieving career development for women.

"The journey to re-discovering myself has led to an appreciation of others in the leadership realm: the leaders who continue to nurture, inspire, and drive others. Mothers who are unabashedly dedicated to both their families and work, and people who have the courage to bring their authentic selves. Inclusivity needs to be reconsidered, to broaden the concept and acceptance of the general definition of a good leader."

Heather Yelland – TOPIC: Leading by Heart: exploring the power of beliefs



Heather is President and Founder, The Elevation Company. She has been a 'people' specialist for over 30 years. Heather is a leading authority in Values Based Leadership and is a respected thought leader in the international arena of consulting, business and corporate innovation and coaching.

Heather opened her speech by speaking to the power of listening. Listening makes a great leader, and all women have that voice inside them. Leadership begins in the trenches— the everyday, seemingly mundane

life. The greatest leaders of the trenches are mothers. Heather then emphasised that, while our jobs are to serve, it is also important to serve ourselves.
She gave the audience 3 great tips to do something powerful for themselves, their leadership, and their families. To finish her discussion, Heather spoke to the two energies—basal and elevated. Basal energy is in the head, is closed, and constantly busy and in action. On the other hand, elevated energy is in the heart, is open, and encourages reflection and attraction. The elevated energy is where leadership of the heart lives.

Odri Fernandes – TOPIC: Change Starts Within You

Odri is Co-Founder and Director of CreatiVVision Coaching.

Odri Fernandes is a professional coach, speaker, and facilitator. She has worked in the leadership space for 15 years and has led her own business and teams.
She aims to inspire people to do better in their life and recognises the importance of transformed workplaces to enhance leadership, professional development, and culture building.



Odri highlighted that leading with love is leading from the core of our being. She explained what the 'core' is: the core begins when we are born, born from love. It is where our leadership is born too, because when we are babies, we are curious, playful, risk-takers— all qualities of a leader. However, when we grow up, we are limited and told not to do or pursue things, promoting stereotypes and suppression. This is when the 'crust' forms over our core. The crust operates out of perfection, fear, and people-pleasing.
Odri then shared the steps needed to overcome the 'crust'. One, Awareness: Start wondering what's happening in your life, what's making you uncomfortable, how you are hindering yourself, what education you need today. Two, Acknowledgment. Acknowledge that it's ok, that you'll continue to grow no matter what stage of life

you're in. Three, Action. Put passion into everything you do. Take action and things will come!

Global Women Peace Ambassadors

Four accomplished women received the prestigious Global Women Peace Ambassador award for their exemplary peace building and values focused leadership within their fields of expertise. Global Women Peace Ambassadors are leaders from all sectors of society and walks of life dedicated to building a worldwide community of peace through applying the peace-building principles essential to WFWP, 'living for the sake of others.'

The award honours the leadership, achievements, and service of individuals for the benefit of others who stand on the common ground of universal moral principles, promoting reconciliation, overcoming barriers, and building peaceful communities.



Awardees: front – left to right

Sylvia Coombe - President, Fijian Community Association Victoria Inc. (FCAV)
Heather Yelland - President and Founder, The Elevation Company
Emma Kamupala - President, Niue Community Council of Victoria Inc. (NCCV)

Rita Seumanutafa - Principal consultant, Vasa Consultancy; Managing Director, Pacific Island Creative Arts Australia (PICAA)

Leadership & GWPN Committee team: back – left to right
Dr Jennifer Huang – WFWP VIC Advisory Committee
Elgy Koay – GWPN Committee
Anne Bellavance – President, WFWP Australia
Dr Shwetha Shankar - GWPN Committee
Patricia Vaz - GWPN Committee



A GWPN signing declaration was undertaken by committed women ready to take the lead in realising a world of peace by bringing together a Global Peace Network of leaders, organisations, and governments committed to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment of equitable human development.

In signing, we declared to take the lead in pioneering the path of active women peace leaders, exercising the values of maternal love, compassion, service, and sharing (which until now have been excluded from most leadership and development strategies), and encourage peace through education, cooperation, and solidarity.

Reflection from Participants

“Congratulations on a beautifully organised event. The food was fabulous, speakers inspiring and the structure of the event was great. Leaving lots of time for attendees to meet and converse was an absolute highlight as well. What an amazing group of women were in attendance. I enjoyed every minute of my time. WFWP is doing a great job.



My takeaway for the day was to let Love guide my every thought and action with family, friends and all who cross my path on life's journey. Well done to all the organisers. Many thanks and big high five to you all." ... Heather

"I feel empowered by meeting all those inspirational women coming from different backgrounds who had to come over so many barriers to be able to reach where they are. Amazing stories!"

"It was a great day of networking, learning and being inspired to lead into the future."



"Congratulation for organising so well a wonderful event. The speakers shared inspiring messages:

- Live for the sake of others, love-care-respect (Anne Bellavance)
- Communication is like apples and oranges (Beck Michell)
- Grant, Employment, Support head and Culture care (Dr Juliana Mutum)



Very peaceful environment with a great message that we are one human family. Discussion / table talk regarding leadership in groups was wonderful to get everyone's thoughts and suggestions." ... Nelson

Venue, registration, MC, food, and drinks were organised well in accordance with everyone's requirements.

PARTNERS and SUPPORTERS

Hosted by:

The **Women's Federation for World Peace** is an international NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. WFWP adheres to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture, and religion to create healthy families can resolve the complex problems of our societies and world.

With Support from:

City of Monash

https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/

Written by Anne Bellavance

(President, WFWP Australia)

United Nations Day of Peace
End Racism, Build Peace

24 September | Australia

Overview

- Forty-five participants representing Australian Aboriginal Elders, academics, and faith and community leaders gathered online to address the issue of racism.
- The common theme was a need to have a deep sense of our shared humanity and practice love for others.

Presenters in order of Appearance

Dr Balwant Bhaneja - Racism, Nonkilling, and Shared Humanity



Dr Balwant Bhaneja is a member of the Board of the Center for Global Nonkilling, a UN ECOSOC NGO.

Dr Bhaneja explained the concept of "other and otherness" as a significant contributor to global violence. He argued that the UN Declaration of Human Rights has inspired a rich body of human rights laws around the world. "We need a culture that is life affirming, and of peace and harmony, now more vital than ever."

Tasneem Chopra - We All Bleed the Same - Let's End the Pain



Tasneem Chopra is a Cross-Cultural Consultant who addresses issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion across organisational leadership. For her efforts she was appointed the inaugural Ambassador for Women of Colour, Australia and awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). She has also been named an 'Anti-Racism Champion' by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Tasneem spoke on the prevalence of racism across the globe as a bleak reality. From micro to macro racisms, this is a societal malaise that demands we tackle it, starting with introspection, then committing to dismantling structural discrimination. It begins and ends with us all. To combat racism, we need to carry in ourselves a sense of common humanity.

Dr Steve Rametse - Inhumanity is Contrary to Ubuntu/Humanness



Dr Steve Rametse is the former President of Nelson Mandela Day Australia. He is a reader of the South African political economy and researcher on the settlement issues of the African diaspora in Australia. He is also a former member of the Victorian Government African Ministerial Advisory Group which helped formulate the "Victorian African Communities Action Plan". He is also an Ambassador for Peace with UPF.

Dr Rametse spoke on the values associated with Ubuntu which are vital for harmony and essential for peace. Inhumanity is contrary to humanistic values articulated in the African concept of Ubuntu; a philosophy based on the idea that all humanity is connected. He argued that world peace is dependent on the popular universalisation of the values of Ubuntu, values such a love, interdependence, justice, and unselfishness.

Dr John Bellavance - The Psychological Underpinnings of Racism and the Persecution of Dr Moon



Dr John Bellavance is the Oceania Coordinator, International Association of Academicians for Peace and Vice-President, Universal Peace Federation Australia, and Founder of drjohn.online. He is one of the founders of Africa Day Australia and was Vice-President for five years.

Dr Bellavance shared that psychology has shown that racism and prejudice are a person's tendency to think that their race, culture, or religion is superior to others. The issue of racism and prejudice is an important issue considering unprecedented global immigration. Immigration is challenging all nations to find a shared sense of humanity because this may cause some to feel a sense of loss, fear, and anger.

He also shared about his experiences in the US when Dr Moon, the founder of UPF, was sent to prison on unjust accusations. Dr Bellavance said, "When the founder of a movement goes to prison you would expect the movement to die, but the opposite came about. Our movement grew and we made many new friends. Many American Christian leaders spoke out in defence of Dr Moon and religious freedom."

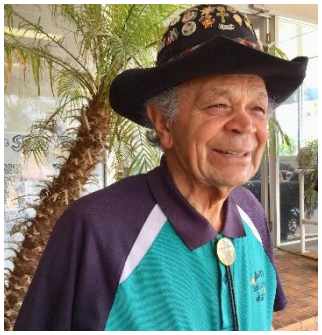
Pearl Wymarra - The In-Love of Love - Identifying, Restoring and Peace-ing Together All Our Good and Proper Cultural Ways of Life



Ms. Pearl Wymarra is from the Gudang Aboriginal Clan. Pearl's mother, Marjorie, was a descendant of the Stolen Generation. For many years, she has provided inspiring leadership in addressing the crisis of violence experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. She is a distinguished teacher and researcher in the restoration of people's emotional health and social well-being. She holds a master's degree in Health Science (Primary Health Care) and is an Ambassador for Peace with UPF.

Ms. Wymarra shared her deeply spiritual/Christian approach to restoring her cultural ways. She spoke on how her family would give food and shelter to people in need: “It was in my home that I learnt about sharing and giving. It was there that I first saw the model of unconditional love. These rules of love, showing respect to our elders, sharing what we have and being humble were not written on a poster in our house; these were the daily practices of the good and cultural ways of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and our Christian faith. We are still a great and solid peace-keeping force in this land. The last 234 years tells the story of how we actively worked for justice and peace. Our story is one of peaceful resistance and this story needs to be told to our children.”

Pastor Uncle Ossie Cruse – Final Remarks



Pastor Uncle Ossie Cruse MBE AM has consistently defended the values of the Yuin-Monaro Nation on regional, national, and global levels, including the United Nations, the Commonwealth Heads of Government, and the Pacific Asia Council of Indigenous People. He contributed to The International Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the World Council of Indigenous Peoples. He continues, at 88 years, to pastor the Eden Aboriginal Evangelical Church, NSW and to promote the renovation of the Constitution with the Federal Government.

Pastor Cruse shared the final remarks, encouraging us to love one another and treat each other as family. He said, “When you are at peace, you will be at peace with others. We must continue to share and care. Regardless of where we come from, we must treat each other as extended family for the sake of our children’s children.”

PARTNERS and SUPPORTERS

Hosted by:

Universal Peace Federation (UPF), an international and interreligious network of individuals and organizations, including representatives from religion, government, civil society, and the private sector, is dedicated to achieving world peace.

The **Women’s Federation for World Peace** is an international NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. WFWP adheres to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture, and religion to create healthy families can resolve the complex problems of our societies and world.

With Support from:

The Center for Global Nonkilling is an international non-profit organisation focused on the promotion of change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world.

The Australian Chamber is Australia's largest and most representative business network. Their purpose is to mobilise the ideas, influence, and passion of people in business to achieve policy outcomes in the national interest.

Global Opportunities Globalisation (GOC) leverages its global networks to align the technology, with new business concepts, that fulfill national strategic priorities and unmet needs. GOC develops market entry strategy and the implementation pathway for optimal value.

Global Somali Diaspora (GSD) is a global not-for-profit organization working to bring together and mobilize members of the Somali Diaspora for positive action.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization **(UNESCO)** is a specialised agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences ,and culture.

Written by John Bellavance, Vice-President, Universal Peace Federation Australia

Global Women's Peace Network



Purpose: A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development. It seeks to ensure mutual prosperity and lasting peace through feminine peace leadership rooted in a culture of

care, responsibility and education in family values.

GWPN inaugural assembly: the founders of WFWPI, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon and her husband Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon called for a new era of women's leadership in peace building. The assembly highlighted the need for a body of NGO leaders, whose collective wisdom and judgment can complement the deliberations

Fiji

WFWP Fiji Courtesy Visit to Minister of Women

28th September | Suva, Fiji

Overview

- WFWP Fiji President, Sharila Lazarus, accompanied by Ms Anne Bellavance (WFWP International Vice President, representing Asia Pacific 2, and President of WFWP Australia), paid a courtesy visit to Fiji's Minister for Women, Honourable Rosy Akbar at her office in Civic Towers, Suva.



On 28th September, WFWP Fiji President Sharila Lazarus and Ms Anne Bellavance (WFWP International Vice President, representing Asia Pacific 2, and President of WFWP Australia), visited Fiji's Minister for

Women, Honourable Rosy Akbar, to share with her the work of WFWP. WFWP is thankful to the Minister for her warm welcome extended to us.

The Minister was happy to know about work being done by WFWP, locally and globally, and welcomed the idea to partner with WFWP Fiji in future programs. Minister Akbar was also very impressed to hear about the recent women empowerment workshops that were held that focused on the mental health and wellbeing of women. This meeting with the Minister further developed the relationship between the Fiji government and WFWP.

Ms Bellevance also presented Mother Moon's recent publication on behalf of the organization. WFWP Fiji is hopeful to have a cordial relationship with the Women's Ministry to positively impact the lives of many women and their families in future.



Written by Sharila Lazarus, President, WFWP Fiji

WFWP Fiji Women's Networking Lunch

29th September | Suva, Fiji

Overview

- WFWP Fiji held a Women's Networking Lunch at the Ginger Kitchen in Suva to provide an opportunity for women leaders from different areas to network with each other, from political and corporate NGOs to community champions.



On 29 September, WWP Fiji held a Women's Networking Lunch that aimed to connect women leaders who were interested to partner with WFWP Fiji or offer their support, and to join as members, friends, or global partners of GWPN in the future. 11 women participated in the event, including a member of parliament, Dr Mere Samisoni. The participants were very pleased to meet up and thanked WFWP Fiji for the invitation.

Through this event, WFWP Fiji were also able to access various platforms to drive more traffic towards WFWP Fiji. Networking was shown to be important as it allowed the sharing of knowledge and experiences, with a strong emphasis on making connections and collaboration between WFWP Fiji and other organisations.

WFWP Fiji is thankful to Autoworld Trading Fiji as they provided partial sponsorship for this networking event.



Written by Sharila Lazarus, President, WFWP Fiji

WFWP Fiji Women Empowerment Workshop 1

24th August | Suva, Fiji

Overview

- WFWP Fiji, Suva Chapter, held a workshop on women empowerment.
- With 24 participants, the workshop took place at the Peace Embassy Building and highlighted the need for women to educate themselves more on mental health and wellbeing.



On August 24, WFWP Fiji held a women empowerment workshop that aimed to promote women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and focus on their mental health and wellbeing. The workshop was designed to help those women who are housewives, not having the opportunity to usually participate in educational and awareness workshops to gain confidence and to practice self-care. This would enable them to function better in their everyday lives. This initiative was also aligned with the UN SDGs.

Due to the pandemic, many women have fallen into depression due to domestic problems, economic issues and more. Such workshops provide an insight into our roles in our families, communities, and nations. They encourage women to uncover inner barriers and improve self-esteem for sound mental health.



WFWP Fiji is thankful to Lavish Salon who volunteered to sponsor morning tea at our recent event. Salon Owner, Deepika Sami, is a young businesswoman who has participated in WFWP Fiji's previous events and participated in the recent women empowerment workshop. She is happy to participate in our future programs and provide assistance where possible. WFWP Fiji acknowledged Ms Sami's kind gesture.

It was an awesome workshop, giving women the space to be expressive and could access and participate in such a forum with wonderful, very knowledgeable speakers.

Speakers at the Forum comprised of Government's Ministry of Health staff specializing in Mental Health Unit: Dr Marilyn Cornelius specialist in health and wellness, and women empowerment; Ms Letila Sandys, a counsellor who has worked under Ministry of Education in various schools and in communities and churches; and Ms Angelina Christi of the Women's Wing of High Commission of India's Cultural Centre.

Angelina Christi is a graduate in Music and Arts and works with the Women's Wing of the High Commission of India. She spoke about the importance of music in our daily lives and how it helps to deal with stress. Dr Marilyn Cornelius is a behavioural scientist, design thinker, entrepreneur, and activist, who thrives at the intersection of climate change, wellness, innovation, and leadership. She spoke about three reasons why it is difficult for women to be empowered and what we can do about that.

Officials from Ministry of Health Fiji , Ms Ashana and Ms Tavaita spoke on mental health and wellbeing. Lastly, Ms Letila Sandys, a counsellor and former community worker, and a strong woman of faith focused on the ability and capability of women.

We received overwhelming, positive feedback about the workshop. WFWP Fiji has plans to do more of these workshops in the near future.



Reflection from Participants

"This is my first women empowerment workshop ever and I feel so good to be part of this. I never experienced participation in such a forum." - Ms Mira Jiit

WFWP Fiji Women Empowerment Workshop 2

27th September | Suva, Fiji

Overview

- WFWP Fiji, Suva Chapter, held the second workshop on women empowerment at the Peace Embassy Building.
- With 23 participants, the workshop highlighted why women's empowerment was important, not just for women's health and wellbeing, but also for strengthening families.

On August 24, WFWP Fiji held the second round of the Women Empowerment Workshop, including 7 tertiary students and older women. It was a very powerful workshop that aimed at informing and educating women on mental health, wellbeing, and the importance of self-care. Women from the native Fijian society and Fijians of Indian descent also attended the workshop.



WFWP Fiji is thankful to Mr & Mrs Suresh and Sarita Chand for volunteering to sponsor lunch for the workshop. They prepared a nutritious vegetarian meal for all participants and speakers at the event. WFWP Fiji is very appreciative of this very kind gesture.

The forum gave an opportunity to enhance the knowledge of participants through the well-informed and powerful presentations made by various speakers.



Sereima Semiti spoke on behalf of Medical Services Pacific and gave a very detailed presentation on enabling women, youth, and children to have greater access to reproductive health care for successful family planning; and to support vulnerable populations in the Pacific. She also informed the participants that their organisation provides a comprehensive range of health and social services for women and youth at zero cost.



The next speakers, Ashana (far right) and Tavaita (far left), represented Government's Ministry of Health. They were speakers in our previous workshop too and delivered a very informative presentation where Ashana, who is with a mental health unit, shared her personal testimonial on an attempt to end her life.



Grace Lowata spoke on behalf of the Fiji Cancer Society. She spoke on the battles of cancer patients and their families, and how they are affected mentally losing a loved one.

Ilana Burness, a yoga therapist, and teacher, spoke on how yoga meditation helps with good mental health and wellbeing.



Anne Bellavance (WFWP IVP representing Oceania & S.E. Asia) introduced the work of WFWP and shared the philosophy of WFWP International, 'Living for the Sake of Others' as a methodology and way of life to support a person's mental health and reduce depression; to think and live beyond me, myself, and I.



The event addressed problems faced by women in our communities today in Fiji. Women are so engrossed in taking care of their spouses, their children, and families that they end up sacrificing their own health. In doing so, they neglect their own self.

Empowerment isn't just essential for the health and wellbeing of women but also for the process of strengthening families. Most speakers highlighted the need for self-care when speaking on mental health to which most participants agreed. Speakers gave testimonials on personal experiences of depression, stress and need for self-care which really kept the participants connected.

Reflection from Participants

"The workshop helped me to understand how to manage stress during the exam period." - Vilomena

"I learned I should not neglect my health." – Asheeta

"The workshop was powerful. The presentations were very informative, and I learned so much." – Rajni

Written by Sharila Lazarus, President, WFWP Fiji

Philippines

WFWPI 30th Anniversary

6 August | Philippines

Overview

- WFWP Philippines celebrated WFWPI's 30th anniversary with 86 participants coming together to spend the day looking back on WFWP's achievements and feats over the last 30 years.

August 6th was a festive and remarkable day for WFWP Philippines as past and current officers, members and invited guests celebrated the 30th founding anniversary of WFWPI at Luxent Hotel, Quezon City, Philippines.



The event was graced by 86 people including the esteemed invited speakers, namely, Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltazar, Malacañan Palace Consultant; Mrs. Theresia Kittel, Senior Adviser for WFWP Asia Pacific, who gave the Congratulatory remarks; Hon. Maria Eleanor Juan, 6th district Councillor and Chairperson of the Committee on Women, Family Relations and Gender Equality, representing the City Mayor of Quezon City; Hon. Josefina "Joy" Belmonte and Mrs. Minerva De Leon, former President of WFWP Philippines (1996-2009) who gave the special remarks together; and Mrs. Annie Andanar, UPF Ambassador for Peace, who delivered the Keynote Address.

In addition, leaders from the Universal Peace Federation and International Youth and Students for Peace (IAYSP) were also in attendance during the celebration. They included Dr. Julius B. Malicdem, UPF sub-regional Director of South East Asia; Dr. Leo Angelo T. Halog, UPF Philippines President; Archbishop Elias Soria, ACLC/IAPD President; Mr. Ronnie Sodusta, IAYSP Asia Pacific 2 President; and Mr. Richel Jalipa, IAYSP International lecturer. Rev. and Mrs. Jaime Vergara from the True Family Movement Asia Pacific also joined the celebration.

The celebration kicked off with a prayer which was then followed by the Philippine National anthem. A video introduction of WFWPI was then played before the warm welcoming remarks were given by the WFWP Philippines President, Mrs. Almera Grace Mayo. In her speech, she emphasised the significantly powerful and valuable role of women in today's society as they are responsible for rebuilding our societies and nations. She encouraged everyone to share, to the whole world, a model of movement involving the realisation of true love where women embrace their husbands and raise their children to be good citizens of the world. Doing so should establish a movement that can ignite true peace and love in communities.



She added that women must take a leading role in politics, economics, culture and each area of society to work towards world peace. The cake was then cut by WFWP officers and guest speakers while everyone else stood up and sang together. Next was the awarding of the WFWPI Volunteer Excellence Award which was given to Prof. Angeles Lorenzana, the current Vice-President of WFWP Philippines for her 30 years of unwavering service and dedication to WFWP since its founding. Certificates of appreciation were also given to the former officers as a token for their contribution during their time with WFWP.

Hearty congratulatory remarks were given by Ms. Maria Lourdes Baltazar and Mrs. Theresia Kittel. Ms. Baltazar congratulated the founders of WFWP for their great leadership and guidance to the organisation and wished WFWP 30 more years of progress and success to implement more projects and programs.



She encouraged WFWP to continue paving the way for peace-building and to remain committed regardless of challenges faced along the way. Mrs. Kittel then shared her journey of being part of WFWP since its inception and recalled some of the activities they had conducted then. She also expressed her happiness and gratitude to be part of this momentous occasion.

A powerful song rendition was then performed by Thai woman leader, Mrs. Weeranut Sirimusika Sodusta, to congratulate WFWP. WFWPI President, Dr. Julia Moon; WFWPI Senior Vice President, Dr. Sun Jin Moon; and WFWP IVP Asia Pacific 2, Mrs. Anne Bellavance also gave their informative addresses.

Special remarks were then given by Hon. Maria Eleanor Juan and Mrs. Minerva De Leon. Hon. Juan congratulated WFWP for their commitment and service toward the inclusion and empowerment of Filipinas and Filipino youth. She expressed her hope that WFWP Philippines will continue to work together toward shared goals of progress through inclusion and to continue becoming a partner towards women and youth empowerment. Mrs. De Leon extended her congratulations to WFWP's feat, and expressed her gratitude

and joy to serve WFWP Philippines as president for 12 years. She also thanked Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon for the care and guidance she received during her time as president.



Mrs. Annie Andanar then delivered the Keynote Address. Mrs. Andanar shared her personal journey which was a crossroad of war and peace, from armed struggle and freedom fighter to peace advocacy. She expressed her sincere gratitude to Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, her inspiration and mother.

In her speech, she highlighted that women are not anti-men, but in fact complement their husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons. She believed that it's important for women to acknowledge their frailties as well as their strengths and capacities. She boldly underlined that women can certainly bring about change in the international arena, sports, politics, governance but most importantly, in the home. According to her, no amount of success outside of the home can compensate for our failure in raising our children and providing a peaceful environment for our families. Therefore, women must graduate from just being women and women leaders to family advocates, strengthening and empowering families and young people. She encouraged everyone to pay tribute to the mothers and women leaders who have come before and to those who will come after for being instruments of change and peace. She ended her speech saying, "Peace begins with me, with all of us. I'd like us to hold hands and unite because, if we unite, we can make a world of true peace as we have unity and love for one another."

The event was concluded with a closing remark from Prof. Angeles Lorenzana. Prof. Lorenzana shared how women leaders sacrificed for the Federation to be where it is right now. She thanked the founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, for their efforts and their teaching on family values. She also expressed her determination that, whether she is needed, she will always be there for WFWP.



It was indeed a milestone for WFWP and all its chapters. WFWP Philippines is sincerely grateful to the founders, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, for their unparalleled parental leadership and guidance. It is a great privilege and honour for WFWP Philippines to celebrate and share this achievement. It hopes to do more for women empowerment and for the young generations. WFWP Philippines is determined to go an extra mile further and substantialise the advocacies of the federation.

Written by Jinky Hora, Executive Secretary, WFWP Philippines

WFWP Philippines Celebrates International Day of Peace

October 1st | Quezon City, Philippines

Overview

- WFWP Philippines celebrated International Day of Peace with the theme, “End Racism. Build Peace,” at May J. Café in Quezon City, Philippines.
- Attended by 15 women leaders, the event was filled with sharing knowledge and experiences on how to build peace within families and the community.



On October 1st, WFWP Philippines held a simple gathering to celebrate the International Day of Peace, attended by 15 women leaders from a range of different backgrounds and races. It was a meaningful afternoon where the participants imparted their knowledge and experiences. The event

was moderated by Mrs. Mariflor Gavaran, the WFWP Philippines Auditor.



The gathering kicked off with a presentation by the WFWP Philippines President Mrs. Almera Grace Mayo. She presented the vision, mission, and objectives of WFWP. The president enlightened the women about the activities that WFWP are currently undertaking, which are aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. After this, women participants whose spouses were from different races, cultures and religions shared how they overcame the barriers brought about by their differences, as husband and wife. They also shared on how they build peace within their families as peace begins first within the family.



The room was filled with laughter as each of them uncovered their strategies, and the women felt they could relate to each woman sharing. A young professional whose parents have different religious background also shared what it is like to be raised up by both Muslim and Christian parents. Another participant, a school principal in an international school, also imparted her experiences in managing such a diverse group of students and how she reconciled their differences.

Through this gathering, the women leaders were able to learn that barriers brought about by differences in race, religion, culture and background are not an issue in peace-building, because when the heart is present during the communication process, understanding can grow.

Moreover, highlighted during the discussion was the importance of the role of women in breaking down all these barriers that prevent peace, and the significance of women leadership in building peace. It was, indeed, a meaningful and fun-filled celebration of peace for the women leaders.

There were lots of things learned and a rich exchange of ideas and information. With the inspiration that the women leaders had gained from the gathering, they each filled in their membership forms and were welcomed into the WFWP Philippines family.



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