

A CALL FROM PLAN INTERNATIONAL FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH/ INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

BY MABEL PAIS

Empower girls today, so they can lead tomorrow.

Change the future.

On International Women's Day (March 8) and Women's History Month (month of March), PLAN INTERNATIONAL calls out to all peoples of the earth to: **EMPOWER GIRLS TODAY SO THEY CAN LEAD TOMORROW** by banding together for action.

Her future starts now

International Women's Day is more than just a celebration; it's a call to action. Every March 8, the world unites to call for equal rights and opportunities for women and girls.

Plan works with girls around the world, helping them access the skills, education and resources they need to become the powerful, confident women leaders of tomorrow. PLAN states: Her future starts now, and she's ready to take the lead. Will you help her?

PLAN does this not only with committed supporters and child-sponsors, but also with committed corporate partners who envision a world where every girl can lead, learn, decide and thrive.

Together, PLAN forms a powerful alliance with girls, supporting their ambitions, amplifying their voices and breaking down the barriers that keep them from fulfilling their potential.

WHAT PLAN DOES

Plan International taps into the preserving optimism of the children the non-profit organization works with,



Plan's Youth Leader 17-year-old Delia educating young people about puberty and periods in Guatemala.

Credit: planusa.org

especially girls, as well as its partners and supporters worldwide, to provide proven and powerful ways to positively change lives in more than 80 countries around the world.

Together, PLAN won't stop until we are all equal.

The non-profit centers its work around seven key impact areas: Youth empowerment; Inclusive, quality education; Early childhood development; Skills and work; Emergencies; Protection from violence; and Sexual and reproductive health and rights.

PLAN'S UNIQUE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

GirlEngage is Plan International's unique development approach that lets girls become the drivers of the change they want and need in their lives. It is a strategy focused on adolescent girls between the ages of 10 and 18 that makes it possible for the girls themselves to lead their programs - from designing projects, to leading activities, to measuring success. At all levels, girls provide expertise and insights into Plan's work. Plan is constantly innovating and searching for new ways to involve them and achieve results.

For example, in Zimbabwe, the GirlEngage model was used to co-design a dorm with girls in The Graduation

Project (planusa), so their home away from home meets their needs. And, in response to girls' feedback, PLAN has connected participants with Purdue University to co-design a sustainable water solution for their school.

GirlEngage supports girls as they safely transition into adulthood and create the futures they want for themselves. The volunteers ask questions, listen and co-create sustainable change based on their ideas. This approach reflects the understanding that girls don't experience life according to Plan's program areas. Their education might depend on their health, their family or the culture they live in. Plan might anticipate that they need bathrooms at school, but the girls might share first that they need a way to get to school without being assaulted.

Plan believes that girls hold so much power within themselves. With GirlEngage, Plan acts as the encouraging facilitator to help them see what they are capable of achieving.

So, how can GirlEngage unlock the potential of more girls around the world?

Without volunteer, child-sponsor and corporate-partner support, GirlEngage won't be possible. And girls need this opportunity to be unlocked. Otherwise, more girls will be forced to quietly, maybe unknowingly, sacrifice their potential. And the communities in which they live will never progress toward supporting every child, regardless of gender, to have equal rights and equal opportunity to exercise those rights.

Plan International

Learn more at PlanUSA.org

ARTSXCHANGE CELEBRATES: 'THE FUTURE IS PURPLE' FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

BY MABEL PAIS

Celebrate Women's History Month and the inspiring women in your community with ArtsXChange!

WHERE: Gant-Gilbert Arts Collective

WHEN: Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 6 pm

'The Future is Purple' trivia event returns for a second year. Learn how much you know about noteworthy Black women in Newark and across the country. This special event also features dance and musical performances that speak to the power of sisterhood and honor the unbreakable bond between generations of women and girls.

REGISTRATION

Registration is required at njpac.org/event/the-future-is-purple-2/

1,000 CHILDREN AND EDUCATORS ATTEND WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CONCERT

BY MABEL PAIS

Wharton Arts in partnership with Union County Performing Arts Center (UCPAC) presented a free Education Concert on Wednesday, March 5 at 10:00 a.m. at the Main Stage at UCPAC in Rahway. The New Jersey Youth Symphony (NJYS), a program of Wharton Arts, performed for nearly 1,000 elementary and middle school students from Union, Essex, Morris, and Passaic counties in a special event celebrating Women's History Month. The one-hour concert, featuring the NJYS Youth Symphony led by Helen H. Cha-Pyo, brought the music of Louise Farrenc, Florence Price, Chen Yi, and Gabriela Lena Frank to life for the young audience in a rare opportunity to engage with music, history, and culture in a meaningful way.

Helen Cha-Pyo, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor said, "Music has the power to tell stories, preserve history, and shape the future. As we celebrate Women's History Month, the New Jersey Youth Symphony was thrilled to present 'Raise Their Voices!', a special educational concert highlighting the works of four trailblazing women composers who have made a lasting impact on classical music. Spanning over 200 years, the program featured composers from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, each with a unique voice that has contributed to

the evolution of orchestral music and the advancement of women's equality in the arts."

As Wharton Arts honors the voices of remarkable women composers, students, educators, and audiences of all backgrounds were invited to join in celebrating their legacy. Their music speaks to the enduring impact of women in the arts. Young audience members also experienced a variety of symphonic dances and festival music and enjoyed a special segment introducing various orchestral instruments with visual presentations. For more information, visit NJYS.org.

UNION COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (UCPAC)

UCPAC operates on the Main Stage, built in 1928 and is listed in both the State and National Register of Historic Places, at 1601 Irving St., and the modern and intimate Hamilton Stage, at 360 Hamilton St., in the heart of Rahway, New Jersey's Arts District. To learn more, visit ucpac.org.

WHARTON ARTS

Learn more at WhartonArts.org

(Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Spirituality, Social Issues, Cuisine, and Health & Wellness)