



President's Report

Onward and upward!

Looking at 2016, our second year as the T&T Chapter of the International Women's Forum opened doors to opportunities that could only strengthen the development and unity of this Chapter.

At the start of the calendar year, we discussed a number of ideas for the Chapter to be more involved in the provision of support for other women to become leaders within private and public sector organizations. Although they may not be members of IWF, our purpose has always been to encourage, educate and support.

Our Sister Sandra Chin Yuen Kee introduced an idea to make outreach to young women executives, offering the necessary training to ensure they are able to navigate the corporate tide well. This will be explained later on in my report.

The philosophy of each one, teach one is not obsolete and it applies to those who have been chosen to carry the responsibility of ensuring an organization is on even keel, regardless of the circumstances. This is more than breaking the proverbial glass ceiling, this has to do with ensuring that as women leaders, we are equipped to do the best job possible.

Our TT Chapter was well represented at the 2015 World Leadership Conference in Boston. It warmed my heart to be accompanied by a strong 'Trini' contingent in addition to be well supported as usual by our Jamaican Sisters. It was at that meeting that the IWF recognized and awarded me as one of the "Women who Make a Difference." For this, I continue to be grateful.

The following months demonstrated that we had a full plate of activity:

November 2015:

Given that the Chapter was now building momentum, it was unanimously agreed that the current President serve two consecutive terms. This is provided for in Article IV, Clause 1 of the Bye-Laws. IWFTT Secretary, Sister Sandra Chin Yuen Kee raised the motion at the Chapter's executive members meeting on November 17, 2015 and the Committee agreed.

Personally, I must thank my sister members for supporting me for another two-year term. I hope to use this time to enhance the Chapter further, leaving a legacy for the next president who takes the reins.

December 2015:

Although, we did not have our Christmas get-together, we ensured the season of giving was fulfilled. We distributed hampers funded by membership donations to 14 teenaged girls at Sophia House.

January 2016:

Our first Chapter meeting was held at IWFTT sister's home, Gisele Marfleet. At this meeting we were able to look at the future direction communicated by IWF, where we deepened our conversations on how we can support other women.

Therefore, the spotlight was placed on an initiative which IWF international has invited us to develop. IWF members from around the world have been invited to present their leading edge ideas and inventions for building a better world and better lives. Our executive committee supported an idea put forward by sister member Sandra Chin Yuen Kee to establish training programmes that would prepare women for Directorships and Boards.

May 2016:

Sister Indu Sharma and I attended the World Cornerstone Conference which was held in Tel Aviv, Israel on May 17-19.

Tel Aviv is one city in the world that embodies the concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship. An agile and ever-inventive high tech industry is taking risks, challenging assumptions, and upending convention, to solve the problems of today, and find new pathways to the future.

Under the theme Seek, Solve, Soar, IWF members met, conversed, and collaborated with Israeli experts and global leaders about science, technology, business, and culture.

June 2016:

Second chapter meeting in June took place at Sister Lucille Mair's residence. Guest speaker, Akosua Dardaine-Edwards, discussed her experience with assisting some sub Saharan African women to become entrepreneurs. When Akosua thought that she was there to teach women, she actually became the student! Such an impactful session we had!

That month was also significant as I was nominated for one of the directors-at-large positions for IWF international. I will know the outcome at the Chicago meeting which takes place in September.

Once approved by the Board of Directors in Chicago, that term will begin October 1, 2016 and end two years later on October 26, 2018.

July 2016:

Following discussions at our January meeting re: preparation of women for Directorships and Boards, Sister Gillian Paul along with her colleague from COSTATT presented to members the strategy and process for developing the curricula and identifying prospective candidates for

this programme. We were engaged in lengthy discussions in establishing training programmes that would prepare women for Directorships and Boards. The Committee acknowledged that there is a need to develop a pool of women with the skill sets for sitting on Boards. They noted that women are excluded from the pool for directorship on boards due to lack of experience and that a training programme could fill that gap. It is our vision that future Boards will come to our Chapter for recommendations of women who have undergone this training to serve on their Boards.

It was suggested that a curriculum should be developed containing approximately five or six modules including tentative sessions on presentation skills, understanding Director's Liability Insurance, Governance and conditioning.

At this meeting the concept was approved by members with the hope of working with Gillian and her team to fine tune the process.

September 2016:

At our recent executive meeting, further discussions were held on the recently adopted initiative of our Chapter.

It was decided that while we will continue to develop this project for our Chapter, our framework can be presented at the President's Council Meeting for the 2016 World Leadership Conference and Hall of Fame Awards Gala in Chicago if so required.

Unfortunately, I could not attend this event, however our Vice-President Gisele Marfleet led the contingent and represented me at this Meeting.

At this Chicago session, IWF's innovators, instigators, and disruptors took the stage and presented their compelling concepts, cutting-edge business propositions, and transformational technologies.

Upcoming events:

See below:

In addition, the 2017 Cornerstone Conference would be held in Sweden and the World Conference would be held in Houston in October. I encourage all member sisters to attend.

Membership:

Understanding the demanding roles we have at our respective organisations, I would like to encourage improved attendance at our meetings. The executive committee agreed that there should be a review of attendance records and members would be reminded that there is a requirement to attend a certain number of meetings each year. We also look forward to increasing our membership by 10 more members. This matter will be further discussed at our AGM on October 26th, 2016.

Congratulations:

I end this report on a note of congratulations to four sister members.

Our sister members, Camille Chatoor was appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Board of Estate Management and Business Development Company Limited and Joanne Salazar to the Trinidad and Tobago Football Association in 2015. We wish you both all the best in your positions.

Earlier this year, our sister Sandra Chin Yuen Kee was honoured at the 60th Anniversary Celebration of the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago. This honour, which was conferred before an international audience, was given to Sandra in recognition of her tremendous contribution to the development of the Energy Chamber. Those of you who understand the Energy Sector, you would appreciate the significance of such an honour being granted to a woman.

Recently our sister Anya Schnoor was appointed President of the Bankers Association of Trinidad and Tobago (BATT), the first woman to be appointed to this position. We wish Anya continued success in her career.

I ask the same question as I did last year, what do we do next? I look forward to IWFTT's entrance into year three. We are finding our way and I am eager to see what the New Year has in store for us.

Sharon Christopher
IWFTT Chapter President

October 2015 to September 2016



Upcoming events:

Date	Event	Venue
2016		
26 th October	AGM	Gisele Marfleet's Home
27 th November	Christmas Party 4.00 pm to 9.00pm	Indu Sharma's Home
2017		
9 th February	Carnival Outing	Under the trees or a Pan Yard
20 th April	Meeting with a Guest Speaker	TBD
17 th to 19 th May	IWF World Cornerstone Conference	Stockholm, Sweden
11 th June	Tour / Outing	TBD
10 th August	Dine Around	TBD
7 th September	AGM (Director's Program; Participants to be invited to speak)	TBD
25 th to 27 th October	IWF World Leadership Conference	Houston, USA