

*Compassionate
Academic Success
Respect
Empathy*

W Women Walking West

Advancing education for women from across the globe

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

Dear Friends,

I am grateful to know each and every one of you. It was not that long ago that Women Walking West (W3) was just a dream. Now, as W3 enters into another year, I am humbled by the generosity and commitment of you, our supporters. Thank you to our board members and donors for the financial and in-kind support, and to our mentors and volunteer staff for their time and dedication to our cause. You are the reason W3 continues to sustain and grow funds to support those we serve.

Since our inception in 2015, W3 has served over 135 mentees (women we serve) from 42 countries, and given over \$26,000 in cash awards and \$19,000 in scholarships!

Our 2021 virtual fundraising efforts were a success, resulting in reaching our financial goal! We thank Bluegrass Carryout for their partnership and generous support of our bourbon raffle, and the raffle committee members for creating and managing all of the details to ensure it was a success. At this time, we are planning to hold our 2022 Gala in-person on November 3, 2022! I encourage you to visit our website and follow W3 on social media for more information and to stay up to date on W3 news and events.

On behalf of Women Walking West and its Board of Directors, I would again like to express our sincere gratitude to the individuals whose support and commitment continue to help us grow and succeed in our mission to support the educational needs of foreign-born women, **One woman at a time.**



Dr. George Sehi, Board Chair



Noah Koterba and Wendy Waters-Connell

2021 Virtual Fundraising Campaign and Bourbon Raffle a Success!

Thank you to **Bluegrass Carryout** for again partnering with us, and to our generous sponsors, raffle participants and donors for their support of our Pour for a Purpose Bourbon Raffle and Fundraising Campaign. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to achieve our fundraising goal for 2021! We sold 256 raffle tickets and had 86 sponsors/donors. A list of the sponsors may be viewed on our website.

We plan to hold another bourbon raffle in 2022, and please mark your calendar for our in-person gala to be held at the Manor House in Mason on November 3, 2022!

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W3 Newsletter

JANUARY 2022 | VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1



Mentee to Mentor

My name is Tolu Orebiyi, I am an immigrant born and raised in Ibadan, Nigeria. In 2003, my family and I visited the U.S. We liked the Dayton area so much that my parents encouraged me to pursue my college education here. I came to the U.S. in 2005 on an F-1 visa. After graduating from the Business program at Sinclair Community College, I transferred to Wright State University, where I received my bachelor’s degree in Accounting/Finance and my master’s degree in Business Administration (MBA) with concentrations in International Business, Marketing, and Project Management.

In 2018, after recovering from some health issues and interning as a Financial Analyst with a benefits consulting firm, I realized how much I wanted to make a difference in the health industry. For me, that meant providing administrative support needed to ensure healthcare providers can continuously provide their life-saving services. I enrolled in the Health Information Management (HIM) program at Sinclair Community College in 2019.

“I am grateful to W3 for their mentorship and helping me ... thus enabling me to accomplish my goals of graduating”

Tolu Orebiyi, W3 Mentor

It was during Fall Semester 2019 that I met Dr. George Sehi. He was giving a speech during International Education Week. I was so fascinated and impressed with his story and the work he was/is doing with Women Walking West (W3) that I approached him after the event for more information. I signed up as a mentee and was paired with a mentor in the Health Informatics field and was provided with financial assistance by W3. I am grateful to W3 for the mentorship and helping me through some financial difficulties, thus enabling me to accomplish my goals of graduating and sitting for the board exam by the summer of 2021.

I am currently an HIM Clerk/Medical Coder for a local hospital and the Treasurer for the Miami Valley Health Information Management Associate (MVHIMA), a local chapter of the AHIMA/OHIMA organization that helps with professional development and continuing education. I am also now a mentor with W3, enabling me to give back to students by guiding them in accomplishing their goals in the same way W3 helped me.

Women Walking West *Her Words* Essay Contest

This initiative was designed to highlight the determination and personal commitment of our mentee community through their own storytelling. The participating women demonstrated courage in disclosure, offering us the chance to better understand their personal journey. All of the submissions were powerful, inspiring and highlighted the strength of these women! Congratulations to all of the winners! Many thanks to W3 Board Member, Su Chang, for helping us launch our first essay contest! Please enjoy a synopsis about our essay winners.

First Place Winner: Reham Gaafar is a pediatric physician from Egypt. At a young age, Reham had a passion for medicine and helping others and pursued her medical degree. She was a practicing pediatrician for almost 10 years before moving to the US in pursuit of better opportunities. Once here, she faced additional training, education requirements and licensing to be able to practice. A friend introduced her to W3 where she has received scholarship assistance and guidance from her W3 mentor. Reham recently passed all of her US medical license exams and is actively applying to residency programs in the area.

Second Place Winner: Charafa Barhdadi is an agricultural specialist with a Masters in Agricultural Studies and Environment from Morocco. Charafa came to the US 3 years ago with her husband in hopes of a better future and to start a family. She enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and learned about W3 who provided a mentor and scholarship to support her continued education, applications, and parenting healthy twins. She is currently enrolled in UC business and marketing courses and hopes to secure a position that leverages her experience in agriculture and marketing.

Third Place Winner: Samera Hossain is from Bangladesh. As a US college student she was fortunate to have a professor who introduced her to W3. She appreciates the help W3 and her mentor provide. Her confidence in achieving her goal of being a financially independent woman who can accomplish anything, has grown. She is currently a graduate student of Nuclear Engineering at Purdue University.

Fourth Place Winner: Hasna Ben Jillali is from a village in southern Morocco where she faced gender bias challenges, and education for girls was not prioritized. Her parents sent her to boarding school to give her the opportunity for education. After graduating high school, she received a university degree, got married and moved to the US. Hasna is studying Computer and Software Development at Sinclair and feels fortunate for the help and support she now receives from W3. Hasna remains motivated to get her degree, begin a career path and be successful.



Community Partner:
Miami University
Regionals

Miami University Regionals vision closely aligns with the work of Women Walking West - empowering minds, strengthening communities. Like Women Walking West, their core values are student centered - access, community, diversity, student success, and teaching excellence.



REGIONALS



“Like Women Walking West, their (Miami Regionals) core values are student centered - access, community, diversity, student success, and teaching excellence.”

Since the Middletown and Hamilton campuses opened in the mid-1960s, Miami Regionals have been open admission, providing access to higher education for persons who were place-bound or working toward their degrees while balancing responsibilities for work and family.

Today, students at the Regionals have the opportunity to earn associate or baccalaureate degrees in 31 majors through a variety of in-person, hybrid, and online course options. Support services to ensure student success include academic, personal, and career counseling as well as veterans services.

Helping to prepare students for postsecondary education, the Regionals work with the Hamilton City Schools ASPIRE program, providing space for daytime ESOL instruction at Miami’s Voice of America Learning Center in West Chester. Adult Basic Education (GED) and college transition classes are offered by ASPIRE at Miami’s Hamilton Campus.

Miami Regionals’ federally-funded TRIO Student Support Services program works with first-generation college students, Pell Grant recipients, and students with disabilities. Students receive academic, personal, professional, and financial coaching, assistance with goal setting, and weekly meetings with their academic coach. Workshops on academic skills, professional and career development, financial literacy education, and civic engagement opportunities are all part of TRIO.

GOOD NEWS!

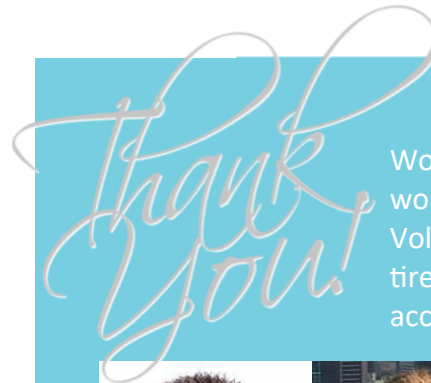
W3 has awarded **\$10,500 in Sinclair Community College scholarships**, and another \$3200 in cash awards to Sinclair students.

Congratulations to **Mentee, Hanna F.** for graduating from UC earning a BA in Early Childhood Education!

Congratulations to W3 Board Member and YWCA Hamilton CEO, **Wendy Waters-Connell** on being named one of West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance **2021 Women of Excellence!**



Wendy Waters-Connell shown with Dr. George Sehi



Women Walking West would like to thank our Volunteer Staff who work tirelessly to help W3 accomplish our mission.



Brett Ballard -Web Design/Development, Dave Beatrice - IT administrator, Jennifer Seifert - Marketing Specialist

W3 Board

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Senior Consultant
Miami University Regionals

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Wendy Waters - Connell

CEO/Executive Director
YWCA Hamilton

Dr. Reham Gaafar

Ex-Officio Board Member
W3 Mentee & Medical Student

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Community Partner Miami Regionals Cont. from page 3

The innovative Work+ Program is now in its third full year, creating opportunities for students to work and learn, and complete their degree while incurring no debt. Recognized as the model for statewide implementation, Work+ employers provide an hourly wage and pay the tuition and general fees for each of their Work+ students. Work+ students work approximately 24 hours per week and attend classes full-time.



“Improving access is an essential first step. We will be strengthening collaborations with local and regional organizations to expand our diversity recruitment and enrollment efforts.”

Miami has joined Moon Shot for Equity, a national program designed to identify barriers to higher education and close equity gaps. Working with Cincinnati State Technical and



Ande Durojaiye, Vice president and dean of Miami Regionals

Community College, Gateway Technical and Community College, and Northern Kentucky University, the shared goal is to accomplish this by 2030.

Ande Durojaiye, vice president and dean of the Regionals, sees community connections as key to the success of Moon Shot for Equity. “Improving access is an essential first step. We will be strengthening collaborations with local and regional organizations to expand our diversity recruitment and enrollment efforts.”

Durojaiye shared that “working with our Moon Shot for Equity colleagues we will be providing equity-minded educational experiences, advancing student success, and serving as a model for other colleges and universities.”

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!

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