

## Words of Inspiration

We are members of a society of Leading Women Educators Impacting Education Worldwide.

When Dr. Blanton created our honorary organization for women educators with 11 other women from Texas, in 1929, women movements all over the world were fighting for equal rights.

At the beginning of the last century many women did an outstanding work or service in various sectors of the society, through women associations, clubs of all kinds or just joined together. It was not always easy, but what success stories have in common, is women standing together - united.



This year in Iceland we have been celebrating 100 years of women suffrage, as Norway did two years ago. This has given us an opportunity to review history, the life of women in the last century and their contributions. We have been reminded, that all over the country we had strong voluntary women associations fighting for better life. They truly made an impact. They also worked closely with their sisters abroad, especially in Scandinavia.

Suffrage opened many doors and it became more visible how valuable women were in the society. They showed that they were not only a valuable source of ideas and skills, but also put their ideas into action. One example is how women started fighting for a new hospital **the day** they were able to vote. Men in Parliament had been discussing a new hospital for 60 years, but after women became involved the hospital rose 15 years later.

1975 was an International Women's Year, under the theme EQUALITY - DEVELOPMENT – PEACE. In Iceland various conferences were held all over the country. At one of them a Women's Congress in Reykjavík in June '75, where the Icelandic women associations had joined together, a motion was put forward: to urge all women to take the day off, on United Nations Day in October, to demonstrate the importance of their work

And on the 24th of October, all across the country - women, from every walk of life, stopped working - simply took the day off! The community was brought almost to a standstill. Day nurseries and schools were closed as well as big shops and the factories of the fishing industry. Business slowed down. Housewives walked out of their homes and the men had to take their small children to work with them - or else stay home. Cooking and other household chores were also in men's hands that day.

The Icelandic women demonstrated to themselves and to the country and maybe the whole world, the importance of women's contribution. This day is probably one of the most memorable day in the lives of those who experienced it.

Through our celebration this year we have been reminded of what women have accomplished in the last century and it certainly has been inspiring. And it is important to remember, appreciate and respect the accomplishments women fought for. The best way to honour their memory is to carry on together. There is still a lot to fight for.

In DKG we have the possibility for women to work together in all tiers of our society in all regions. Through education we have a very powerful tool. And changes in education are

changes for the future. We have to strengthen educators to use the tools available in technology and science, and to – COMMUNICATE, LEAD and MENTOR.

Mahatma Gandhi said: „ You must be the change you want to see in the world“.  
Our Rose reflects the inspiration and creativity of nature, and the red colour is a symbol of the courage needed to be successful. May the rose along with our mothers´/grandmothers´ strength lead and inspire us to be a strong force **together**, so our voice is clear and will be heard.

Ingibjörg Jónasdóttir, Gamma, Iceland.

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