



TRIENNIAL REPORT OF THE HEGG HOFFET COMMITTEE

Members: Marian Ennis (*Canada*) Convener; Anita Earle (*Australia*); Anne Harris-Hennon (*France*); Catherine Bell (*South Africa*), IFUW Treasurer, *ex-officio*

During the last three years, a total of approximately CHF 14,100 was awarded to displaced women graduates to facilitate their integration into their new countries. Most recipients came from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, or Latin America. They were given refugee status in Canada, the USA, Switzerland, France, England, Latvia, South Africa, and Egypt. Funds were provided to pay for language courses, requalification or new skills training, transportation, books and supplies, and the translation and evaluation of their professional documents. We have kept in touch with them to follow their progress, and several have found work. Some are single mothers who are the only wage earner in the family, so improving their skills quickly was essential to earning a liveable wage.

In addition to providing grants, we offered moral support to several women who needed advice on networking to find employment, how to apply for scholarships and bursaries, how to locate other possible resources via the Internet, and how to make contact with IFUW's national federation or association (NFA) in their new country. Members of several NFAs interviewed and assisted applicants. The displaced women have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to correspond or speak with other graduate women who are sympathetic to their situation, as it can be a traumatic transition to go from a professional position in one's native country to living on social security payments or a "minimum wage" job in a totally different culture and climate.

E-mail notices were sent every year to organizations which assist refugees, to alert them to the availability of the Hegg Hoffet grants. Some applications resulted from these efforts. However, the majority of applicants learned about the Fund from the Hegg Hoffet section of the IFUW website. We revised the website material regularly to keep it current, and to make the application criteria and process clearer. We also updated the Hegg Hoffet brochure annually, and reworked our terms of reference and standing rules to make them congruent with IFUW committee documentation formats. To clarify the important functions of the committee, we expanded the name to the "Hegg Hoffet Fund for Displaced Women Graduates" for use in publicity materials.

During the triennium, donations were received from NFAs and individual branches in Switzerland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, England, and the USA. Several groups had fundraising projects to raise the money, such as special lunches, silent auctions, or shops. Unfortunately we were not able to continue operating our fundraising boutique at the annual University Women of Europe (UWE) meetings, as their executive decided to use the boutique project to raise funds to subsidize UWE members who could not otherwise afford to attend their meetings. However, announcements and brochures about the Fund were offered at the UWE meetings.

Since we do not receive enough money in donations to cover our grants, the IFUW Shop, which is held during the triennial conference, continues to be an important source of income for us. As usual, we are looking for attendees to bring small items to sell at the shop, some volunteers to help out at the sale tables, and of course, lots of shoppers!

In addition, we earned a little money "on paper" from our invested funds, but due to the recession in 2007-2009, this income was less than usual. On the recommendation of IFUW's auditor, the Hegg Hoffet investment accounts in various currencies were all consolidated into one Hegg Hoffet bank account in Switzerland in 2007, and signing authority was turned over to IFUW Headquarters. If a grant is awarded, the convener faxes an authorization form to Headquarters, and the staff arranges a

bank transfer to the recipient or their educational institution. The Committee receives annual reports on all bank transactions.

New committee members this triennium were Anita Earle of Australia, and Anne Harris Hennon of France. Due to geographic distance, almost all committee consultations took place using e-mail. The committee members worked to raise awareness of the Fund within their own NFAs, and through their various contacts. The Convener represented the committee at the special planning session for the IFUW Board, Conveners, and UN representatives, held in Geneva in November 2007.

Unfortunately, wars and political upheavals continue to force graduate women and their families to flee their homes, sometimes moving half way around the world, and the difficulties they face in re-establishing themselves are immense. During the next triennium, the Committee will need to continue its ongoing efforts to publicize the available grants, to encourage NFAs to suggest and assist suitable applicants, and to raise funds so that this valuable work can continue.

Marian Ennis, Convener
May 2010