



ASIAN UNIVERSITY  
FOR WOMEN



# FINAL GRANT REPORT

TO JYOSHI KYOIKU  
SHOREI KAI (JKSK)

FROM ASIAN UNIVERSITY  
FOR WOMEN  
SUPPORT FOUNDATION

February 2018



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Asian University for Women Support Foundation (AUWSF) is pleased to submit this final grant report to Jyoshi Kyoiku Shorei Kaia (JKSK). We are most grateful for your support since 2009 and would like to provide you with updates on the university's operations and student accomplishments.

## A UW OVERVIEW

Asian University for Women (AUW) educates Asia's next generation of women leaders. Since opening its doors in 2008, AUW has provided more than twelve hundred women from 15 countries with the academic, professional, and financial support required to earn their Bachelor's degrees, and become leaders in their chosen fields.

The inspiration for AUW stems from recognizing that women from historically neglected populations are an untapped pool of human potential. The challenges to equality and dignity which arise from the aspirational limitations placed on them are fundamental obstacles to women's empowerment and global development. Therefore, AUW focuses particularly, but not exclusively, on identifying talent from among the most neglected population groups and bringing them to the highly multi-cultural residential community of its campus. There, it offers a flexible preparatory course on English, Math, and technology topics prior to their matriculation into a liberal arts and sciences undergraduate program.



*A UW thrive academically through peer and tutor support in pre-collegiate and undergraduate studies.*

## UPDATES FROM 2017-2018 ACADEMIC YEAR

### STUDENT OUTREACH

A UW welcomed more than a record 700 incoming and returning students this academic year. Most AUW students are first in their family to attend university, and virtually all receive full financial aid. Since 2014, AUW has increased the student enrollment from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Palestine, Pakistan, and Syria, as part of efforts to increase outreach to women affected by conflict. Students from Afghanistan now account for the second largest student group at AUW.

A UW has begun student outreach in Nagaland in Northeast India, between Bangladesh and Myanmar and welcomed the first cohort of Naga students in Fall 2017. Nagas have been systematically denied equal treatment due to their religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. The University anticipates another cohort of women from Nagaland and the surrounding highland areas of India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh will be part of the next cohort.

*At a time when there is still so much strife in the world on the basis of our inherited identities, Asian University for Women shows that yet another world is possible where young women from different upbringings can come together – first in solidarity with each other and second in supporting a wider vision of changing their communities together.*

### CHERIE BLAIR

*Chancellor, Asian University for Women  
speaking at an AUW event in in September 2017*



## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

AUW pre-collegiate programs have steadily grown since the inaugural class of *Pathways for Promise* Program in January 2016. A total of 52 garment factory workers have enrolled at AUW for intensive pre-collegiate study in the English language. Additionally, 77 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar and Bangladesh have enrolled into *Pathways*. Over 95% of both cohorts remain enrolled in AUW completing the *Pathways* program or graduated to Access Academy for subject-level pre-collegiate study.

The new **Bioinformatics major** at AUW will train students to use computer technologies and biological data to promote biomedical research and developments, improve curative and preventive medicines, identify waste cleaning bacteria, and produce high-yield and low-maintenance crops. As the first university in Bangladesh to offer a Bioinformatics major, AUW is advancing tech innovation to improve quality of life in the region.

AUW is also pleased to announce the **Finance & Management minor** to meet the demand from the rapid growth of the financial sector. AUW now offers high quality courses in finance, sustainable enterprise, innovation, and ethical practices.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

This fall, AUW welcomed **prominent peace and women’s rights activist Wai Wai Nu** to campus to speak. Ms. Nu is the director of the Women’s Peace Network Arakan and also the co-Founder of Justice for Women, which provides legal aid to Burmese women. Her visit to campus provided students with an excellent opportunity to engage with a young woman who has become a leader in the international community.

The **AUW Women Across Borders Club**, organized a local school visit in Chittagong on World Children’s Day 2017 and organized a group of AUW students to visit with donated school supplies and group activities for the children.



*AUW Women Across Border Club organizes a local school visit on World Children’s Day.*

## INTERNSHIPS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

All five JKSK Scholars completed an internship with JKSK to learn more about international professionalism. Internships are particularly important for AUW students to gain professional work experience within the public sectors in government ministries and civil service, the private sector with multi-national corporations, and within the non-profit sector. AUW students seek guidance on internship opportunities and placement through the AUW Center for Career Development and International Programs (CDIP), where students can access Career Counselors, resume and cover letter workshops, and connect with alumnae working across industries.

*It has been the best learning experience for me because I got to learn the workings of the various companies in close proximity to them. During this, I have created networks that I will cherish for my life ahead and gained experience that will provide me help in my future works.*

### SUSAN SITOULA

*JKSK Scholar (Class of 2018) speaking about her JKSK internship*



## ALUMNAE & IMPACT

AUW signifies only the beginning of exceptionalism in the lives of its graduates as changemakers. Since its opening its doors in 2008, AUW has graduated five classes, totaling nearly 550 students. About 80% of AUW graduates pursue employment in their home countries immediately after graduation while the remaining 20% attend graduate school internationally. AUW graduates and former students have pursued graduate studies in a range of institutions including Oxford, Stanford, Columbia, Brandeis, and Ewha (South Korea). Graduates have gone into careers with organizations such as Chemists without Borders, Room to Read, Teach for Nepal, Accenture, Chevron Bangladesh, and Democracy International. The Class of 2017 was surveyed at six-months from their graduation, and the results show similar trends as previous years.

## CLASS OF 2017 JOB PLACEMENT within 6 months of graduation



## EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

Looking at AUW's students and graduates, their successes and plans for the future provide further evidence of that our model of education and empowerment is working. Commitments to international development from foundations and governments remain a strong source of support for our students as well as private donors and individuals.



In October 2017, **Takeda Pharmaceuticals** donated \$1 million to establish the Takeda Chair in Public Health, marking the first endowed chair at AUW. With funding from Takeda, the Takeda Chair in Public Health will propel research and create opportunities for collaboration with scholars in public health. The Takeda Chair will also enable AUW to build upon its strengths to

improve public health in developing and emerging countries, and to educate the next generation of leaders in Asia and the world.

In anticipation of the 10th year of its founding, AUWSF hosted a discussion in New York to celebrate and reflect upon the University's first decade of operations. To strengthen AUW's outreach to potential new supporters, the University announced plans to launch a New York Support Group. In attendance of the event celebrating AUW were, among others, **AUW Patron and First Lady of Japan Akie Abe**; noted human rights lawyer and AUW Chancellor Cherie Blair; and AUW alumnae.



*Mrs. Abe with Tamiko Soros of Open Societies Foundation (OSF) at an AUW event in New York City.*

In December 2017, **Chair of the Board of Trustees and former Bangladesh Foreign Minister, Dr. Dipu Moni** traveled with Vice-Chancellor Nirmala Rao, along with current AUW students traveled to Kuwait to present at an international conference on global quality education.



## LOOKING AHEAD

From May 10-12, AUW will be celebrating its **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** in conjunction with the **Sixth Commencement Ceremony** in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Over 200 students will be graduating from the University and embarking on promising careers in their chosen fields. Concurrently, AUW is preparing an international conference on refugee, forced migration and women's empowerment in the region. In mid-June, the AUW-Hong Kong Support Foundation will be hosting the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gala** featuring Chancellor Cherie Blair.

## CONCLUSION

We thank you for your continued supports to AUW from Jyoshi Kyoiku Shorei Kaia (JKSK). Your support has many beneficiaries, not only among the AUW student population but in the region as a whole, as AUW scholars graduate and make a lasting impact in their home communities. Your continued support is instrumental to the University to achieving AUW's vision for promoting intercultural understanding and sustainable human and economic development in Asia and the Middle East. Your generous consideration is greatly appreciated.

## APPENDIX

*Annex I.* JKSK Scholars Profiles

## student

*"I want to contribute to peace by promoting education for all in Afghanistan. If individuals change their conditions, the whole society will change."*



### SHEKEBA AHMADI

Ghazni, AFGHANISTAN | Class of 2018  
Economics Major, Development Studies Minor

To escape the Taliban rule, Shekeba's family relocated to Pakistan, up until 2011 when they returned to Afghanistan. Because of limited financial means, Shekeba was unable to return to school and had to support her family after her father's passing. As the first female in her family to pursue higher education, she is a strong advocate for access to quality education for impoverished communities and continues to volunteer with underprivileged children in Chittagong. In the previous summer, she returned to Afghanistan to start arts corners in Afghan schools to develop safe learning environments.

