



WOMEN INVESTING IN WOMEN

WEAA News

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Chapin and Pearson Halls 1871

ISSUE #1

Celebrating our 2021 Graduates

The Woman's Educational Aid Association salutes our 2021 graduates. They have completed the Northwestern University vigorous course work, survived the Chicago area cold winters, successfully studied through the Covid pandemic, and built lasting relationships with other scholars. We celebrate with them and their families as they move forward in making the world a better place for us all.

WEAA invites our graduates to future spring and fall dinners. We hope to see you in the coming years and look forward to hearing from you as you build your careers.

(Photo left to right: Joanne Skrzeczyna at Weinberg-Psychology, Kimberly Sloan graduate of SESP/Learning Sciences graduate, Chloe Wong graduate of WCAS/Anthropology,

Alva Chavez graduate of Medill School of Journalism and Global Health Studies, Linda Ford board mentor, Brittany Ray board mentor, Agnes roach board mentor, Betty Terry-Lundy board mentor, and Cayla Clements graduate of Medill School of Journalism)

Kaitlyn Dutchin not in photo, graduate from the school of Communications-Theatre in December 2020

Alumnae Global Work

Nicole Amani Magabo (Class of 2013) is a writer, director, producer and multimedia journalist based in Kampala, Uganda. She recently completed her debut short film *Family Tree* as writer, producer and director.

After leaving Northwestern with Journalism and African Studies degrees, Nicole worked as a journalist and advertising copywriter in Kampala, and a marketing coordinator in Boulder, Colorado. In 2018, she completed a MA in Screenwriting from the London Film School. *Family Tree* is about an 8-year-old schoolgirl who finds out that she has siblings at her father's deathbed. Below, Nicole with her cast and crew on set.



Taking Lead on WEAA Board of Directors

The Woman’s Educational Aid Association was founded in 1871 to promote the higher education of women. Our history informs us that for most of its first 100 years, the WEAA operated a residence for women students at Northwestern University. Since 1968, the association has provided tuition grants to women students at Northwestern who meet the WEAA criteria of superior academic ability, personal potential, and financial need.

WEAA alumnae step into leadership roles to secure our future and tuition giving program. Our young board members serve on committees and on the Executive Board.

Young alumnae serving on the WEAA Board:



Photo #1: Macelle Fullwood-Pakalnis (Finance Committee) upper left; Ida Samuel-Clay (Treasurer and Finance Committee) lower left



Photo #2: Easter Lilly (Governance Committee) on right



Photo #3: Brittany Ray (Scholar Engagement Committee) lower left and Sobeida Peralta (Scholar Engagement Committee) lower right



Photos left to right: Taylor Bird, Chidera Olewuyeni, Katelynn My-ling Nguyen and Adebukola Owyinka Fetuga, and Perla Vargas (not shown)

2020 FIRST YEAR SCHOLARS

WEAA invites first year scholars to join our organization each fall. We provide tuition and mentoring for scholars throughout their four years of study at Northwestern University. We are pleased to introduce our 2020-2024 class of scholars. Board members and other scholars had an opportunity to meet each of our first year scholars at the 2020 fall dinner

meeting via Zoom. We look forward to getting together in person for brunches, dinners and seminars in the coming months.

Exciting new experiences await our 2020-2024 scholars as they grow academically and participate in internships and travel to support their learning. Welcome, first year scholars.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

WEAA welcomes Rona Pietrzak to our board. Rona lived in Philadelphia for many years working at Bryn Mawr College as Associate Dean and Professor, Assistant Professor of Law at Rutgers Camden School of Law, and as Staff Representative, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, District Council, Pittsburgh, PA.

Rona served on the Germantown Jewish Center Board as a member of the finance committee. She was a member of the Social Justice Committee and participated in a successful campaign to educate GJC members and join the city-wide inter-faith POWER committee which works for racial and economic justice.



Rona, now, lives in Chicago where she can reside close to her daughter and family. She remains actively engaged in volunteering at Chicago's

Jewish Council for Urban Affairs, which works in coalition with a variety of progressive organizations for social justice, with a particular focus is with the Police Accountability Committee. She spends time serving the community at Lakeview Pantry, which is part of the Greater Chicago Food Depository. As a new grand-mother, Rona loves spending time with her granddaughter and enjoys kayaking, crafts, reading, walking and traveling. Rona now lives in Chicago, closer to her daughter and family.



WEAA encourages you to share your story. Contact us to get started. We love hearing from you.

<https://weaa-northwestern.org/contact-us/>

WEAA Junior Speaks

Chelsea Franklin is a junior at NU and is a WEAA scholar. She has been busy with her university classes, campus activities, a second language study, and participating in a writing internship on the television program, *Madam Secretary*. Chelsea recently participated in the We Will campaign for Northwestern. Click on the link to view her video.

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/488724105>

WEAA PHILOSOPHY

Our Vision

Women investing in women to support their success in college and beyond

Our Mission

The Woman's Educational Aid Association provides financial assistance, personal support and mentoring to undergraduate women at Northwestern University.

We enable women from economically or socially disadvantaged circumstances to access the full range of educational experiences offered at Northwestern.

WEAA Alumna Making a Difference

Leondra Downs, a WEAA alumna, graduated from Northwestern University in 2017. She has been busy since her NU graduation. All of her efforts paid off in November of 2020 when she graduated in absentia from the University of Kent's Brussels School of International Studies with a Political Strategy and Communication Master's degree in International Conflict and Security. Leondra's second degree gave her an opportunity to spend two years in Belgium (2018-2020).

Studying abroad also created work opportunities as executive producer and editor for the university podcast. Leondra and the podcast team took a trip to the Royal Museum of Central Africa in Brussels to take a close look at the impressive taxidermy collection of specimens, where she discovered "the darker, whitewashed undertones" of Belgium's history. The podcast, called *Not the News*, can be found in Apple podcasts and Spotify. Take a listen to the podcast episode by clicking on this link.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/not-the-news/id1461442209?i=1000467077961>

Leondra now lives in Chicago and works for a civic journalism lab. This lab documents and publishes events and information related to the city council and other city agencies and committees. She mostly covers budget hearings and election commission meetings. It is good to know that WEAA has one of our own scholars reporting and keeping everyone informed on city business.

The Covid 19 pandemic has altered Leondra's activities along with the rest of the world. She reflects on the change in her activities, "My current activities and interests are kind of all over the place, as the pandemic forced me to return to my roots! I'm back into playing violin (I played for 7 years before stopping during NU)", says Leondra. She now practices most days and is even working on a couple of pieces. WEAA board members and scholars hope to be able to hear these pieces in the future. Leondra is spending the Covid shutdown continuing to improve her French and has added Japanese to her language study. On the move, Leondra is about to start a Google certificate course in UX Design. She shares, "As I said, the lockdown got me to return to my more artistic side, and though I wouldn't trade my time spent in Belgium or the Master's, I am considering a complete 180 for my career path. UX Design seems to scratch that itch for me in terms of applying creativity, honing my tech skills, and more generally being a versatile trade that'll be in demand for the foreseeable future."



Living and studying in Brussels

Living and working in Chicago

