

2018-2020 BIENNIUM  
ISSUE FOUR | JULY 2020

# THE Zontian

THE VOICE OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL





**ZONTA**  
INTERNATIONAL  
EMPOWERING WOMEN  
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

**ZONTA INTERNATIONAL  
HEADQUARTERS**

**Welcome from the Staff**

Zonta International Headquarters, located in Oak Brook, Illinois, is a staff of 14 employees that manages the day-to-day operations of Zonta International and Zonta International Foundation and supports the Zonta International Board in implementing policies and programs to further the objectives of Zonta International.

Our friendly team is ready to assist you!

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If you are visiting the Chicago area, we invite you to visit Headquarters. To schedule a visit, please call +1 630 928 1400 or stop by our offices during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CDT.

**World Headquarters**

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[www.zonta.org](http://www.zonta.org)

Cover: Since the launch of the Global Programme to End Child Marriage in 2016, more than 7.7 million adolescent girls and more than 4.2 million community members have been reached with information, skills and services.



Phase II of the Global Programme to End Child Marriage launched at the beginning of 2020 and will continue until Phase III in 2024.

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## GOING FORWARD

### Dear Zontians,

This is a big thank you for your dedication to our mission and all your wonderful contributions in our Centennial Anniversary Biennium. Many of you have gone extra miles to capitalize on our 100 years to raise awareness for our causes, to expand our network with like-minded people and to strengthen the impact of Zonta. And, although many of you have to deal with challenges due to COVID-19, you are creatively managing to support each other and women and girls in need.

Our international projects and educational programs have helped create a better future for thousands of young women. Our goal to implement Ending Child Marriage as the major international project for Zonta has been met: Not only did the Global Programme, to which we are UNICEF's and UNFPA's first private sector donor, exceed its target; we surpassed our goal with more than 250 Zonta clubs embracing it, starting to learn about the causes for this severe violation of human rights and advocating against it. Just a few days ago, the first advertisements that Zonta's USA Caucus will be sponsoring throughout the entire country, were put up in 209 buses in California.

It was obvious that the Centennial Anniversary Biennium has encouraged our members to seek out new paths for Zonta engagement. All but two districts participated in the pilot program that awarded scholarships to women in technology. Recently, we had an inspiring Zonta Talk with Sedinam Worlanyo, one of the international recipients. Locally, 289 Zonta clubs filed applications for grants to support the activities of a local organization. With so many deserving projects to consider, the International Service Committee had a difficult time selecting the 62 recipients.

We welcomed 5,122 new members, among them 244 young professional members, and saw 24 clubs and 64 new Z and Golden Z clubs charter. That said, and although some of our districts recorded admirable increases, the target to grow our overall membership base was not met. The new opportunity to become a member directly with Zonta International, without having to join or stay in a club, attracted 128 people. A proposal to continue this pilot project has been put forward to the voting members who will decide on it in early July.

The Centennial Anniversary Endowment Campaign will end with the conclusion of this biennium. As a result, the two Endowment Funds combined have grown by 210.5% per cent since June 2014. Special thanks to our generous donors who have contributed to strengthen Zonta's ability to provide support for many women and girls in the next decades.

Activities to enhance our operations have been going on since the first day the 2018-2020 Board took office. We will realize substantial savings with the move of our headquarters offices to a nearby building. Efficiency has also been improved by investments in technology and by reducing interfaces. As a result, our staff could easily transition to work from home during the lockdown that the State of Illinois proclaimed as a result of COVID-19. A direct member benefit is the new, more user-friendly website that now sits on the same platform as our membership database.

These past two years, and especially the last months with COVID-19, have made it clear that humanity faces what are probably its most serious challenges ever. That said, as very often in times of crisis, opportunities also appear more clearly. One of them is making women's equal participation in all decision-making processes a reality. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by all UN Member States lists achieving gender equality as a goal in its own right. We are convinced that pursuing it will be a catalyst for meeting the other 16 goals. Zonta and its mission are as relevant as in 1919. Thank you very much for your commitment to achieving our goals and all that you do to support women and girls.

With best wishes and warm regards,

Susanne von Bassewitz

President

Zonta International and Zonta International Foundation





# PURSuing OUR MISSION WITHIN A GLOBAL CRISIS

The Zonta Club of Tuguegarao, Philippines, District 17, donated surgical masks and nitrile gloves to frontline workers at a local quarantine facility.

By now, every country has seen the impact of COVID-19, an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Some communities have had to face more extreme numbers of cases of sickness and death, but everywhere gender inequalities have become more visible.

According to the [United Nations Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women](#), published April 2020, the well-being and empowerment of women is being affected on every front.

**ECONOMIC IMPACT:** Women who already generally earn and save less while holding insecure jobs, or living close to poverty, are feeling compounded economic impacts.

**HEALTH IMPACT:** Women's health is generally being adversely impacted through the reallocation of resources and priorities, including sexual and reproductive health services.

**UNPAID WORK IMPACT:** Women, who take on more unpaid care work have had this load increased, with children out-of-school, care needs of older persons increasing and health services becoming overwhelmed.

**SAFETY IMPACT:** Gender-based violence is increasing as economic and social stress deepens, coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures. Many women are being forced to 'lockdown' at home with their abusers while support services are being disrupted or made inaccessible.

Caring and supporting women is in Zonta's DNA. To achieve this mission, Zonta's multi-level work is reaching and impacting communities across the globe through global, national and local initiatives, all made possible by its members.

During a virtual Zonta Talk on 15 May, Susanne von Bassewitz, Zonta International and Zonta International Foundation president, spoke about the importance of interpersonal connections and Zonta's unique ability to quickly connect to those in need. "In times when you were really affected, the people who are closest will be the ones who can offer immediate care," Susanne said.

Zonta members are in more than 60 countries, developing and maintaining networks and support systems through local projects and membership. "The clubs are the ones that are able to very quickly respond to needs of women that arise in the community," Susanne said. "Via the meeting platforms that are available, clubs within an area or district can stay connected and conduct business. This makes it a lot easier to respond and offer support to women then in crisis situations."

The Zonta Club of Tuguegarao, Philippines, District 17, created hygiene kits with customized Zonta and COVID flyers to be given to the female Persons Under Monitoring (PUMs) at the Quarantine Facility of Tuguegarao City.

## ZONTA TALKS

**Listen to Zonta Cares: Our Responses to COVID-19**, which featured the initiatives that clubs and districts have been taking to support and extend the work of Zonta's mission.

Additionally, more than 25 clubs shared their personal experiences and ideas for what they are doing within their own communities.

**Click here:**  
[zonta.org/zontatalks](https://zonta.org/zontatalks)





(Left) The Zonta Club of West Hidalgo County, Texas, District 10, made and delivered face masks to local nursing homes and assisted living facilities. (Right) Members of the Zonta Club Waasland, Belgium, District 27, gave 1000 tulips to health care centers.

### ADAPTING TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

Zonta clubs and districts across the globe have been adapting their traditional practices to focus on Zonta's mission and regular business.

The Zonta Club of London, for instance, is one of many that now meets online, which allows members to stay in contact with each other while offering the unexpected benefits of expediting business and not spending money on face-to-face meetings.

After hearing that the number of women who have died due to domestic violence doubled within the U.K. so far during the COVID-19 lockdown, Club President Dianne Jeans reached out to NIA, an organization they have supported in the past, to see how the club could help. NIA provides services to women and girls who have been subjected to sexual and domestic violence, including prostitution and drug abuse.

The organization required extra funding to set up work from home for employees and volunteers, enabling them to better serve the higher volume of traffic. The Zonta Club of London's members agreed to reallocate the cost of the usual face-to-face dinner meeting along with extra donations to the organization, resulting in more than 1,000 pounds collected. With Zonta's support, NIA could provide the women in need with secret phones and vouchers to purchase food and essentials.

To read about how Zonta is addressing COVID-19 within the Let Us Learn Madagascar project, please see the update on page 10.



The Zonta Club of Lome Millénium and the Zonta Club of Lome, Togo, District 18, donated handwashing materials and masks for women.

The MASK-19 initiative is based around the increased concern that women who suffer from domestic violence are now locked in with their abusers and do not have the normal outlets to escape abuse.

### ADOPTING SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES

The Union of German Zonta Clubs also saw the need to respond to the increasing domestic violence caused by the COVID-19 lockdown. A successful campaign from Spain and France inspired the clubs to begin work on a quick response called "MASK-19." This initiative is based around the increased concern that women who suffer from domestic violence are now locked in with their abusers and do not have the normal outlets to escape abuse.

The Union has begun work on a nationally coordinated advocacy plan that gives women the opportunity to contact police in a discreet manner. When a woman enters a pharmacy or doctor's office and says the codeword "MASK-19," the employees know to quickly respond by calling the local authorities. The Union is currently exploring reaching out to national doctor and pharmacist associations to further evaluate and expand the idea.

Many more clubs have shared what they have been doing to meet the needs of the women within their local communities. From manufacturing face masks, sewed by recently out-of-work women, to distributing food packets to migrant workers, the spirit of Zonta endures through its members.



# PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

## *in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia*

In the last two years, Zonta International has contributed US\$4 million to support actions to end child marriage, improve girls' educational opportunities and empower vulnerable and refugee women.

In Phase II, the Global Programme will continue to work in the 12 countries already engaged, to build on what has already been done and to accelerate progress.

### **GLOBAL PROGRAMME TO END CHILD MARRIAGE LAUNCHES PHASE II**

In March 2020, UNFPA and UNICEF kicked off Phase II of the Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which will continue to increase girls' access to education and health care services, focus on skills development, and educate parents and communities on the dangers of child marriage. It will also promote gender equitable attitudes, build partnerships for economic support to families and strengthen and enforce laws that establish 18 as the minimum age of marriage.

"Since its launch [in 2016], the Global Programme has saved millions of girls from unwanted marriage," said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. "Yet we must not forget the 12 million girls who still get married every year, causing irreversible damage to their future, health and well-being."

Worldwide, an estimated 650 million women alive today were married as girls. The Global Programme is working to achieve lasting change on a significant scale by tackling the human rights violation in 12 countries in Africa, the Middle East and South Asia.

**"The Global Programme has saved millions of girls from unwanted marriage," said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore. "Yet we must not forget the 12 million girls who still get married every year..."**

Thanks to the support of partners like Zonta International, who, after supporting the fight in Niger for four years, joined the Global Programme in 2018, more than 7.7 million adolescent girls and more than 4.2 million community members have been reached with information, skills and services since the program began. Zonta is the first private sector donor.



© UNICEF / UNI303892 / RALAVITA

More than 550 girls benefited from catch-up classes before the start of the school year thanks to the Let Us Learn Madagascar program.

### LET US LEARN MADAGASCAR HELPS KEEP GIRLS IN SCHOOL

More than a quarter of Madagascar's children are excluded from formal education, and one out of three girls will become pregnant before the age of 18. Just 65% of schools offer students the minimum resources of a clean toilet, a blackboard, and enough light in the classroom to see the blackboard. UNICEF's Let Us Learn program, which Zonta has supported since 2016, tackles the issue of equity and innovations explicitly addressing girls' education at the post-primary level.

**Just 65% of schools offer students the minimum resources of a clean toilet, a blackboard and enough light in the classroom to see the blackboard.**

Today, a newly built secondary school in the Androy region is filled with brand-new desks, supplies, chalkboards, books and pedagogical posters, which enable students to process information more easily and make learning more efficient. This school would not be there without the support from Zonta International.

Merci, a 15-year-old student in Androy, dreams of becoming a nurse one day. "The posters help me learn, especially in class, because it is easier for us to understand the teachers when there are pictures to look at," she says.

When one of the boys in class asks Merci what she would do if a rich man came to the village and wanted to marry her, Merci declares: "I won't go. I want to keep learning and to help my family."



Girls from the poorest and most marginalized communities in Madagascar will likely feel the spill-over effects of the COVID-19 crisis the most.

### RESPONDING TO COVID-19 IN MADAGASCAR

As of 29 April 2020, 128 confirmed cases of COVID-19 were recorded in Madagascar, where girls from the poorest and most marginalized communities will likely feel the spill-over effects of the crisis the most.

At this time, schools and non-essential services have been shut down to prevent the spread of COVID-19. To support the continuity of education for children in Madagascar who have been affected by school closures due to COVID-19, a portion of Zonta's funding is being redirected. The money will be used as follows:

- US\$100,000 for printing and distributing learning materials to approximately 45,000 children for independent learning while schools remain closed.
- US\$130,212 for a "Back-to-school" campaign targeting all 60,000 primary and lower secondary schools in the country, including catch-up classes for more than 12,200 lower secondary students unable to return to school after they reopen.

These program activities will help UNICEF preserve the gains that have been made for girls through the past several years of the Let Us Learn program. In contexts like Madagascar, where digital learning solutions are less accessible, reading and writing materials can be used to reach the most vulnerable.

To learn more about how Madagascar has been affected, listen to our [Zonta Talk, Zonta Cares: Education Continues in Madagascar](#).



©UN Women, Lauren Rooney

The Eid bi Eid program works to improve Syrian refugee and Jordanian women's access to resources and reduce violence against women.

**HAND IN HAND (EID BI EID)**

Maha Aasi Emm Ala'a, a Syrian refugee, arrived at the Oasis Centre in Jordan's Za'atari refugee camp with severe depression after her husband passed away. Through the program, she received counseling and found tailoring work.

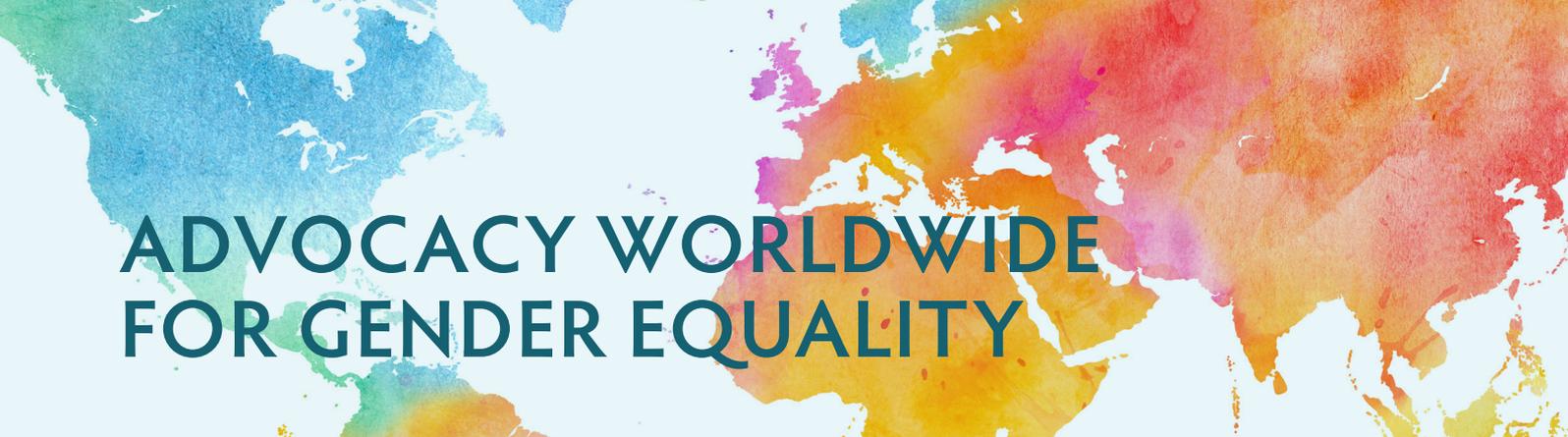
"Not only has the women's Oasis enabled me to provide for my children, it has become my sanctuary," she says. "Surrounded by women of my age who are also overcoming similar situations, we became each other's support system and friends."

Jordan is currently hosting 660,000 Syrian refugees. The UN Women Eid bi Eid (Hand in Hand) program, which Zonta International has supported since 2018, is a multi-year initiative to support the government of Jordan in addressing issues of employment and gender inequality, exacerbated by the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis.

**"Not only has the women's Oasis enabled me to provide for my children, it has become my sanctuary."**

Thanks to Zonta International's generous donors, nearly 3 million adolescent girls were reached with information, skills and services related to ending child marriage, more than 550 girls in Madagascar benefited from conditional cash transfers to enable them to attend school, and 4,753 women and men in Jordan benefited from cash-for-work opportunities.

**To support our programs that empower women like those above, please visit [www.zonta.org/donate](http://www.zonta.org/donate).**



# ADVOCACY WORLDWIDE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

## Beijing+25: Reflections on 25 years of advancements for women and girls

In September 1995, approximately 17,000 participants gathered in Beijing for the Fourth World Conference on Women, and an additional 30,000 activists, representing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from around the world, attended a forum parallel to the official government meetings. Amongst this group of NGOs was a delegation of Zonta members led by then Zonta International President 'Folake Solanke, SAN. Like their peers in the women's movement, Zontians came from all over the world to advocate for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere.

After two weeks of intense debate and consistent advocacy from women's groups, including Zonta International, 189 governments agreed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most historic and progressive plan for advancing women's rights. Commitments were made in 12 critical areas of concern, which have galvanized the work of governments, the UN and NGOs in the years since and resulted in concrete advancements for women and girls. However, 25 years later, the Beijing Platform for Action has not been fully realized. No country has achieved gender equality in all facets of life.

**Like their peers in the women's movement, Zontians came from all over the world to advocate for the empowerment of women and girls everywhere.**

Today, the Platform remains an important guide for the movement for gender equality. Every five years since Beijing, a comprehensive review of the commitments made in Beijing is conducted to ensure that efforts continue to be made and progress is not lost. This year was an especially important year for gender equality advocates and an important milestone in the review process, as it is the 25th Anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the five-year anniversary of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. An assessment of the challenges affecting the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was to be the focus of this year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at UN Headquarters in New York in March.

## No country has achieved gender equality in all facets of life.

Almost 140 Zontians from across the globe planned to be in New York for the CSW to commemorate Beijing+25, review progress made and advocate for the continued advancement of women's rights and gender equality. However, like most meetings and events in 2020, the CSW could not take place as planned due to the global pandemic of COVID-19. The Commission convened for a one-day procedural meeting to adopt the draft Political Declaration, but there was no debate and all side events and parallel events were cancelled, including Zonta International's Child Marriage Symposium, a joint side event with Soroptimist International and three Zonta-sponsored parallel events.

While it was disappointing that the Zonta delegation to the CSW could not meet in New York as intended, Zonta International's voice was still present in discussions around Beijing+25. Pam Perraud of the Zonta Club of Houston, Texas, and Kay Meyer of the Zonta Foothills Club of Boulder, Colorado were both influential in the drafting of the U.S. Women's Caucus to the UN's statement to the CSW. In the absence of the CSW, the U.S. Women's Caucus sent the statement to the U.S. Mission and Congress to alert them to the anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and share the views of the Caucus members. Leslie Wright of the Zonta Club of Brooklyn, New York and Lee Fogarty of the Zonta Club of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania were also on the Editing Committee for the US NGO and Civil Society Parallel Report, and many other Zontians followed and shared news as members of their national delegations to the CSW.

Plans for the 65th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2021 are still uncertain; however, in the meantime, Zontians remain committed to ensuring that women's rights and gender equality remain on the agenda for governments and the UN.

Zontians attend workshops at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995.



# Zontians Recall

Two Zonta members who were in Beijing in 1995 share their reflections on that experience and where the movement for gender equality is today.

“Young and fired up for change, we arrived in Beijing, China. NGOs were in Huairou, in the outskirts of Beijing. There were many workshops, networking, exchanges: there was activism. There was energy in the air. We wanted results, we wanted change, because a new dawn was breaking. We lobbied Government officials to have our concerns included in the Platform for action.

The world stood still and listened to us! We listened to Hillary Clinton affirm that “WOMEN’S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS.” I can still hear her voice (in her pink suit), followed by thunderous applause!

Zonta had a panel discussion “Zonta’s Leadership in the 21st Century.”

Beijing was groundbreaking and we returned home with HOPE. Twenty-five years after, while a lot still remains to be achieved, we can dare to say that we have come a great way.”

**Dunstanette Macauley**

Zonta Club of Lome, Togo



One of 12 critical areas of the Platform for Action in Beijing was “Power and decision-making.”

“We need to battle against gender prejudice. We need pioneers, who show that it is possible for women to become anything. We need to change the attitudes.

25 years after the UN conference on women in Beijing women have gradually achieved higher positions in their society; and, today, we can see more and more women even as Head of Parliament or State. In the Nordic countries, four out of five Prime Ministers are women.

The first female President of Finland, Tarja Halonen (2000–2012), asked a small boy what he wants to be when he grows up. “A policeman or fireman,” he said. “Why not a President,” asks the President.

He stared at her and wondered “Can a boy become President?” That question coming from a small boy is a huge step of achievement towards gender equality.”

**Carita Rönnqvist**

Zonta Club of Jakobstad, Finland

(Top) First Lady of the United States Hillary Clinton addresses the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. (Bottom) Zontians from around the globe attended the conference, including 1994-1996 Zonta International President, 'Folake Solanke, SAN (right).

# Zonta reaffirms commitment to ending child marriage at **The Nairobi Summit** on ICPD25

In 2019, as Zonta International celebrated its centennial anniversary, the gender equality community marked the 25th Anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), where 179 governments adopted a landmark Programme of Action to empower women and girls for their sake and for the benefit of their families, communities and nations.

As the first private sector donor to the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage and a long-time supporter of efforts to prevent maternal deaths and end all forms of gender-based violence, Zonta International was invited to participate in The Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 in November 2019. Past District 18 Governor Anne-Marie French-Cudjoe represented Zonta International at the Summit, convened by the governments of Kenya and Denmark and UNFPA to mobilize political will and secure the necessary financial commitments to achieve zero unmet need for family planning information and services, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

Past District 18 Governor Anne-Marie French-Cudjoe (center) represented Zonta International at The Nairobi Summit in November 2019.

Read [Zonta International's commitment to ending gender-based violence and harmful practices](#), one of the five themes of The Nairobi Summit.



# ZONTA SAYS NO TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

We are creating the awareness that violence in every form or shape has to be stopped.

## Taking a stand against violence by turning the world orange

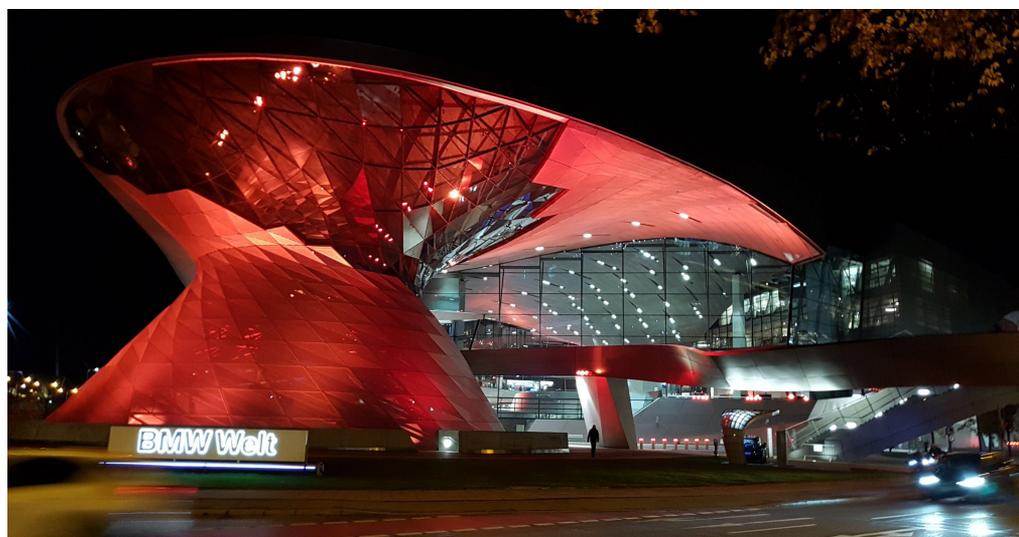
Zonta members around the world unite each year to advocate for ending violence against women during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (25 November–10 December). In 2019, actions and events were once again highly visible as clubs brought global attention to the issue through many initiatives. The most spectacular one was lighting architectural landmarks in orange. Zonta clubs in Australia, Canada, Europe, the U.S., New Zealand and many other countries participated. In Germany alone, 90% of the country's 130 clubs linked the actions to their appeal to end child marriage.

Zonta clubs in other parts of the world took different approaches. In Ghana, where 21% of girls are married before their 18th birthday, the Zonta Club of Tema partnered with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on a joint billboard to bring awareness to child marriage during the 16 Days of Activism.

"We are creating the awareness that violence in every form or shape has to be stopped. Violence affects our development; that is why UNFPA and Zonta are unveiling this billboard," said Selina Owusu, UNFPA Ghana Gender Programmes Analyst.

Now is a great time to start planning your 2020 Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women campaign. Visit [www.zontasaysno.com](http://www.zontasaysno.com) for resources.

District 14 participated in the Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women campaign in Bavaria, Germany.



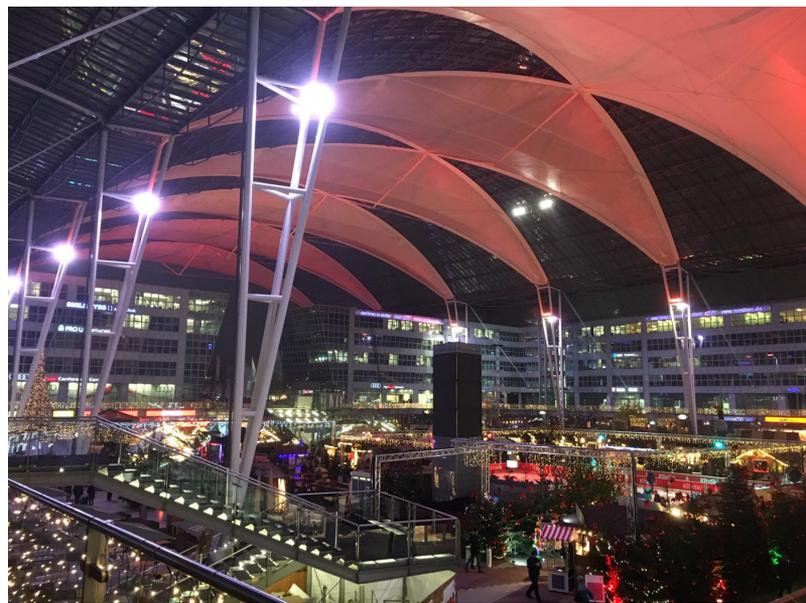
# 9 simple steps to run an “Orange the World” event in your city

By Fiona Ruff, *Co-Chairman of the International Advocacy Committee and Zonta Says No Working Group in the Union of German Zonta Clubs*

## Set up a small committee to ensure focus.

1. Create slides explaining the goal and description of the action and what you need from partners and provide examples of previous events in your town or country.
2. Partner with relevant city/state officials, state agencies and organizations who provide facilities, support, shelter or counseling to women exposed to violence and agree on the specific action to be taken, the precise call to action, etc.
3. If possible, identify and acquire a prominent sponsor or champion who is willing to support and promote the event and leverage their connections to secure further partners and/or financing.
4. Acquire a mix of state and/or religious buildings and landmarks as well as private corporations and institutions that will be lit up in orange.
5. Ask partners to organize and pay for the lighting themselves. If not possible, either generate sponsorship or use alternative lighting options (see right).
6. Print promotional materials such as a flyer, poster, postcard, etc. to advertise the event and post on your club’s homepage and social media.
7. Issue a well-formulated press release and contact the press directly, leveraging all partners’ connections to the media.
8. Take good, quality photos and post on all social media.
9. After the event, send a thank you note with the results and photos to all partners and ask for their support next year.

(Top) Members of the Zonta Clubs of Frankfurt Main and Frankfurt II Rhein-Main, Germany spread awareness of the Zonta Says NO campaign through orange lighting, scarves and umbrellas. (Bottom) The Munich Airport was lit orange as part of the Orange the World campaign to end violence against women.



## Low Cost Lighting Options for Buildings:

- Buildings with modern LED external lighting systems can be easily programmed to orange.
- High-quality transparent orange film (must be heat-resistant) can be purchased at a low cost to cover existing LED lighting.
- If no exterior lighting exists, interior lighting can be used so orange light shines out of the building. Either cover the windows in orange crêpe paper or cover the light bulbs inside with an orange transparent film.

# Zonta and UNICEF USA launch ending child marriage billboard campaign in the US



Consequences of early marriage include an early end to education, poverty, higher risk pregnancies, increased risk of domestic violence, higher divorce rates and more.

The Zonta USA Caucus has partnered with UNICEF USA to initiate a national Public Service Announcement billboard campaign to stop child marriage in the United States.

Only four states in the United States—Delaware, Minnesota, New Jersey and Pennsylvania—have prohibited marriage before the age of 18 with no exceptions. Approximately 248,000 children were married in the U.S. between 2000 and 2010.

Until every state enacts legislation to protect children, particularly young girls, from child, early and forced marriage, thousands of children in the U.S. are at risk of missing out on the chance to be a child. Consequences of early marriage include an early end to education, poverty, higher risk pregnancies, increased risk of domestic violence, higher divorce rates and more.

The Zonta USA Caucus has initiated a national Public Service Announcement billboard campaign to stop child marriages in the United States and invited UNICEF USA as our partner. The campaign has launched and is expected to roll out across the 46 states that allow child marriage over the next 12 months.

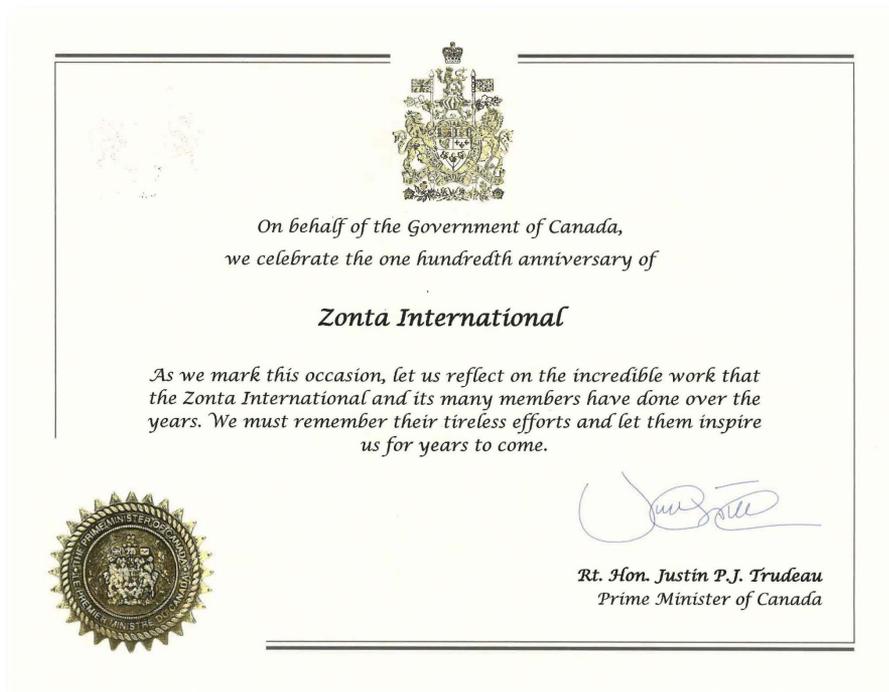
The billboards direct people to [stopchildmarriages.org](https://stopchildmarriages.org), which provides facts about child marriage in the United States and allows users to call on their state representative and state senator to support legislation to end child marriage with zero exceptions in their state.

The Zonta USA Caucus and UNICEF USA are ideal partners. Both are members of the National Coalition to End Child Marriage, and their national efforts build off Zonta International's support to end child marriage globally through the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage.

# Centennial Events



The Centennial Anniversary was a good opportunity for Zonta to expand and strengthen our network of like-minded individuals and organizations by presenting some of them with a special prize.



Congratulatory note from Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau.



History-conscious Zonta Club of Bendigo reenacts famous Zontian photo of the original Founders.



8 November beach sunrise with the Zonta Club of Whakatane, New Zealand.



The Hamburg, Germany mayor addresses audience of more than 400 where several dressed in centennial teal.



Houston, Texas City Hall lit up in Zonta International centennial teal.



The Zonta Club of Freetown, Sierra Leone unveils their billboard featuring the work of the club and the Zonta International Centennial Anniversary.

# Recognizing the Empowerment of Women



As part of our centennial celebration, Zonta International honored like-minded individuals and organizations who significantly contribute to the empowerment of women. These awards were presented at the district, country and club levels.

## District Centennial Recognition Awards

Districts recognized and honored outstanding individuals and organizations, living or working within the district, who demonstrated outstanding commitment to empowering women.

**Marian T. Ryan** and **Miia Suokonautio** from District 1  
**Ellie von Wellsheim** from District 2  
**Denise Britton** from District 3  
**Susan Evans, Mary Travers Murphy** and **Timea Nagy** from District 4  
**Sarah Frank, Gretchen Hunt** and **Margaret Mitchell** from District 5  
**Reclaim 13, Sojourner Family Peace Center, Fontabella Maternity Home, Support the Girls,** and **Hoekstra Transportation** from District 6  
**Abby Honold** from District 7  
**Girl Scouts/Girl Guides** and **Girls Build** from District 8  
**Renae Hamilton-Cambeilh** from District 9  
**Faith House** from District 10  
**Marion Bethel** from District 11  
**Dr. Rae Fleming Dineen** from District 12

**Ulla Toernaes** and **Inga Laukyte-Budriene** from District 13  
**Dr. Ingeborg Geyer** from District 14  
**Michelle Schryer** and **Jane Penton White** from District 15  
**Professor Marilyn Waring** from District 16  
**Dr. Carmen Valdez** from District 17  
**Patricia Beltran** from Region South America  
**Raija Sollamo** from District 20  
**Katarina Carroll** from District 21  
**Natasha Stott-Despoja, AO** from District 23  
**Carol Hardy** from District 24  
**Razia Sultana** from District 25  
**Flying Wheelchair Research Group** from District 26  
**Serap Cileli** from District 28  
**Fabiola Gianotti** and **Ivonne Kniebiehler** from District 30  
**Ellen Huang** from District 31  
**Young-Shil Kang** from District 32



Marian T. Ryan, District Attorney of Middlesex County, MA, USA, pictured here with Governor Liz Hart and previous Governor Joanne Puopolo, was awarded the District 1 Centennial Award.



Shalom House Executive Director Denise Britton (left) attended District 3's centennial celebration hosted by the Zonta Club of Harrisburg-Hershey and was presented the District 3 Centennial Award by Governor Joanne Gallos (right).

## Country Centennial Recognition Awards

The Zonta International country awards recognized an individual or organization within each Zonta country that demonstrates outstanding commitment to empowering women through service and advocacy.\*

Australia .....	Julia Gillard
Austria .....	Shifteh Hashemi-Gerdehi
Bulgaria .....	Reneta Indzhova
Canada.....	Dr. Beverly Jacobs
Cyprus.....	Anastasia Papadopoulos
England.....	Lesley Abdela
France.....	Ghada Hatem-Gantzer
Germany .....	Dr. Monika Hauser
Hong Kong.....	Dr. Margaret Wai-Ling Chung
India .....	Dr. Kriti Bharti
Italy.....	Prof. Amalia Ercoli Finzi
Lebanon.....	Ghida Anani
Lithuania .....	Nijole Dirginciene
Luxembourg.....	Maria Teresa, Grand Duchess of Luxembourg
Macau.....	Cradle of Hope Association
Mongolia .....	Continental Hotel
Nepal .....	Bandana Rana
Philippines .....	Dr. Amelita Dayrit Go
Republic of China (Taiwan) .....	Professor Su-Jan Lin
Romania.....	Daniela Palade Teodorescu
Singapore.....	Elim Chew
Sri Lanka.....	Deborah Edirisinghe
Switzerland.....	Doris Leuthard (Liechtenstein)
Thailand.....	Aunumpai Passakchai (Khun Nun)
Turkey .....	Prof. Dilek Funda Kurtulus
Uruguay.....	CEPRODIH (Center of Promotion for Human Dignity)
USA.....	Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg

*\*Many districts chose to combine country and district awards.  
Awardee names were not duplicated.*

## Club Centennial Community Awards

Many clubs recognized and honored outstanding individuals, businesses and organizations who had a proven record of empowering women within their community.

To learn more about recipients of the club award and the honorees above, please read the submitted stories on [www.zonta100.org](http://www.zonta100.org).



Faith House, a nonsectarian domestic violence crisis center and shelter based in Lafayette, Louisiana, USA, was chosen as District 10's Centennial Awardee.



Raija Sollamo (center), president of the Finnish Federation of Graduate Women, Vantaa Branch, was chosen as the District 20 Centennial Award winner. Her association was also chosen as one of the Centennial Anniversary Grantees.



Natasha Stott Despoja, AO, who has served in Australian parliament and has been an active advocate for women's rights, was presented the District 23 Centennial Award by Governor Jane Adornetto (left) at the Area 2 Centenary Celebration in Adelaide, South Australia.

# Stories of Community Impact: *Zonta Centennial Anniversary Grantees make a difference for women and girls*

In honor of Zonta's centennial anniversary in 2019, Zonta International awarded one-time grants of up to US\$5,000 each to recognized charitable organizations. Each grant was dedicated to improve the lives of women and girls in the local community.

A total of US\$296,271 was disbursed to 62 organizations in 18 countries, partnering with a Zonta club. Following are stories of impact from three of our Zonta International Centennial Anniversary Grantees.

## **A HEALING ENVIRONMENT**

This year alone, 70 to 90 women and children will find refuge in five refurbished bedrooms, one newly created bedroom and gathering spaces in a shelter for survivors of domestic violence. This is the impact of the US\$4,110 that Hope Shores Alliance in Michigan received through the initiative of the Zonta Club of Alpena-Tri County Area. Hope Shores Alliance is a multi-service agency that supports women and children in four rural counties of Michigan. The grant went to their project "Creating Trauma-Informed Spaces to Empower and Educate Women and Children for a Better Tomorrow."

The team reported, "The immediate impact to the wellbeing and overall energy in the shelter has been so very positive. While we did anticipate that outcome, we didn't realize how quickly the residents would notice and comment on the shift in feeling as though they were in a healing environment."

The Zonta Club of Alpena-Tri County Area, Michigan, District 15, partnered with Hope Shores Alliance to refurbish rooms in a domestic violence shelter.





The Cameleon Association was awarded a Centennial Anniversary Grant, which they used to provide training and support for survivors of sexual abuse.

### **IT TRAININGS FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

The US\$5,000 grant from Zonta International bought laptops, desktops, an overhead projector with LCD printer and other equipment for “IT Trainings and Values for 40 Girl Survivors of Sexual Abuse.” Participants completed a 30-hour skills enhancement training in IT and received Certificates of Participation and Completion. This service was provided by Cameleon Association Inc., an organization that has developed a holistic approach to responding to the causes and effects of sexual violence towards children and teenagers in the Philippines. They protect and support victims of sexual violence by accompanying them and their families on the path to resilience. They encourage beneficiaries’ autonomy and the socio-economic development of families in their communities. Their training project was made possible through a partnership with the Zonta Club of Makati-Ayala.

It is important to note that the trainings also contributed to the mental and social well-being of the girls. As the motivation and interest of the girls increased, their participation also improved as shown in their attendance and outcomes. Equally important, the IT trainings provided an opportunity for the girls to develop positive values as they were encouraged to enjoy and use their imagination. With the supervision of the staff, this activity provided a venue to improve their collaboration, teamwork, discipline and positive peer interaction.

“This training helped me to be more patient. Learning new skills is not easy but at the same time very challenging. Now, I am more confident to help my classmates and fellow girls when they need assistance. I am thankful for this opportunity,” said Angel, one of the training participants.



The Centre for Handicapped in Sri Lanka provided artificial limbs to women and girls through a grant from Zonta International.

### REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES

With the grant from Zonta International, the Centre for Handicapped in Sri Lanka provided 25 women and girls with below the knee artificial limbs, four women and girls with above the knee artificial limbs and two women with below the elbow artificial limbs. This enables them to live a full and productive life.

The Zonta Club of Kandy supported the application that was awarded with a grant of US\$4,400.

One of the beneficiaries, a 46-year-old mother of two and housemaid, shared her story. “My husband and I were having an argument which turned into a fight and he attacked me, due to this I was severely injured, I was taken to the Colombo General Hospital by the family members. The doctors who examined me said that my leg was severely damaged and in order to save my life, the left leg had to be amputated from below the knee. I underwent surgery and had to stay at the Hospital for nearly two months till I recovered fully.

While at home I came to know about the Centre for Handicapped through a friend and I visited the centre. After having explained my present financial situation to the officials at the centre they said an artificial limb could be fitted free of charge as they had a donor who was sponsoring the limb. Accordingly, they referred me for the necessary measurements and fitted an artificial limb.

I don't feel disabled anymore. I attend to all my work as I did previously. I take this opportunity to thank the Zonta Club of Kandy and also the staff at the Centre for Handicapped for their kindness and all the efforts taken by them to help me walk again.”

See a full list of the grantees on our website at [www.zonta.org/web/Programs/Mission\\_in\\_Action/Centennial\\_Anniversary\\_Grants](http://www.zonta.org/web/Programs/Mission_in_Action/Centennial_Anniversary_Grants).

# Fundraising to celebrate our Centennial Anniversary



Mary E. Jenkins

The Centennial Anniversary Biennium has seen some special campaigns in support of the Zonta International Foundation.

As one of our biennial goals, members were encouraged to join the Mary E. Jenkins 1919 Society. Named in honor of Zonta International's first president, the Mary E. Jenkins 1919 Society is comprised of individuals who are supporting the Zonta International Foundation through a planned gift. This opportunity to donate ensures the future of the Zonta International Foundation and its life changing programs without giving a large outright gift. As of 31 March 2020, there are 29 new members of this society, which now counts altogether 103 members. As we communicate more about this option to leave a legacy, [we hope to see more Zontians sign up for membership in this special circle.](#)

On 8 November, as a highlight of the centennial anniversary celebrations, the Foundation brought together the world of Zonta and its friends for a special campaign to raise US\$100,000. The event started at midnight in New Zealand and ended at midnight in Hawaii, thus spanning the globe for altogether 47 hours. Members and supporters were invited to give US\$100 to honor our visionary founders. Together, Zontians exceeded the goal and raised US\$135,250. The Foundation received donations from 742 donors representing all 32 districts and regions.

Thank you to all our members, clubs and districts for the generous donations. Through May 2020, we have raised US\$4,575,655, which represents 92% toward the US\$5 million biennial fundraising goal.



## THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

The Centennial Anniversary Endowment Campaign will conclude at the end of this biennium. The Campaign encouraged members and friends to grow the Endowment Fund to ensure that Zonta International will have a solid base of resources going forward. As of May 2020, more than 2,400 members, clubs, districts, and friends have made commitments totaling more than US\$3.6 million.

## ACTION FOR SERVICE... FRIENDSHIP FOR PEACE



This biennium, Zonta honored the legacy of Past International President Cornelia Hodges (1982–1984) and her work of establishing the Zonta International Foundation, through the Centennial Anniversary Endowment Campaign. This campaign ensures that our mission continues by building a solid base of financial resources that can be used for Zonta's projects and programs. The Foundation was started after more than US\$500,000 was raised for one of Zonta's most successful projects, the Sri Lanka well-water project with UNICEF. Sadly, Cornelia passed on 22 November 2019 at the age of 95. Her passion and inspiration live on through the Foundation and the support of Zonta's members.

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY  
ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

BELIEVE • INVEST  
EMPOWER



Children use a pump provided by the Sri Lanka well water project, a program that spurred the creation of the Zonta International Foundation.

“One of our friends aged 13–14 was about to get married, but we did not let it happen. We talked to the parents of the girl about the harmful effects of the child marriage. We got the support from our teachers and the principal and even the police to stop it from happening.”

Focus-group Discussion with Junior Champions, Dhanusha, Nepal  
As part of the Global Programme to End Child Marriage

Girls and communities are becoming more empowered each day to end child marriage.

To give opportunities to women and girls worldwide, please join our members from around the globe in supporting projects and programs that empower women. [DONATE](#)



# Two Awards for Meritorious Service

*Beryl McMillan, Centennial Anniversary Committee chairman, contributed to this article*

The Centennial Anniversary Biennium has been a time to empower women in communities across the world. It has also been a time to reflect upon the work and service of Zonta's leaders and honor the contributions that have been made.

The Zonta International Board has chosen to recognize the service of two members who have exemplified the spirit of Zonta: Val Sarah, 1998–2000 International President, and Eva Nielsen, 2014–2016 District 13 Governor, both of whom are members of the Centennial Anniversary Committee.

For many years of leading and executing work through her ongoing international leadership roles, and for their extensive work and priceless contributions to the legacy of Zonta through the compilation of the Zonta International history, Val and Eva respectively, have been chosen for the Zonta International Meritorious Service Award.

The Meritorious Service Award is a prestigious award given in recognition of exceptional service performed at the international level, including outstanding Zonta leadership; remarkable, successful efforts in membership, service, PR or other Zonta activities; and activities which have created a legacy for the organization which has resulted in other unspecified areas.



## Val Sarah

After joining Zonta as a charter president of the Zonta Club of Ballarat in 1978, Val has continued to hold leadership roles in Zonta at the international level in almost every biennium since 1982, while simultaneously holding club and district roles and maintaining active club membership.

Val's passion for Zonta and its history was exemplified when she commissioned and contributed to 'A History of Zonta International 1919-1999' published in 2000, the concluding year of her biennium as International President.

With a vision to produce a comprehensive history for the centennial anniversary, International President Dianne Curtis established the Centennial Anniversary Committee in 2010, appointing Val to lead this extensive decade-long project. Val involved clubs and districts, through their archivists and historians, in organizing their records and documenting or updating their histories for use in the production of '100 Years of Zonta International' authored by Eva Nielsen.

Its publication earlier this year has made this the perfect time to acknowledge and celebrate Val's extensive contribution to our history.

"Those who have had the privilege of working with Val have also learnt much from her," writes Beryl McMillan who has worked alongside Val for many years. "She willingly shares her extensive knowledge and understanding of Zonta's history. She remembers details of people and conversations. In an exchange with Val, she concentrates solely on the person she is with. She gives advice and makes suggestions in a warm and respectful manner. She has the capacity to bring out the best in people."



## Eva Nielsen

Eva studied at the Universities of Edinburgh and Copenhagen, and finished with a Master's degree in History with a thesis on the early Danish Women's Rights Movement. Her research was awarded with the Gold Medal of the University of Copenhagen in 1963. She taught history and was principal at Aabenraa Statsskole, an academic upper secondary school, from 1975-2001. In 1987, she received a royal decoration as Knight of Dannebrog (R) from HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark.

In 1996, Eva joined Zonta and, since 2009, has been writing Zonta's history. She first wrote the history of the Danish Zonta clubs to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Zonta Club of Copenhagen and soon after finished the complete history of District 13.

In 2014, recognizing a need to record the history of Zonta's first century not only to preserve the past, but serve the future, Eva set to work.

"Eva's work is unique in its attention to detail and accuracy, and it would be difficult if not impossible to find another member of Zonta who would have dedicated so much time and emotional effort to accomplish the task," wrote Val Sarah in regards to Eva's work on compiling the complete Zonta history. "She would be the first to admit that she has enjoyed support, but the sheer volume of work has been staggering and complex, involving communication with all Zonta's districts, old and new, all with different levels of archival collection and storage."

For the better part of a decade, Eva worked alongside knowledgeable and dedicated Zontians around the world in researching and compiling complete histories of a district or a geographical region. This work was incorporated in the more than 80 chapters of complete Zonta history and appendices that are now free for all of Zonta and the rest of the world to read and use.

Val and Eva's outstanding contributions have given all members of Zonta International a legacy of leadership that will live on.

(Left) Val Sarah (left) stands with her fellow past international presidents at the Nice Convention in 2016. (Right) Eva Nielsen (bottom row, second from left) joins her fellow Zontians for dinner at the Monaco Yacht Club at the 2016 Convention in Nice, France.

Please see the complete work of Eva Nielsen at  
<https://zonta100.org/celebrate/our-history/100-years-of-zi/>

# CHANGING THE WORLD— WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY

This biennium, Zonta International launched a pilot program to encourage women to pursue education, career opportunities and leadership roles in technology. More than US\$100,000 was awarded to 30 recipients through Women in Technology scholarships.

Two recipients of the Women in Technology Scholarships, Lucy Pei and Giorgia Di Tommaso, recently shared what this scholarship means to them while also giving some insights into the world of technology.



The Zonta Women in Technology Scholarship was the first award **Lucy Pei** won in her graduate career. She felt honored that she was able to connect in with Zonta, but also felt that there was recognition of her research path.

Lucy's work in technology is focused on researching the growing influence of digital technology. As an undergraduate, she saw that technical innovation was being focused on high-profit areas like entertainment and warfare and that the uneven distribution of technology was exacerbating existing social inequalities. She became involved in projects that sought to use technology to mitigate social inequalities and promote

education and opportunities for social mobility.

"As I continued to work on these projects and saw the longer term impacts of technology-for-good projects on the underserved communities they sought to help, I realized there needed to be more research that would delicately critique this area of well-intentioned initiatives," Lucy said. "Such critique is necessary, not to undercut the good work that is being done, but to evaluate how underlying assumptions and ethical frameworks may still reproduce inequities that the projects are trying to address."

Lucy also sees opportunity for the future of the world of technology.

"Technical work is prestigious and difficult; it requires sacrifices, and it's doubly difficult for women to make it in the world of tech. Women pursuing a career in tech should always remember to care for themselves, and for other women aspiring to work in tech," Lucy

said. "Equally we should care for the people who will be impacted by the digital products we make, and for the people who don't have access to technology or the opportunity to learn about technology."

To read Giorgia and Lucy's full interviews, please visit [www.zonta.org/news](http://www.zonta.org/news).

**Giorgia Di Tommaso**, another recipient of the Women in Technology Scholarship, also was drawn to the technology that surrounds us when she began her education in computer science. "I liked the idea of the power that gives computer science: you can create anything you imagine, computers are pervasive in every field of our daily life," Giorgia said. But she also set out to bring down a barrier.



"I wanted to break the false stereotype that computer science is not suitable for girls," Giorgia said. During the first years of her education, it was hard for her to understand a new subject and live in a "males" world. She knew it was not going to be easy as she was not only in a field dominated by men, but computer science is known to have a high dropout rate.

Giorgia recently completed her Ph.D. at the Sapienza University of Rome, where her research was focused on data and web science, particularly on semantics-aware

recommender systems. She has the following advice for young women looking to pursue a career in technology:

"Keep in mind that the stereotype that computer programming is boring and only for men is wrong," Giorgia said. "Coding, for example, often requires more inventiveness and problem-solving ability than technical ability... [and] the ability to work in teams and to be creative, areas in which women are very skilled."

(Left) Lucy Pei, 2020 Women in Technology scholar (left), has researched the growing influence and long-term impacts of technology. (Right) Giorgia Di Tommaso, 2020 Women in Technology scholar, entered the field of computer science wanting to break down barriers.



# TWO STORIES OF MEMBERSHIP



## Shontaye Abegaz, Zonta International individual member

“I feared I would never be able to truly connect to a club at the local level,” Shontaye Abegaz, Zonta International individual member said. “I believe Zonta International is blazing the trail with options that perfectly fit not only my lifestyle, but [the lifestyle of] other women who balance their lives between two or more countries.”

Shontaye Abegaz lives in the U.S. and had been interested in Zonta International’s work and global contributions to empowering women for some time. Only, she could not find the opening within her schedule to dedicate to club life. Becoming an individual member was the solution.

Zonta International has begun offering this new membership opportunity that allows people with very busy lives to stay on top of women’s issues and to connect occasionally with other members, at events or via email. The membership also is an option for when getting to club meetings is no longer logistically possible.



## Maxilyn Tudman, Zonta International individual member

Maxilyn Tudman of New Zealand is a long-standing member of Zonta and has served in a variety of leadership roles from club president to governor. While she moved away from where her club physically meets, her passion still resided close to the mission.

“In my time as a Zontian, I have been to nearly all district conferences and area days and attended eight international conventions,” Maxilyn said. “I have made many friends through Zonta around the world. As a longtime member of Zonta International, I am passionate about the projects and awards Zonta undertakes to improve the lives of women worldwide.”

“Individual membership gives me the opportunity to participate by invitation in district and club events, and also any international events.” Maxilyn said. “I love the fact I still receive the Zonta information by way of emails and particularly *The Zontian* magazine.”

Maxilyn believes that members who, for whatever reason, prefer to leave their club, should explore the opportunity of an individual membership, so they can still feel part of Zonta’s story, feel comfortable to speak up for gender equality and contribute to projects.

To learn more about individual membership and all member membership opportunities, please visit [www.zonta.org/Join](http://www.zonta.org/Join).

# Get Social



Zonta International Official Group



@ZontaIntl



Zonta International



Zontiantl



Zonta International



**ZONTA**  
INTERNATIONAL  
EMPOWERING WOMEN  
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY



## WELCOME TO THE ZONTA INTERNATIONAL FAMILY!

### ZONTA CLUBS

#### Am Taunus

District 28, Area 02

#### e-Club of Germany

District 27, Area 03

#### e-Club of Switzerland 1

District 28, Area 04

#### Muar

District 17, Area 02

#### Sipoo-Sibbo

District 20, Area 05

#### South Bay

District 09, Area 04

### Z CLUBS

#### Munich

District 14, Area 03

#### BHC Educational Institution

District 17, Area 04

#### Geographe Bay

District 23, Area 03

#### Cedars

District 14, Area 04

#### Jamestown Blue

District 07, Area 01

#### Hawken School

District 05, Area 03

#### Estero High School

District 11, Area 06

#### Saint Sofia Next Generation

District 30, Area 05

### GOLDEN Z CLUBS

#### Khon Kaen Vocational College

District 17, Area 06

#### NPUST

District 31, Area 02

#### Penn State

#### Harrisburg

District 03, Area 03

#### Utica College

District 02, Area 02

#### Muskingum University

District 05, Area 04

#### Griffith University Gold Coast

District 22, Area 03

#### Bad Gleichenberg

District 14, Area 01