

March 2013

Dear Zontians,

Every year on 8 March we celebrate International Women's Day and Zonta Rose Day where we recognize opportunities—giving, seizing and encouraging. It's about a little girl, born HIV positive because her mother wasn't tested before her birth. The family now has opportunities, giving them hope and understanding. Through Zonta and its partners, we are providing effective service to future generations in Rwanda, so all mothers give birth to HIV free children...imagine that!

This year's theme for International Women's Day is "A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women." What action are you and your community taking?

For Zontians, 8 March is also Zonta Rose Day – a day when 30,000 Zontians celebrate and recognize work in their own communities and show their support. I encourage all Zontians to reflect on what this day means. How are *you* making a difference in your community? Keep the dreams, hopes and possibilities alive for every woman and girl worldwide by supporting and sustaining Zonta's service and advocacy efforts. Plan a service project or advocacy project; reach out to your fellow woman; offer support to those in need; or build a stronger sisterhood in your neighborhood. I challenge you not only to provide service or advocacy in your community on this important day, but every day.

I urge you to join the efforts of the "Zonta Says NO" campaign. The campaign features the service and advocacy actions of Zonta clubs and districts to prevent and end violence against women and girls in their local communities. It highlights Zonta's International's ongoing partnerships with the United Nations and its agencies to end violence against women and girls through the Zonta International Strategies to End Violence against Women (ZISVAW) program.

On my recent trip to Rwanda, I saw first-hand the progress made in addressing and reducing gender-based violence by visiting One Stop Centers where victims of gender-based violence can access essential services to help recover. This biennium, Zonta International has pledged more than US\$3 Million to service projects and projects to end violence against women, including strengthening our efforts to eliminate gender-based violence in Rwanda, Bangladesh, Honduras, Nigeria and Samoa. This wouldn't be possible without every Zontian's hard work and dedication. Thank you for your unwavering support.

I am proud to say we had record donations last biennium and exceeded the target, but there is still much work to be done, and it starts every day.

International Women's Day means dreams, hopes and possibilities. It means a world where women and girls are safe, healthy, educated, empowered and full of opportunities. We as Zontians working with others can make it happen.

Warmest regards,

Lynn McKenzie

Zonta International President