



Mission

W3's mission is to remove language, social, cultural, academic, and financial barriers that foreign born adult women experience in the U.S. This mission helps instill an environment of connections that creates a base of support to provide opportunities for women to overcome difficulties and therefore achieve their lifelong professional and personal goals.

Values

To create a culture that includes our core values: Compassion, Academic Success, Respect and Empathy (CARE).

A Message from the Board Chair

It is my privilege to offer you another edition of CARE, the official publication of Women Walking West. It is my goal to keep you informed about our activities, progress and accomplishments as we expand the organization to serve more women achieving their educational goals.

First and foremost, I am pleased that after the inception of Women Walking West in June 2015, we have provided educational opportunities and support for almost 100 women from 34 different countries. This is a remarkable achievement for a new non-profit organization. We would not have been able to accomplish such a milestone if we were not surrounded by many dedicated volunteers who deeply believe in the vision and mission of Women Walking West.

Secondly, I am pleased to announce Women Walking West's first office location which will be on the campus of Sinclair College in Mason, Ohio, effective July 1, 2019. We are most grateful to Sinclair's leadership for believing in our mission and goals. Having a physical location will allow us to expand our services and support more women as they enter higher education and become successful citizens.



Dr. George Sehi, Board Chair

Another piece of exciting news is the announcement of our Second Annual Gala which will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2019 at the Manor House in Mason, Ohio. I am inviting you to attend the gala to see first-hand how Women Walking West is changing the lives of so many women in the tri-state region and beyond. We have a pressing need to improve the education levels of the women we serve. We must find new, creative and effective ways of penetrating the region and reaching out to more women who are the future workforce in our country. If we don't assist our target population, whom are mainly naturalized American citizens or permanent residents, we will face the harsh reality of having a segment of our society not being as educated as they should, and that would be a real tragedy.

As we start the 5th year of our existence, I would like to express my heartfelt and sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors, volunteer staff, donors and mentors for their unwavering support and commitment to help grow Women Walking West and to assist foreign born women in achieving their educational dreams, *one woman at a time*.

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W3 Newsletter

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Caring Community Partner

GMI Sees Supporting W3 as Win-Win-Win

The GMI-Women Walking West (W3) relationship started when Dr. Sehi spearheaded opening a Sinclair College Campus in Warren County. “We supported that idea,” says George Leasure, GMI co-founder and Chairman, “because there were people in this area who wanted to attend UC, Miami or Sinclair in Dayton for whom the distance was a barrier. Having Sinclair here solved their transportation issues, and it allowed them to advance their education and still work and/or take care of their families.”

Dr. Sehi sought George Leasure’s involvement again when he was starting W3. “We immediately felt it was a worthwhile effort,” says George. “Our purpose is service to our customers, employees, and the community. By donating to W3, we are serving the community in a big-picture way, and if some of these talented, resilient women decide to stay in fast-growing Warren County and make careers here, our support will contribute to the local community as well.”

At GMI, Diversity Adds Perspective

GMI is made up of people of a wide variety of races and heritages, and about half of the company’s employees are women. A result of that diversity is teamwork.



*George L. Leasure,
Co-Founder and
Chairman,
GMI Companies*



*G. Mark Leasure, CEO,
GMI Companies*

“Our culture is accepting and inclusive,” says Mark Leasure, CEO. “People are only judged on their ability to be part of the team. We welcome anyone willing and able to do the job who can embrace that mindset.” Mark sees having a lot of women in the company as an advantage. “I have had more female direct reports than male, and I think a mix of people provides a broader perspective to solving problems.” He finds it surprising that woman are not as highly-valued in the workplace in some countries as they are here. “We know for a fact that women bring many talents and skills. Employers who don’t take advantage of that are missing out. Today there is a battle for talent, and the women W3 helps have so much to offer,” Mark adds. “They have overcome many obstacles just to get to the United States, let alone pursue an education.” Mark gives an example of a woman who spoke at a recent W3 luncheon: “She was trained as a doctor, but could not practice in her home country because she was female. She came to the US, got more certification, and is successfully practicing medicine here. These women are immigrating legally. They are not asking for a handout. They are looking for an opportunity to show what they can do.”

George added that they met another woman who was from Nigeria, learned English, went to UC, graduated, and is starting her career. “What she had to overcome on that journey was remarkable,” he says. “By helping these women, W3 helps everyone win including immigrants, their employers, and their communities.”

GMI is a growing, family-owned manufacturer of visual communication products, which began operations in 1976. Core values which dovetail with W3’s include: Doing the Right Thing, Being Caring and Compassionate, Driving and Embracing Change, and Promoting Teamwork.



Mentor Ryan Bowman

I was born and raised in the Greater Cincinnati area where my family is still firmly rooted. Education is something that has always been important to my parents, and that was instilled in me at a very early age. As the first person on either side of my family to attend college, I know better than anyone how important an education is. Over the years, my eyes have been opened about accessibility to education and how some folks have distinct advantages over others when it comes to getting an education. I have had the pleasure and great fortune of having some amazing mentors in my life – which I did not gain a true appreciation for until adulthood. This is why Women Walking West and the work they are doing is so important to me. Helping others along their educational journey is something I am very passionate about.

Women Walking West was first introduced to me by Dr. George Sehi when I started working in Mason, Ohio and became involved in the community. I was simply blown away by his passion and energy behind Women Walking West. As we talked more and more and saw each other more frequently, I was inspired to get involved in W3 as a mentor. Since my background is in Finance, I was paired with two mentors who are currently studying Accounting and Finance – Judith and Laurette.

My mentee's, Judith and Laurette are both amazing people and are both incredibly driven to succeed academically and professionally. Judith is the mother of a beautiful little girl and her husband is currently working on his doctorate degree. She currently attends Cincinnati State and studies accounting with the goal of eventually being an accountant. Laurette is equally talented and driven to succeed. Laurette is currently studying Finance at Cincinnati State and was recently awarded The President's Up-Lift Award for Community Involvement. Laurette has also won several other awards and scholarships through her academic and professional ventures. These two talented women inspire me every single time we chat on the phone, text, or meet up in person. I can only hope they get as much inspiration from me as I get from them. We have had great discussions ranging from fun things to do in Cincinnati to deep conversations about interview scenarios and different career paths that are available for them to pursue. We have even talked about TV and radio shows about accounting and finance that we enjoy. My experience as a mentor has been nothing short of incredible. I am simply grateful to play a small role in Women Walking West.



Mentor Ryan Bowman with his mentee, Judith.

Advancing Education for Women:

SECOND ANNUAL

Gala
SAVE THE
DATE...

Thursday, Nov. 14, 2019
6 - 9 p.m.

**Manor House
Banquet & Conference Center**
7440 Mason Montgomery Rd.
Mason, OH 45040

Visit our website at:
womenwalkingwest.org
for more information.

Easy Ways to Support W3

1. AMAZON

At www.smile.amazon.com select Women Walking West as the organization that you support next time you shop.

2. KROGER

Designate Women Walking West as your Kroger rewards organization. Sign in to your Kroger account (or create an account with your plus card at: krogercommunityrewards.com). Select our organization by using W3 ID #DX899. Then, every time you use your plus card, a portion of your purchase will come back to W3, without affecting your plus card points!

W3 Board

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*Shannon Isom, President/
CEO YWCA, Dayton*

Featured Board Member Shannon Isom

Women Walking West (W3) is important to me for many reasons. The first is the most obvious to what I breathe and how I live. The elimination of racism and the empowerment of women is of utmost importance in providing justice, freedom and peace. The education of women is imperative to these means and ensuring

all women have access, parity and support to mitigate historical systems has to be intentionally addressed. Another reason is that W3 provides a safe haven for immigrant women as they navigate the micro-social issues that may compromise their success in the macro-goal of full education engagement.

I choose to be a part of the Women Walking West board because it is worth every moment to lay foundations that provide women access to their own agency and to our next generation of leadership. This board intentionally convenes voices, ethnic and racial diversity that solves, speaks and advocates on behalf of women – in and benefiting from education. W3 allows me to align my service to my belief. As the President/CEO of YWCA Dayton, I am able to focus on these beliefs at work as well as through the W3 board.

YWCA Dayton was founded in 1870 and is the oldest social services agency serving women in Montgomery and Preble counties in Ohio. YWCA's mission is to eliminate racism, empower women and to promote peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. YWCA Dayton lives its mission through four core service areas: operating the only domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centers in Montgomery and Preble counties, providing affordable housing and wraparound life skills services for women and families who are survivors of domestic violence or at risk of homelessness, empowering girls to explore and achieve their highest potential through our signature Girls LEAD! Leadership development program, and advocating for legislative and public policy priorities that promote racial and social justice equity.

In 1970 YWCA created One Imperative which calls us to thrust our collective power towards the elimination of racism, wherever it exists, by any means necessary. YWCA's approach to racial justice goes beyond changing hearts and minds. We strive to transform communities, systems and public policies. To learn more about YWCA visit: www.ywcadayton.org.



Women Walking West

Advancing education for women from across the globe

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