

## Take-Backs from Nassau County, NY Global Women's Peace Network Conference

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Recently I have been getting more involved with Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP). WFWP is truly relevant to this time in history where women are stepping up in STEM, politics, entertainment, and business. This progress for women would not be possible without the support and encouragement from societies and organizations such as this.

One of WFWP's most noteworthy projects that I admire is the Schools of Africa project, from which over 15,000 students have graduated so far. This project financially supports 9 schools founded by WFWP volunteers in the regions of Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and many more.

WFWP has also been developing their Global Women's Peace Network project. This past November 11-12, 2018, I had the opportunity to attend the Global Women's Peace Network conference in Nassau County, NY, with the theme "Women as the Turning Point for Peace." Here are my few take-backs from the conference I attended:

### **Your present situation is not your final destination**

Ms. Audra Hajj, CEO of Phoenix Business Cycle, talked about her childhood experience of being in 32 foster homes before the age of 10, and all she aimed for was to look at her future with brightness instead of focusing on the dark tunnel of what her past had presented to her. She saw the need for a workforce support system for Veterans, and now has a non-profit called Veteran Business Builder Program. This program provides the step by step process for Veterans to utilize their specialized skills to become effective business owners.

## **#PeaceBeginsWithMe**

### **It's not about what you know, but what you choose to do with your knowledge**

We have to participate in having a heart of giving. Ms. Astrid Fidelia, Founder of Stand up To Poverty made me realize how challenging it is to bring peace to those who live in poverty, and our role in impacting others with a heart of giving. I quote Jeff Weiner CEO of LinkedIn, "Sometimes they don't just need handouts, they also need a hand." In addition to offering daily essential needs to those less fortunate, consider the impact of providing an opportunity, respect, and a real helping hand of love. While someone who is homeless certainly would benefit from being given a sandwich, imagine the difference you can make by sharing a smile, conversation, or setting up a job interview for them to break their current cycle.

## **#HandNotJustHandouts**

### **Your actions speak louder than words**

The unique part of this Global Women's Peace Network Conference is that we weren't there to just listen and learn, but we became stakeholders. Each table of conference participants and speakers were asked to brainstorm a project proposal for the future of the Global Women's Peace Network. This activity set the stage in bringing the underlying purpose of the GWPN into reality: Women leaders with various backgrounds and expertise, utilizing our strengths in a combined effort to make real change in the community and world. We were able to turn our thoughts into an actionable projects, ranging from topics such as eliminating poverty, promoting family values in the next generation, empowering women to use their feminine leadership abilities, and much more. Stay tuned to find out how these projects come to life!

## **#WhatICanDo**

I still have Bob Marley's lyrics in my head, as we all sang it together at the conference: "One love, one heart, let's get together and Feel Alright!"