

WOMEN'S EDUCATION PROJECT

December 15, 2023

Dear WEP Supporter,

In this season of gratitude, we'd like to thank you for being a part of our 20 year strong organization and invite you to ensure that WEP remains accessible to young women pioneering paths to careers and becoming leaders of their own lives.

Evidence of the missing leadership of women throughout all social, economic and political spheres globally, could not be more apparent than in the decreasing participation of women in India's workforce – from 28.8% in 2010 to 24% in 2021.*

Our work is more important than ever before.

Within our Leadership Academy, young women, all first generation learners, find supportive mentors and peers, foundational knowledge, vision-expanding courses, career-readiness skills, field trips and scholarships, to guide them to form their own career choices and lead lasting change.



As women worldwide increasingly face challenges to their rights, safety and mobility, WEP alumnae, now over 3,650, question social expectations, travel within and outside their communities, and break barriers by becoming an entrepreneur, a lawyer, a government social worker, a banker, a police officer, a dentist, a pharmacist, a journalist, a farmer, an artist.



Their choices form a ripple effect that resonates throughout their own lives, families and communities.

It costs WEP \$250-\$350 per student to attend the Leadership Academy each year. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the young women of WEP, as 2023 comes to a close, we invite you to contribute generously so that more young women can experience this life changing opportunity.

Thank you and wishing you the happiest of holidays.

Zoë Timms
Founder & Executive Director

*World Bank

DONATE



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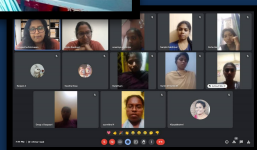
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Since our start in 2002, working alongside the Academy Directors and students, WEP has established the Leadership Academy curriculum, a framework providing courses on foundational knowledge and career-readiness skills. Using this framework, Directors adapt courses to meet their students' needs. The Academy further supports students through our Next Steps program, providing scholarship to advanced study and training opportunities, and ongoing access through the Alumnae community.

The following pages show 2023 program highlights:

Leadership Academies in Madurai & Ramanathapuram

47 students attended the Madurai Academy and 40 students the Ramanathapuram Academy, led by Vijayalakshmi (Viji), since 2005.



When students requested to learn Python coding, Viji enlisted alumnae to teach this course to 15 students. A US-based tech professional and WEP donor, mentored the alumnae and students remotely.



40 alumnae, and some of their children, gathered for the 2023 Madurai Alumnae meeting.



The Student leadership team formed Language, Financial & Technology Clubs and ensured that regular goal setting sessions were conducted.



Studying at the Academy Center.



A Social Hack-a-Thon was held between Madurai and US high school students to learn community problem identification and ideate innovative solutions. Both teams held fundraising events (above: a bake sale) to support the initiative.



Multi-day retreats were held to provide an in-depth exploration on:

- mental health (Mind, Body & Spirit)
- examination of societal problems (Social Analysis)
- Fundamental Rights & Responsibilities



Students took field trips to a history museum, an area fishery to learn about the blue revolution and climate change and to Kodaikanal, an area hill station (above).

Leadership Academies in Hyderabad & Thulekalan:

80 students attended the Hyderabad Academy and 15 students the Thulekalan Academy. 90 students joined village-based discussion circles led by WEP students. Esther Subhashini has led the Hyderabad program since 2009.



Tailoring training at Thulekalan (sewing machines donated by Rotary Club)



Special multi-day programs focused on:

- Reproductive health, presented by a local gynecologist
- Women's Equality Day, a lawyer discussed women's rights, domestic violence, sexual abuse, body image, role models & healthy relationships
- Nutrition Week, value of organic vegetables, leading a healthy life, malnutrition and anemia
- World Ozone Day, ozone protecting life on earth, how to reduce carbon footprint & promote sustainability
- How to Start a Book Club - students formed clubs in their villages



Throughout the year, students have attended permaculture training and multi-level kitchen gardens cultivation - inspiring one student to start a sustainable agriculture collective; another decided she "would pursue a career in food security" and some students reporting "green" income.



ATREE's sustainable futures workshop exploring the interrelated issues of climate change & poverty



Students met with the Panchayat leadership (Sarpanch and Secretary) of Thandipathy village to discuss WEP's satellite program. Each student was gifted a sapling.

Kadapa Leadership Academy

30 students enrolled in the Kadapa Academy. Sandhya Puchalapalli, founder of Aarti Home for Girls, has led the program since 2012.



Sessions have included:

Discovering Your Uniqueness and Spark, a holistic approach to mindfulness and self-discovery, intertwining themes of affection, compassion, gratitude, self-reflection, meditation and understanding emotional intelligence.

Native Language (Telugu) & Public Speaking, practice courage and confidence in day-to-day communication and public speaking.

Reading Comprehension, Building Vocabulary, Essay Writing, Exam Preparation and Handling Stress During Exams

Computer Literacy - compose emails, use search engines and Google Suite, Artificial Intelligence (AI) in daily life, and safe use of social media

Family, Patriarchy, Gender Roles & Stereotypes, Gender-bias, Gender Discrimination & Gender-Based Violence

Know Your Constitution - Preamble & Fundamental Rights
Village councils in Kadapa, knowing the rules and duties of elected Panchayat leaders

Leadership, Decision-Making and Problem-Solving. Learning from the lives of exemplary leaders

Ethical Goal-Setting. Having a vision, articulating ambitions for the next five years spanning work, family, and personal aspirations



Field trip to a library to learn how to use library resources both offline and online.



Self defense sessions incorporate warm-up exercises and introduce Karate basics.