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WOMEN'S EDUCATION PROJECT
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Women's Education Project Announces the I Am a Leader Academy
A Program for Young Women to Discover Their Careers

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(New York, NY) Today on International Women's Day, Women's Education Project (WEP) announces its "I Am a Leader Academy." This experiential program provides each WEP scholar with the rare opportunity to design her own curriculum leading her to choose her own career. WEP scholars currently include 350 young women at WEP Centers in India and, for the first time this year, 10 young women in New York City.

Titled "I Am a Leader" and developed over the last decade at WEP Centers in South India, the updated curriculum is unique in that the students themselves decide the topics they wish to study and the local resources they wish to employ. Updates to the existing I Am a Leader curriculum include career-ready certificates and an entrepreneurship program.

I Am a Leader Academy Scholars broaden their understanding of their career opportunities through new and unfamiliar experiences. Drawing on the WEP network of experts, mentors, institutions, and online and classroom curricula (including LinkedIn Learning, the UN's World's Largest Lesson, and TED Talks), WEP scholars earn certificates in leadership, career exploration, career-ready skills, volunteering, and entrepreneurship, as well as gain access to on-site internships and training programs. To complete the Career Explorer Certificate, students lead field trips to hospitals, courtrooms, laboratories, and farms; volunteer; interview female professionals at their workplaces; and design their own creative projects.

"Recently, our Hyderabad scholars went on their first train trip (and saw the ocean for the first time!) to interview fishermen on the Bay of Bengal about climate change. The I Am a Leader Academy is a transformative experience opening our scholars' eyes to new opportunities," says WEP Founder Zoë Timms.

"Bringing the I Am a Leader Academy to New York is exciting, as it provides a unique platform for young women from disadvantaged backgrounds around the world to broaden their community while discussing important issues." said WEP Board Member Kathy Hurley.

"WEP scholars come to us small, skinny, afraid, and confused about their future. Through the WEP Center and the I Am a Leader curriculum, our girls leave determined, able to withstand societal and family pressures, and prepared to aid vulnerable people and serve our planet.

Focusing on a career, she will put her financial independence first and only then think of marriage. She leaves WEP saying, 'I am a woman with an identity, with knowledge and courage to stride forth into a world of opportunities,'" said Esther Subhashini, WEP Center Director, Hyderabad.

About WEP

Founded in 2002, Women's Education Project, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit registered in New York, assists women of limited means to develop fulfilling careers of their choosing. WEP provides a consortium of grassroots NGOs focused on girls' and women's issues, an integrated program of academic and social support, college scholarships, and career guidance.

WEP, through its partnerships with local NGOs, offers a safe environment for young women to explore career opportunities and meet like-minded individuals. These "WEP Centers" house the I Am a Leader Academy, which enables women to explore their interests through the I Am a Leader curriculum and eventually obtain college degrees, often with the aid of WEP scholarships. WEP alumnae go on to pursue careers of their own interest. Today, 75% of WEP's over 1,200 alumnae in India work as lab technicians, physical therapists, dentists, teachers, nurses, corporate and legal assistants, NGO staff, computer operators, hotel receptionists, and entrepreneurs.

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