



## DIRECTOR'S CORNER

### **You Matter!**

We ring in 2009 surrounded by numerous challenges from the economy to disease, hunger, and conflict. What is possible in light of what seem to be overwhelming issues? Where do we find answers?

Perhaps it is time to return to the most basic of all beliefs - the belief in ourselves. Yes, you matter!

In 2009, let us each take on at least one action whose trajectory moves us forward. There are men and women all over the world taking such actions.

- Jin In and Sarah Asad are partnering to bring leadership to young girls in Pakistan. 4Girls GLocal Leadership ([www.4ggl.org/](http://www.4ggl.org/)) is a nonprofit organization with one simple goal: to change the paradigm of how impoverished, vulnerable girls are treated in the world - from valueless to valuable instruments of change. Their unique approach is to mobilize local resources to bring leadership to girls in impoverished communities.
- Bedy Yang is bridging the United States and Brazil to preserve the Amazon ecosystem and provide income for its inhabitants.
- Svetlana Aslanyan is leading organizations to raise the status of Armenian women and promote the "self-empowerment of women in a growing democracy." (See her story in this newsletter.)

As Jean Bolen Shiboda said in a recent email message, there is "a tipping point that can come about through a critical mass of women and exceptional men." Become part of the tipping point. Decide on one action you can take that moves us closer to a solution. Dare to be bold. Dare to act.

Global Women's Leadership Network is dedicated to developing the leadership capacity of women who dare to transform the future of their organizations, communities, and the world. We welcome your involvement.



## Featured WLW Graduates

### Finding Time to Do Everything

By Ellen Boneparth, GWLN Advisory Board Member

How does Svetlana Aslanyan do all she does? She holds what seem to be two more than full-time jobs! With a Ph.D. from the Institute of Linguistics at the National Academy of Sciences in Armenia, she works at her first job at the Institute where she heads a research group and serves as the Scientific Secretary on International Relations.

For her second voluntary job, Svetlana has created and works in a number of NGOs. She was the Founding President of the Center for the Development of Civil Society and its Women Scholars' Council Division. She has organized many initiatives and training programs to raise the status of Armenian women and promote the "self-empowerment of women in a growing democracy."

As if that were not enough, Svetlana has prepared several women's studies courses and has published extensively on women's issues.

All that activity hasn't kept Svetlana from pushing even further. She is currently organizing the Political Academy of Women to increase the role of women at all levels of decision-making and enable them to participate in local, parliamentary, and presidential elections. The Political Academy will focus especially on women from small and medium-sized towns. Armenian women leaders will participate in workshops to learn more about democracy, personal presentation, communication and media, political parties and public meetings, and public speaking and campaigning.

I was impressed that many of the techniques Svetlana will use in her training workshops parallel techniques from WLW (Women Leaders for the World), namely, consultations between workshops for participants with the seminar presenters and work on building participants' self-knowledge and vision. Svetlana reported that WLW played an important role in helping her define her own values, discover how to present herself, and learn how to train others.

With all this activity, Svetlana still finds time to enjoy her family - husband, son, and two wonderful grandchildren - and, occasionally, reading and music.

Just in case you're worried that Svetlana might relax some day, she is researching a future book, tentatively titled "Women in Post-Communist Armenia: Soviet Tradition, Democratic Transition, and Future Dreams."

Congratulations to Svetlana on all her accomplishments. Let's hope she got just a bit of rest over the holidays!!