



2023 Annual Report

American Women for International Understanding

Meet AWIU President Maggie Sabbag



On the international front 2023 was a difficult year; understanding was more critical than ever. At AWIU, our year was full of growth and accomplishment, from preparing young women for careers in international relations to reflecting on our mission, vision and values, to attracting new supporters for our work. We couldn't have done this without our extraordinary network of members and friends, for whom we are tremendously grateful.

I'm pleased to report that AWIU programs took a big leap forward this year. We began with the launch of an improved Passport curriculum for students that now intersects with other AWIU programs. Through this framework, Passports gain critical skills and global perspective.

We supported 19 small but mighty organizations through micro-grants. A refreshed application, with Spanish and French options, increased accessibility. March's *International Women of Courage Celebration* was, again, a rousing success. In addition, we collaborated with several IWOC Alumnae across our Programs and told their stories through a revitalized social media presence.

In October, we featured 17 inspirational speakers, representatives, and recruiters from six organizations at our Washington DC student symposium, Career Opportunities in International Relations (COIR). AWIU chapter activity grew as well, with some chapters focusing on ways to help local refugees. We launched the Young Professionals Collaborative and the IDEA Task Force (on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access), both forward looking initiatives critical to our future.

Fueling the extension of our program reach were several organizational improvements to improve efficiency and impact. AWIU's governance and internal processes were strengthened and streamlined. We considered who we are and what we stand for, resulting in refreshed Mission, Vision, and Values statements (page 4).

My thanks to all of the AWIU friends and mighty bridge-builders out there. It has been an honor to serve as AWIU president. In a world that needs so much help, I count my blessings to be a part of this AWIU community that knows no boundaries in terms of heart and hard work.

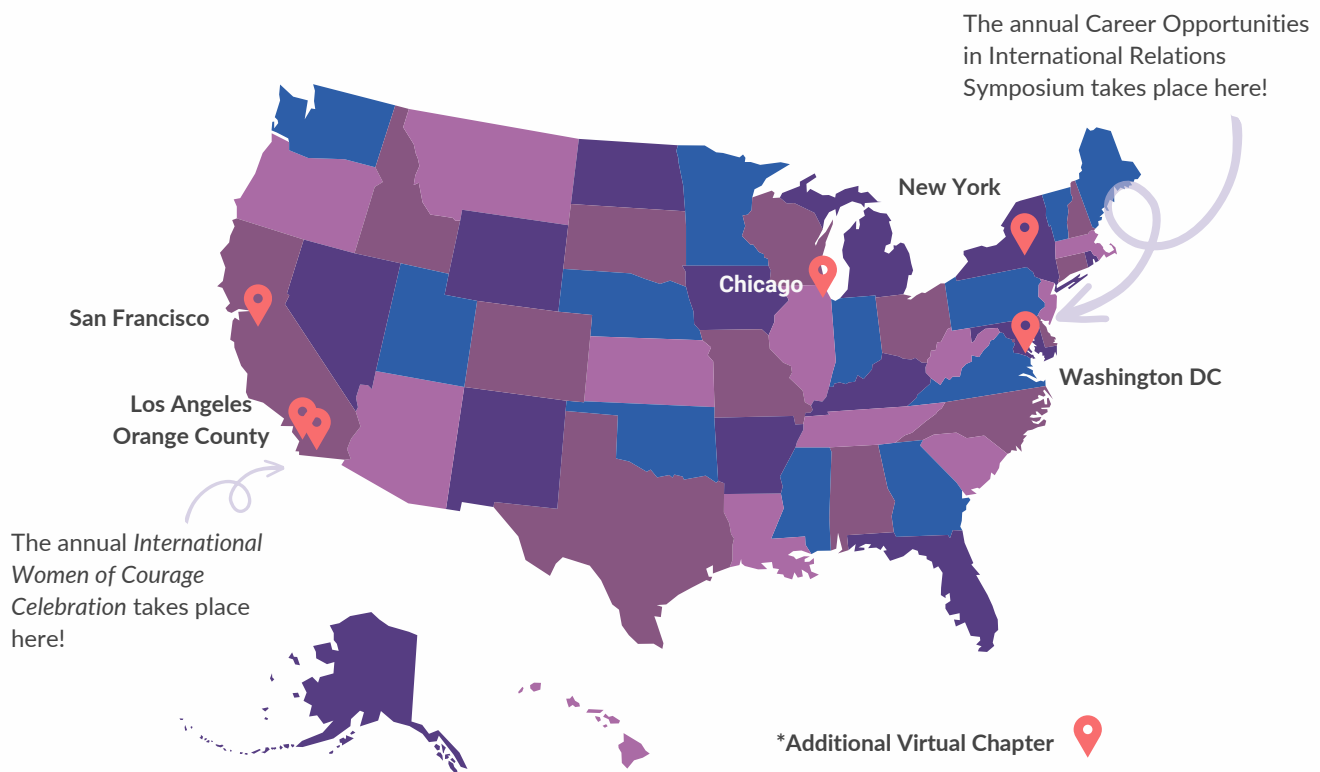
Maggie Sabbag
2023 President, AWIU

Our History



Cuba Delegation, 2002

- 1968 AWIU began with a focus on international learning and connection through study, symposia, and travel. That year, an AWIU delegation of American women leaders traveled to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to meet with members of the Soviet Women's Committee, the first such group to do so in decades. Dozens of delegations have followed.
- 2008 The grants program is redesigned to target projects that are women-led, have an impact beyond the immediate need, and that focus on health, education, and entrepreneurial development.
- The International Women of Courage (IWOC) program collaboration with the U.S. Department of State begins.
- 2010 The Passports to the Future program launches. The program targets young women, typically students or those just beginning careers in international fields. To date, some 50 young women have participated.
- 2014 The inaugural annual one-day Career Opportunities in International Relations (COIR) Symposium in Washington, D.C., takes place. COIR brings young women and leaders in the field together for practical advice, inspiration and networking.
- 2022 AWIU receives the Gender Champion Award from the Secretary of State's Office of Global Women's Issues at the *15th Annual International Women of Courage Celebration*.



Active Chapters

AWIU currently has 7 active chapters where members engage with each other, plan events, and learn about global issues. Several other chapters are under development as interest grows nationally.

AWIU chapter members are responsible for organizing several annual events, such as the *International Women of Courage Celebration* in Los Angeles, and the Career Opportunities in International Relations Symposium in Washington, D.C.

Mission, Vision, Values

Revised 2023

Our Mission

To build bridges of international understanding through personal exchange and collaboration.

Our Vision

A compassionate and interconnected world with equality for all.

Our Values

Understanding: Respecting, honoring, and celebrating diversity promotes mutual understanding. Leading with empathy and compassion, we embrace opportunities to engage, learn, and serve the greater good.

Learning: Knowledge promotes understanding. We are committed to collaborative education and approach experiences with curious and open minds.

Community: Personal relationships are the foundation of mutual learning. We build friendship and community locally and globally through a supportive network of women.

Social Responsibility: Equal access for women and girls to education, healthcare, and opportunity is essential. We believe that empowered women are highly effective communicators and problem solvers.

Our Programs

American Women for International Understanding programs include: Delegations, Grants, *International Women of Courage Celebration*, Passports to the Future, and Career Opportunities in International Relations. In 2023, these programs impacted the lives of 116 AWIU members, 50 youth participants, 18 International Women of Courage, and over 500 women worldwide through our micro-grants.



The **16th Annual International Women of Courage Celebration** honored exceptional women leaders and their contributions to the advancement of human rights.



Micro-grant recipients trained over 216 women worldwide on income-generating activities. Read more in the **2023 Grant Report**.



The 2023 **COIR Symposium** on the topic of "Women Leading: Building Bridges of Peace, Security, and Equity" brought together students, **Passports to the Future**, women leaders, and local recruiters in Washington, D.C.

Delegations

AWIU has sent over 65 Delegations, with over 100 country visits, to every continent except Antarctica. Several have broken ground as the first group of American women permitted to enter a country. These milestones include our first Delegation to Russia in 1968, our Delegation to China in 1973, and to Saudi Arabia in 2002. In 2009, the Delegation to Libya marked another milestone – the first Delegation of American women to visit there in 40 years.

The purpose of our Delegations is to seek enhanced learning experiences about the countries we visit, while also seeking to, wherever we travel, foster an environment that promotes understanding between the United States and that country. Delegation members often meet with political leaders, business leaders, leading women's groups, non-profit organizations, embassies, institutions, historical sites, and private homes. Delegations have at times been inspired by the work of individual International Women of Courage honorees and micro-grant recipients. Information is shared upon return via presentations and digital communication.



AWIU visited the Tejidos Cotzal weaving cooperative in October 2022. Widowed by Guatemala's 35-year civil war, four women founded the non-profit in 1996 so they could feed their families. Tejidos Cotzal has been the recipient of four AWIU grants.

Grant Program

AWIU has awarded over \$441,000 in micro-grants since 2008 to non-profit organizations that train and empower women and girls in the areas of health, education, and entrepreneurship. Our recent focus has been on women-owned businesses in developing countries. Read more about the grants program in the **2023 Grants Report**.

Annual grants are also awarded to the U.S. Secretary of State's International Women of Courage.



International Women of Courage

Since 2008, AWIU has collaborated with the U.S. State Department to recognize women around the globe who fight for human rights and the advancement of women's rights. AWIU hosts the *International Women of Courage Celebration* annually and awards grants to every State Department honoree.

The 2023 International Women of Courage award recipients included Zakira Hekmat (Afghanistan), Alba Rueda (Argentina), Danièle Darlan (Central African Republic), Doris Ríos (Costa Rica), Meaza Mohammed (Ethiopia), Hadeel Abdel Aziz (Jordan), Bakhytzhan Toregozhina (Kazakhstan), Datuk Ras Adiba Radzi (Malaysia), Bolor Ganbold (Mongolia), Bianka Zalewska (Poland), and Yuliia Paievskaya (Ukraine).

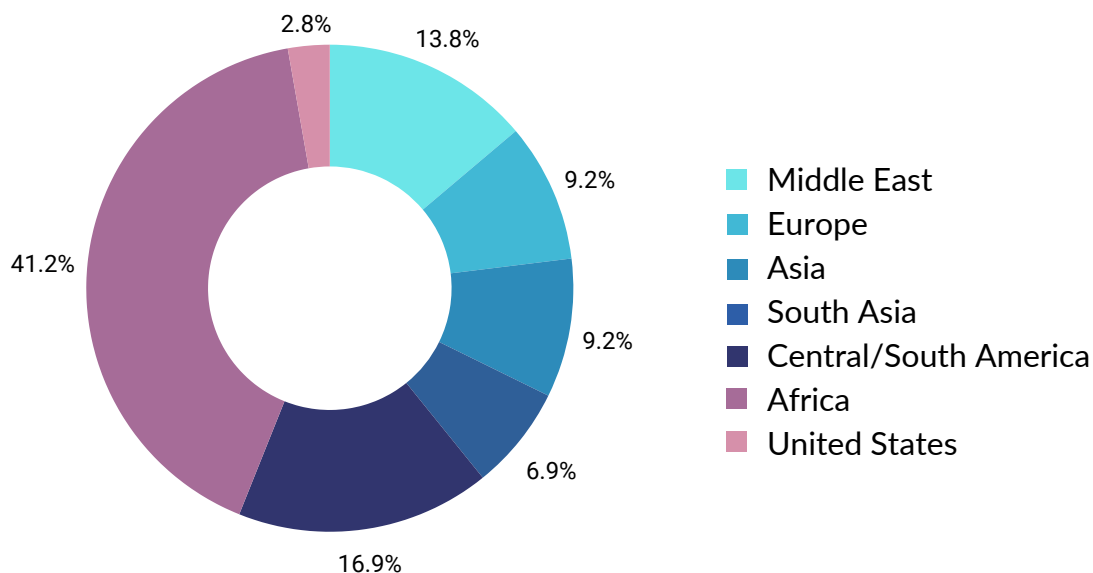


The 2023 International Women of Courage at the *Celebration* in Los Angeles

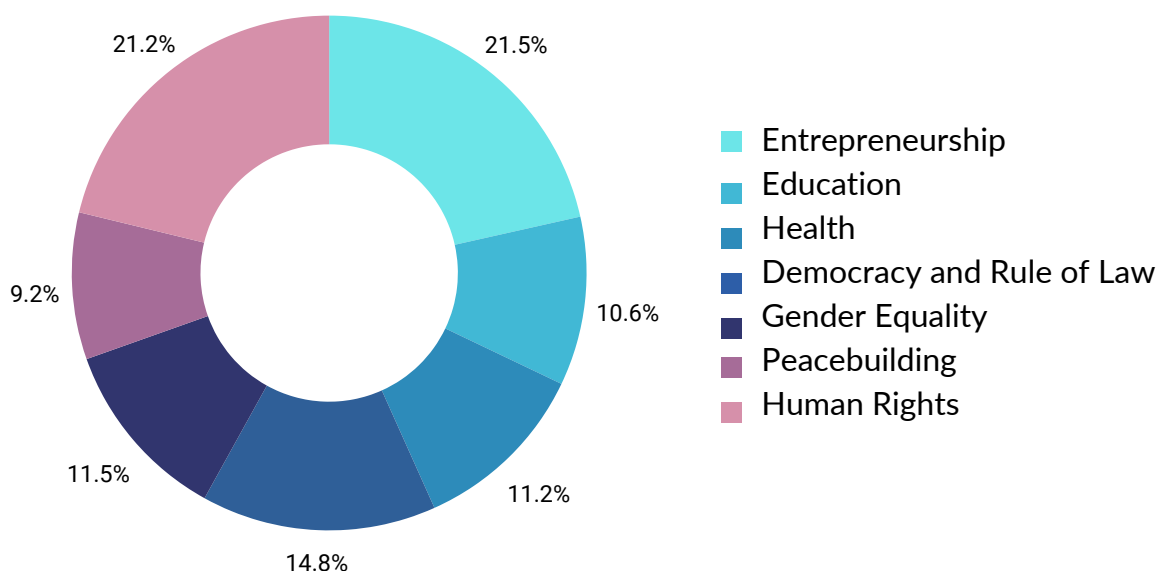
Grant Breakdown

In 2023 AWIU distributed \$108,450 in grants, including to 19 small women-focused organizations, 12 International Women of Courage, and 6 IWOC Alumnae.

Grants by Region



Grants by Topic



Youth Programs

Passport to the Future

AWIU's Passport to the Future is open to women under 32 years of age. These young women, typically students or those just beginning careers in international fields, seek to learn by association with AWIU programs under the mentorship of an AWIU member. Passports engage with our members, programs, and grantees through this fulfilling and mutually beneficial program.

Career Opportunities in International Relations

Since 2014, AWIU has sponsored the Career Opportunities in International Relations (COIR) Symposium, a one-day program in Washington, D.C. that provides young women the opportunity to engage with and learn from leaders in the field.



The AWIU Community

Walt Whitman said, “I am large. I contain multitudes.” While a small organization in terms of membership (116) and budget, AWIU’s outreach is significant and global.

Our members, located throughout the United States, share a belief in our mission, vision, and values. They are doctors and lawyers, ambassadors and professors, teachers and executives, mothers and grandmothers, retirees, women new to the workforce, and women at the peak of their careers.

Our global relationships, fostered among members, grantees, International Women of Courage, the U.S. State Department, women serving in the foreign service, universities, and supporting companies (see Our Supporters on page 14), are indispensable to our work. Through our shared beliefs, we accomplish what amounts to multitudes for the women and children we reach.



What People are Saying

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Grants Committee members are enriched by the opportunity to learn about and from women throughout the developing world, and in a small way, to improve their lives by supporting their vetted projects. This is a win for all of us.

Marsha Niazmand, AWIU member and Chair of the Grant Committee

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AWIU is an incredible organization full of warmth and close mentorship. Through the organization, I have worked on projects with the founder of an elementary school in Ghana to measure the impact of the school and secure grants. It is very exciting to see the real-world impact of my work, especially as I had not had many opportunities to work with folks internationally before my time in AWIU. My connection with my mentor Barbara Rubio has been a large part of my positive experience, working with me throughout the entire project to ensure I produce my best work. I also had the honor of attending COIR last year, which involved excellent networking opportunities and inspiring talks and breakout sessions from women with extensive career experience in international relations. AWIU has opened a wide door of opportunities for me, and I am endlessly grateful to be a part of this organization.



Kamryn Scott, AWIU Passport to the Future and COIR attendee

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Participating in the Passport to the Future program was incredibly valuable during a period of transition for me. After completing my master's degree and while applying for jobs, I sought networking and mentorship opportunities within the field of international affairs. The Passport program provided exactly that. Collaborating on a project with AWIU members and one of the organization's exceptional grantees allowed me to apply my skills in writing, editing, and analysis while giving me a sense of purpose during this transitional phase of my life. I am truly grateful for the work I accomplished and the relationships I built through AWIU's youth programs.

Jordan Grandt, AWIU Passport to the Future

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Financial Highlights

Balance Sheet		
Assets	2023	2022
Cash	\$60,117	\$116,744
Investments	\$565,835	\$388,504
Prepaid Expense	\$10,329	\$5,122
Total Assets	\$636,281	\$510,370
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Deferred Revenues	\$67,464	\$37,690
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$492,349	\$409,495
Restricted Net Assets	\$76,468	\$63,185
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$636,281	\$510,370
Income Statement		
Revenue		
Contributions	\$48,671	\$20,245
Programs	\$193,792	\$194,860
Membership Dues	\$28,340	\$26,285
Total Operating Revenue	\$270,803	\$241,390
Delegation	-	\$35,298
Total Revenue	\$270,803	\$276,688
Expenses		
Grants	\$108,450	\$84,140
Other Programs	\$87,536	\$87,980
Management & General	\$73,564	\$62,259
Total Operating Expense	\$269,550	\$234,379
Delegation	-	\$35,640
Total Expense	\$269,550	\$270,019
Net Operating Income	\$1,253	\$6,669
Investment Gain/Loss	\$94,884	(\$67,758)
Change in Net Assets	\$96,137	(\$61,089)

Our Supporters

American Women for International Understanding thanks the following organizations for their support:

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