

*Compassionate
Academic Success
Respect
Empathy*



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, Board Members and Volunteers,

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering dedication and support of Women Walking West. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones. Your commitment has been the driving force behind our organization's accomplishments, and I am immensely grateful for each and every one of you.

Thanks to your efforts, our fundraising endeavors have been exceptional, securing vital resources that allow us to thrive in our mission. Your passion and dedication in spreading awareness about our cause have enabled us to forge new partnerships and collaborations, further amplifying the impact of Women Walking West.

To further our mission, I am thrilled to welcome Kristyn Gates as Operations Manager. Her added expertise will help us expand our reach and create lasting change in the lives of the women we empower through our services.

Looking ahead to our annual RISE fundraising Gala, I am filled with anticipation and excitement for the future of Women Walking West. Together, we have laid a strong foundation upon which we will build even greater achievements. None of this would be possible without your steadfast support. Each one of you plays an invaluable role in shaping the future of Women Walking West. Your dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment inspire us all to continue working towards our shared goal of empowering women and creating a more equitable society, **One woman at a time.**



Dr. George Sehi, Board Chair

Save the date for our

ADVANCING EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

4TH ANNUAL **RISE** Gala

Women Walking West

Advancing education for women from across the globe

Please Save the Date to Attend Our 4th Annual RISE Gala on November 9th!

The Women Walking West 4th Annual RISE (Reaching International Women. Supporting through Education) Gala will take place on Thursday, November 9, at the Manor House in Mason. The Gala is W3's premier fundraising event.

The gala will be an elegant, semi-formal evening featuring celebrity speakers, shared stories from past and present W3 mentees, a silent auction, and dinner.

Please contact Dr. George Sehi directly if you, or your organization or company is interested in becoming a sponsor of the event. Visit the Women Walking West Website at: www.womenwalkingwest.org for more information or to purchase individual tickets.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 1: Board Chair Message
4th Annual RISE Gala

Page 2: Featured Endowment
Dr. Javad Salajegheh
Good News!
Upcoming Events

Page 3: Caring Community
Partner
Welcome Kristyn Gates
W3 Operations Manager

Page 4: Mentor Spotlight
Wendy L. Waters-Connell

DESIGN/EDITOR:
Jennifer Seifert

EDITORS:
Kristyn Gates
Fateme Hajhosseini

W3 Newsletter

JULY 2023 | VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

GOOD NEWS!

W3 has a new Operations manager!

Read more about Kristyn Gates joining our team on page 3 of this newsletter.

Barbara Agyapong a graduate student at Wright State University, and W3 mentee won the **Best Student Spotlight Graduate Presentation** for her research on **“The Politics of LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Africa.”**

Congratulations to **Reine Kamenei!** Reine, recent W3 mentee, was placed on the **Dean’s List for Fall 2023 at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College** where she is a business administration student.



W3 was featured in Movers & Makers May 2023 Edition!

The article “Notables: Women & Family Services”, features organizations working in service of women and families and who are making a difference in Greater Cincinnati’s nonprofit community.

Visit: <https://moversmakers.org/2023/05/23/notables-women-family-services/> to read the full article.

Upcoming Events!

JULY

Mentor/Mentee Training Workshop at Union Institute and University

AUGUST

3rd Annual W3 Essay Writing Contest “In Her Words” kickoff

SEPTEMBER

Attend a Mentor/Mentee training Workshop

OCTOBER

Resume Writing Workshop at Sinclair Community College

NOVEMBER

4th Annual RISE Gala on at the Manor House

Featured Endowment

Dr. Javad Salajegheh Family Endowment

My father, Dr. Javad Salajegheh was born in Kerman, Iran. He has been my role model and inspiration throughout my life. His invaluable advice and wisdom have been the main pillars of support that have guided me and my family.

My father obtained a Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from the University of Science and Technology in Tehran. Throughout his career both as an engineer and professor, his strong beliefs in the value of education, work-ethic and philanthropy were the reasons for him to become one of the co-founders of the University of Kerman. As a college professor with senior management positions for over 40 years, he advocated for education as a tool that would change the world.

Beyond his professional achievements, he was deeply committed to giving back to his community. He is the author of four engineering textbooks and more than 100’s of Instruction Set Architecture (ISA) journal papers that are still being taught at the University of Kerman.

He generously provided financial support to companies, families, and individuals in need. My father’s commitment to his community, coupled with his passion for education, has and will continue to significantly impact the lives of many people in his homeland.

My father's commitment to his community, coupled with his passion for education, has and will continue to significantly impact the lives of many people in his homeland.



Pedram Salajegheh

His teachings instilled in me and my sister the conviction that our purpose in life transcends individual triumphs and calls for making positive impacts on the lives of others through the spread of knowledge. He taught me the invaluable lesson that our actions have a ripple effect, and by helping others, we ultimately help ourselves.

I am forever grateful to my father for his wisdom, love, and guidance. His core values and beliefs are fully aligned with the mission of Women Walking West'.

I am forever grateful to my father for his wisdom, love, and guidance. His core values and beliefs are fully aligned with the mission of Women Walking West'. It is my privilege to establish the Dr. Javad Salajegheh Family Endowment in his honor.



Caring Community Partner

Ryan McCurley, President of Peoples First Savings Bank

As a leader, I truly believe you win by surrounding yourself with trustworthy people who are engaged, committed, and are self-starters, which I have always strived to do. I wear many hats within the bank, and so do our employees. This enables me to empower my staff and have the confidence that they will make the right decisions on a consistent basis. It makes the management experience so much more enjoyable, as they will come to you with suggested solutions to problems rather than asking you to solve every issue. This enables me the time to do what I do best, which is maintain a high level of engagement with the business community within our market area, as well as focus on business strategy. I make it a point to get to know all my employees on a personal level and consistently interact with each one frequently through casual conversation. This helps me understand their personalities and how I can best support them, through their personal and professional development.

Women Walking West's mission aligns with our organization's values. We are a Bank of leadership, respect, empowerment, diversity and inclusion, which is fundamental to the success of our organization.

Women Walking West's mission aligns with our organization's values. We are a Bank of leadership, respect, empowerment, diversity, and inclusion, which is fundamental to the success of our organization. With these values at our core and the core of our family of employees, we look to ensure the future of our institution at every level. I love how Women Walking West's organization impacts the area by connecting accomplished women leaders who are making a difference within the communities we serve.

Leadership positions, within the banking industry, have historically been dominated by men. However, at Peoples First Savings Bank, there are no barriers for women, as senior leadership positions have evolved over the last two decades to a more balanced level; but there is always room for improvement. We continue to pursue the professional development of women within our company to prepare them to assume leadership roles in the future. I am optimistic that our efforts will result in continued improvement in this area. I am also confident that Women Walking West will continue to do the same for women in the business community, and as such we are privileged to be supporters of W3.

I have worked at Peoples First Savings Bank for over 25 years, and my vision for the Bank remains consistent. We want to maintain a safe, collegial working environment where all of our employees respect one another, feel challenged, and have the opportunity to grow professionally while providing great customer service experiences. The result for the Bank has been consistent growth, while meeting or exceeding the various banking regulatory requirements.



Ryan McCurley
President of Peoples First Savings Bank



Kristyn Gates, W3 Operations Manager

Welcome Kristyn Gates as Operations Manager

Women Walking West is pleased to introduce Kristyn Gates, as our new Operations Manager. She is a Pennsylvania native and graduated with a Bachelors of Science from Lock Haven University. She has extensive experience working with both collegiate and professional sports teams in their Corporate Partnerships departments helping them achieve their revenue goals. Most recently, she worked for the Columbus Blue Jackets as a Partnership Activation Specialist, working closely with their corporate partners as well as assisting the Blue Jackets Foundation team with events and programs.

"I'm very excited and grateful for this new opportunity working with Women Walking West. I have extremely high regard for this organization's mission to help foreign-born women achieve their goal of earning an education here in the United States. I only hope that my skillsets and experience can help contribute to its further success."

W3 Board

George H. Sehi, Ph.D. Chair
Former Executive Dean and Professor,
Sinclair College

Dwight Packard, JD Vice-Chair
Attorney at Law, Graydon

Carey Curtis, Treasurer
Chief Commercial Officer
North Side Bank & Trust

Rick Casey, Secretary
Vice President, Area Investment Manager
Fifth Third Securities

Tom Daskalakis
Chief Administrative Officer
UC Health West Chester Hospital

Marian C. Glancy, Ph.D.
Former Provost/CEO
Antioch University Midwest

DeAnn Hurtado, Ph.D.
Professor, Sinclair Community College

Judy Lightner-Noll, Ph.D.
JLN Coaching

Karen Schuster Webb, Ph.D.
President
Union Institute & University System

Sherry Taylor
President & CEO
Mason Deerfield Chamber

Janice Walker, Ph.D.
Former Vice President
Institutional Diversity and Inclusion
Xavier University

Wendy Waters - Connell
CEO/Executive Director
YWCA Hamilton

Su Chang
Ex-Officio Board Member
Senior Director, Research & Development
Procter & Gamble

1-844-500-WEST(9378)
www.womenwalkingwest.org
info@womenwalkingwest.org

Board Member Spotlight

Featured Board Member:
Wendy L. Waters-Connell

I am an RN, a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator, a Certified Risk Manager, and a Certified Fundraiser with more than 25 years of experience as a non-profit CEO. Starting at YWCA Hamilton in 2018, I reaffirmed the organization's mission and programs, starting with the board's governance structures and internal diversity. We organized and deployed a strategic process to build a larger, brand-new campus with permanent supportive housing and emergency domestic violence shelter apartments, ensuring that racial justice is the foundation of all internal operations and supporting organizations in the county to further inclusive and welcoming corporate cultures. I use my intersectional identities to build collaborations that create a more equitable and inclusive community.

I joined the board of W3 when requested by my friend, Dr. George Sehi. I have tremendous respect for the incredible work this human being has accomplished, and I was honored to be asked to join an organization he founded. I am doing my best to support this pivotal mission as it faces the normal developmental milestones and growing pains of an expanding scope of services and work.

I am committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion because of my experience with racism very early in life and again as I became a working member of society and experienced gender-based discrimination and limitations professionally. My calling was further molded by the continued racism experienced by my sons. I am committed to a future where every single person lives, works, and plays in a world that respects and celebrates difference.

Education was my bridge out of poverty and adverse childhood trauma. The early teachers and mentors who made a transformational difference in my life were Jewish, African-American, and Quaker women. I am committed to doing the same for others. We have a sacred trust to raise up the next generation, so our world improves. This is the foundation of our humanity. Women Walking West is a natural extension of this passion because it sits at the intersection of gender and race, promoting the empowerment of women who are foreign born, seeking advancement in education. When we remove barriers, we advance everyone. When women are uplifted, multiple future generations are positively impacted.

*When we remove barriers, we advance everyone.
When women are uplifted, multiple future
generations are positively impacted.*

YWCA Hamilton is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. We will get up and do the work to root out injustice, and transform institutions until the world sees women, girls, black, and indigenous, people of color the way we do...

Equal. Powerful. Unstoppable.

 **Women Walking West**

Advancing education for women from across the globe



Wendy L. Waters-Connell
CEO/Executive Director
YWCA, Hamilton