

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

You hear it every day - having a network is important. Why? What kind of a network is useful?

First, let's say what a network is **not**. A network is **not** a collection of business cards that you exchanged at various events. It is **not** all the names in your Outlook file or all the connections on LinkedIn.

A true network consists of relationships that you can count on for various kinds of support. Your family is a part of your network that can be relied on for physical and emotional support. Your friends are a part of your network that you trust to speak the truth and to listen deeply. People in your organizations (work, church, community) are a part of your network that provides perspectives and assistance in getting things accomplished. Some of those whom you meet at events **become** persons related to you and members of your true network.

The "N" in GWLN is for Network. We are a network that is a "community of commitment." We are **all** connected by our various commitments to creating a new world for humanity. In our summer leadership program, Women Leaders for the World (WLW), we discuss the concept of "each and every." It means that we are committed to the success of **each and every** WLW graduate.

When our WLW graduates Gacheri and Louise are suffering through turmoil in Kenya, and Sarah and Simi are surrounded by danger in Pakistan, we send messages of encouragement and pass along reports about their safety to friends around the world. When our WLW graduates such as Margaret Aringo, who is profiled in this issue of the newsletter, achieve breakthroughs in their leadership, we applaud them and share the news of their success. We acknowledge each other's achievements and comfort each other when things are not going quite the way we want. We coach each other. We provide connections and information. And, if that is our inclination, we pray for guidance and protection.

Starting July 20, we will welcome a new class of Women Leaders for the World to the Santa Clara campus. Already accomplished leaders, they are coming to WLW for breakthroughs in their leadership and their organizations' capabilities. They will be wonderful additions to our network.

I encourage you to view GWLN as a resource for you. Please write to me about how the network could be serving you better (LAlepin@scu.edu). If you already feel supported, please let me know that too.

Together we are far more powerful than we are alone. As Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote in *Letter from the Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963*:

"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."



Featured WLW Graduates

Community Health for Kenyan Women

We are proud to announce that Margaret Aringo of Kenya, a graduate of the 2007 Women Leaders for the World (WLW) program, has been awarded a Sacred Theology Doctorate from the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. Her dissertation on the blood taboos of Luo Kenyan culture is an important first step in fulfilling her vision of health and empowerment for Kenyan women.

In Margaret's homeland of Kenya, cultural taboos, especially the blood taboos that have dominated Luo Kenyan culture for centuries, deprive women of medical care, health education, and counseling. As Margaret explains, "These cultural taboos and lack of knowledge marginalize women and result in thousands of deaths each year." Margaret's vision has been two-fold: first, to complete this doctorate that will allow her to sit at the table of church and civil leaders in Kenya, for her voice to be heard where there is little or no representation of women; and second, to establish a center in Kenya where women are trained in leadership and counseling and where women suffering from blood-related illness and disease as well as HIV/AIDS can receive treatment, preventive care, and counseling.

Margaret herself has broken taboos in the very act of writing this dissertation. Margaret was joined by her sister and WLW graduate Louise Sewe in taboo-breaking interviews of 150 Luo women in Kenya. Margaret's dissertation has also had a profound effect on the faculty at the School of Theology. "This study," she says, "challenges the legitimacy of such taboos and decries the consequences of suffering and alienation that Luo women inherit as a result. Moreover, it constitutes an invitation to Luo women to speak out against these taboos and to begin the educational process that dismantles the authority of such practices as well as diminishes the negative consequences for contemporary Luo women."

In June Margaret will return to Kenya to fulfill the next phase of her work. As a member of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph and Dean of the School of Social Ministry, she will begin to train other women leaders. The school has acquired land on which she will build her health

center that will significantly change the lives of Kenyan women. "I intend to empower women to assert themselves and seek wholeness of life in the face of dehumanizing cultural taboos. My center will help the women of my country become independent and transform their lives."

We applaud Margaret's latest achievement and look forward to sharing news of further success in the years ahead.



Help Our WLW Participant

Twenty women leaders from around the world will be here in July for the WLW leadership training program. To read the profiles of these wonderful women, please visit www.gwln.org and click the WLW 2008 link on the home page.

GWLN provides scholarships and travel grants for most of these women. We need your help to raise \$60,000 more towards this year's program. Donations in any amount are most welcome.

To make a donation, you can send a check to GWLN, c/o EDC, Santa Clara University, 500 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, CA 95053. To donate online, go to scu.edu/business/gwln/get-involved/donate-sponsor_gwln.cfm.

For more information, email Linda Alepin at LAlepin@scu.edu.

By supporting these women, you too will dare to transform lives, communities, and the world.



GWLN Expands its Network to Washington and Harvard

GWLN was represented recently in Washington, D.C., and at Harvard University. In March, Sema Basol, a member of the leadership team of GWLN, attended a fund-raising event in Washington. She took this opportunity to talk about GWLN with members of the Congressional Women's Caucus, members of Congress, and the Labor and State Departments.

In April, Linda Alepin joined Sema, who is from Turkey, in attending the Turkish American Scientists and Scholars' (TASSA) Annual Conference at Harvard University. At TASSA's invitation, Sema organized a conference workshop on women's leadership. The purpose of the workshop was to look at "self-empowerment" from the perspectives of the panelists who are established women leaders themselves and to inspire the participants to take action in their own lives. The four panelists were: Linda Alepin, Founding Director, Global Women's Leadership Network, and Dean's Professor of Entrepreneurship, Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University; Shelli Hendricks, Executive Development, EMC Corporation, President, EMC Women's Leadership Forum, West Coast; Nakiye Avdan Boyacigiller, Dean, Faculty of Management, Sabanci University, Turkey; and Funda Serifoglu, President, Duzce University, Turkey.

At Harvard, clockwise from lower left, Funda Serifoglu, Sema Basol, Nakiye Avdan Boyacigiller, Linda Alepin

Reflecting on her experiences in Washington and at the TASSA conference, Sema is "very encouraged to see such interest in empowering women as global leaders and to affirm the important work of GWLN in the world community."



Women at the Well in Moscow

Echoing Linda's editorial on the power of the network, we received word that a small but hardy band has launched Women at the Well in Moscow. Galina Federova recently visited her sister in the Bay Area and attended one of GWLN's Women at the Well events. Inspired and motivated, she returned home to Moscow and organized the first Women at the Well. Their first speaker, Marina Pisklakova Parker, engaged a group of six women on the topic of women's leadership in Russia. Based on its success, Galina reports that they will begin monthly Wells in May. And so it grows. . .