



MEDICAL WOMENS SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

MWS NSW DINNER INVITATION 2018

Save the date **May 31st** for the opportunity to learn from **Dr Kimberly Ivory** - who has had a pivotal role in the innovative production *Grace Under Pressure*, as well as working with LGBTQI groups in Mongolia.

To be held at AMA House in St Leonards

Register here: <http://e.mybookingmanager.com/MWSNSWMayDinner>

CV Writing and Interview Workshop

In an increasingly competitive landscape of medicine, make your CV stand out. Come to an interactive workshop where you can receive tips on building your CV, communication, and tailored feedback from experts Dr Sharon Tivey, Professor Deb Colville, and Ms Anita Fletcher.

Save the date - **2nd June**

Register here:

<http://e.mybookingmanager.com/>



INSPIRATION FROM SIERRA LEONE - DINNER REPORT 2017

Over 30 medical women, ranging from enthusiastic medical students to senior doctors, met and networked during our bi-annual dinner meeting at the AMA House on 16th November 2017. Our invited speaker was Aminata Conteh-Biger. Her story includes unimaginable hardship, being captured and held prisoner by rebel forces during the civil war in Sierra Leone. Aminata has now built an amazing life after coming to Australia as the first Sierra Leonan refugee.

The night began with a screening of the documentary, "Daughter of Sierra Leone". This gave all attending an introduction to Aminata's background and what led her to her current focus in life, running The Aminata Maternal Foundation. This Foundation allows Aminata to help women and babies in Sierra Leone to improve their maternal health. We were captivated by the stories of the Foundation being able to assist in organising life saving caesarean sections. However we were also shocked at the number of women, including girls as young as fourteen





COMMITTEE 2018

- ✦ President - Gabrielle Casper
- ✦ Treasurer - Sharon Tivey
- ✦ Secretary - Monique Atkinson
- ✦ General committee
 - ✦ Erika Strazdins
 - ✦ Isabella Williams
 - ✦ Leshni Pillay
- ✦ AFMW Representative
 - ✦ Gabrielle Casper
 - ✦ Monique Atkinson

We would love to have you on board, and if you are interested, please contact: nsw@afmw.org.au

Mailing List and Social Media Update

A huge thank you to all our friends of MWS NSW who updated their contact details! Having you with us is the first step in moving our online presence and social media forward. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please share with them this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/ij9H7cMxFslp6Q7C2>

We are currently being trained on how to create, integrate, and update our material, with the AFMW. Exciting things are to come by mid 2018!

**MEDICAL
INTERNATIONAL
WOMENS ASSOCIATION
CALL FOR VICE
PRESIDENT - SEE
ATTACHED FLYER**

years old, who weren't so lucky.

At the close of the meeting a large number of members milled around enjoying the opportunity to mingle with like-minded women. Aminata's presentation had inspired many conversations about ways in which we, as medical women, could become involved in delivering healthcare which really made a difference to our international community. We look forward to more inspiring talks and opportunities to mingle at future MWS NSW dinner meetings.

Dr Monique Atkinson

Australian Federation for Medical Women Report

The annual Australian Federation of Medical Women (AFMW) face-to-face meeting was held in Sydney on 10th-11th November last year. Each year the AFMW Council (comprising the various State society representatives) meet to go through the regular business of the Federation and make strategic plans for the year to come. This meeting is in addition to the three teleconferences held during the year.

As a member of the Medical Women's Society of NSW (MWSNSW) you are automatically a member of AFMW and also a member of the international group, the Medical Women's International Association (MWIA).

The MWSNSW was represented by Dr Gaye Casper. Dr Monique Atkinson is our second NSW rep but was unable to attend. I also attended - this was my final meeting as AFMW President. I had spent three years in the position and did not nominate for a further term. We are fortunate to have A/Prof Deb Colville from Victoria as our new AFMW President. We were also fortunate to have Prof Cissy Yu at the meeting. She is the current Western Pacific Region Vice President. The MWIA is made up of regions, reflecting those of the United Nations. Australia sits in the Western Pacific region and Prof Yu included a visit to us whilst touring the region. She is an accomplished doctor, insightful, enthusiastic and also very elegant! Dr Sarah Coll, an orthopaedic surgeon from Cairns also attended the meeting. She heads up the 'Lady Doctors of Far North



Queensland' group and wanted to see how the state and national groups worked. Our own Erika Strazdins completed the visitor line-up - Erika has started working as an intern this year (Congrats!) and is a hard-working NSW Committee member.



We heard reports from the active state groups, being Queensland, NSW, ACT and Victoria. (The non-active states have an active 'buddy' state available for advice and encouragement, and there are several 'individual members' from WA and SA.) We also heard from the Secretary, Treasurer and the AFMW Young Member rep along with an about MWIA.

Australia was asked to nominate the next MWIA Western Pacific Region Vice President, who will take over from Prof Yu in 2019. Council spent some time discussing how to proceed with the nomination. The State groups will soon receive voting instructions and information about the two candidates who have applied for the position.

AFMW is recognised by the UN and is accredited as a non-government organisation. This means AFMW is allocated ground passes for delegates to attend the UN headquarters in New York - I think that is one very good benefit of MWSNSW membership! In addition to the possibility of attending UN meetings, there are also MWIA meetings such as the next International Congress, to be held in New York, or regional meetings.

AFMW is reviewing and updating its website and associated functionality. This will benefit each of the State groups and MWSNSW is looking forward to engaging with the various options as they are rolled out. We hope to see this completed later this year.

If you do not receive the quarterly AFMW newsletter please let me know so we can add you to the mailing list. Likewise, if you would like further information about AFMW structure or activities please email me at s.tivey@unsw.edu.au

*Sharon Tivey
Treasurer, MWS of NSW
Past President, AFMW*



Commission on the Status of Women 2018

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. During CSW's annual two-week session, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organisations, NGOs, and UN entities gather at UN headquarters in New York. The CSW is instrumental in promoting women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives throughout the world, and shaping global





standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Medical Womens International Association is an NGO we are part of (as members of AFMW) and have a proud history of contributing to CSW. A delegation of senior doctors (Professor Gaye Casper, Professor Christine Bennet), registrars (Dr Jordan Cory, Dr Natalie Yap, Dr Sally Gordon), junior doctor (Dr Erika Strazdins), and 19 exceptional medical students from Notre Dame University (Sydney and Melbourne) represented Australia and healthcare.



Over an action packed week contributed to discussions about how health intersects disciplines such as education, economics, agriculture, and business, and contributes to gender equality. Highlights of the program included active participation in UNICEF's roundtable to understand and overcome the impacts of access to feminine hygiene on girls participation in school in developing countries, presenting our research about rural women and health at the Australian Consulate, and attending the Australian event "Male Champions for Change" where we learnt about successful programs taking place in Australian business, army, and police, with the hope of applying it to the health care setting. We have become better informed and inspired, and will enthusiastically follow the advice of Elizabeth Broderick,

former Sex Discrimination Commissioner "You are powerful and privileged young women, and it is your responsibility to address gender inequality in Australia and globally." Let's work together towards a world where all women are enabled to fulfil their full personal and professional potential.

To hear more about the UN CSW, please come to our dinner event on May 31st, where a brief presentation and educational material will be shared!

Dr Erika Strazdins



We would love to hear from you!

Do you have anything you would like the MWS NSW community to know? Comments, experiences, updates, opportunities - all are welcome for our newsletter. Don't hesitate to contact us on: nsw@afmw.org.au

