



**NAROPA UNIVERSITY**  
**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

Dear Naropa community,

International Women's Day today celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The website, [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com), provides the following information about the day, abbreviated as IWD:

IWD is now an official holiday in China, Armenia, Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. The tradition sees men honoring their mothers, wives, girlfriends, colleagues, etc. with flowers and small gifts. In some countries IWD has the equivalent status of Mother's Day where children give small presents to their mothers and grandmothers.

The new millennium has witnessed a significant change and attitudinal shift in both women's and society's thoughts about women's equality and emancipation. Many from a younger generation feel that 'all the battles have been won for women' while many feminists from the 1970's know only too well the longevity and ingrained complexity of patriarchy. With more women in the boardroom, greater equality in legislative rights, and an increased critical mass of women's visibility as impressive role models in every aspect of life, one could think that women have gained true equality. The unfortunate fact is that women are still not paid equally to that of their male counterparts, women still are not present in equal numbers in business or politics, and globally women's education, health and the violence against them is worse than that of men.

However, great improvements have been made. We do have female astronauts and prime ministers, school girls are welcomed into university, women can work and have a family, women have real choices. And so the tone and nature of IWD has, for the past few years, moved

from being a reminder about the negatives to a celebration of the positives.

Annually on 8 March, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements. A global web of rich and diverse local activity connects women from all around the world ranging from political rallies, business conferences, government activities and networking events through to local women's craft markets, theatre performances, fashion parades and more.

Many global corporations have also started to more actively support IWD by running their own internal events and through supporting external ones. For example, on 8 March search engine and media giant Google some years even changes its logo on its global search pages. Year on year IWD is certainly increasing in status. The United States even designates the whole month of March as 'Women's History Month'. Globally there are many very large scale highly organized IWD events.

So make a difference, think globally and act locally! Make everyday International Women's Day. Do your bit to ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.

The International Women's Day website at [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com) is a global hub for sharing International Women's Day news, events and resources. It provides a free service to women and organizations around the world wanting to share and promote their IWD activity, videos, opinions and ideas.

The United Nations has chosen an annual theme each year and information about how the UN is observing International Women's Day can be found at:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd/>

Today, I would like to acknowledge the many contributions of the women who have made Naropa University what it is today. Thank you all for investing your very selves into the fabric of the institution and for making our community special.

With gratitude and warm wishes,

Stuart C. Lord  
President

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