

## **WJA Foundation Announces a New Charitable Fund to Support Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education**

The Women's Jewelry Association Foundation is launching a Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education Fund this week in celebration of Earth Day on April 22nd, 2021. The fund will expand WJA Foundation's reach by providing access to new and relevant areas of education, and opportunities to facilitate learning and mentorship for WJA members.

This new initiative is a continuation of the generosity of WJA Foundation over the last several decades with the goal of building intentionally for the future. The organization believes the study of responsible sourcing and sustainability, including areas such as gender equality, transparency and the environment, will be pivotal to the future of our industry. Through this initiative, WJA Foundation is excited to do its part in supporting mindful leaders who will emerge and help innovate the future of the jewelry and watch industries, with the goal of protecting people and the planet for generations to come.

In launching the Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education Fund, WJA Foundation is reframing its grants and scholarships opportunities under a new multidimensional framework. The framework will now exist in pillars: WJA Foundation's General Education Fund for students looking to enter or further their careers in the jewelry and watch industries; Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education Fund; and future pillars are forthcoming to be announced.

"This level of intention enables us to be more involved in the pressing needs of our industry and equip future leaders accordingly. I'm optimistic in how the WJA Foundation will continue to play a key role in shaping the industry's future through more targeted giving initiatives like the Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education Fund." says Jennifer Markas, WJA Executive Director.

Through its giving, WJA Foundation will enable jewelry professionals to pursue ongoing education in the fields of responsible sourcing and sustainability through our collaboration with one of the top institutions in the world. WJA Foundation has arranged to support the education (currently live online) of WJA members at NYU Stern School of Business Executive Education. Courses such as "Corporate Sustainability" taught by Professor Tensie Whelan, Director of Stern's Center for Sustainable Business and former President of the Rainforest Alliance, will help their businesses be a positive force for change. In addition, all current WJA members in good standing will receive a special enrollment rate on all NYU Stern Executive Education sustainability courses with their WJA membership.

Brandee Dallow, WJA Foundation President, shares: “I’m proud to lead WJA Foundation through this exciting initiative. Our board’s forward-looking vision, coupled with partnerships with leading institutions and organizations, will enable us to invest in our industry’s future leaders. Now is the time to develop sustainability champions at every level of our industry to help create positive impacts on people, to protect the planet and to move our businesses and industry forward.”

Individual donations, corporate contributions and sponsorships are now being accepted for this fund. Sign up to donate to WJA Foundation’s Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability Education Fund:

The WJA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Contributions to qualified 501(c)(3) organizations may be deductible as charitable contributions on a donor’s federal income tax return.

About the Women's Jewelry Association Foundation:

The Women's Jewelry Association Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)3 corporation created to support WJA's mission of providing educational and business opportunities that allow women to reach their full career potential. The Foundation accepts gifts from individuals and corporations that are used to fund the association's extensive scholarship and grant programs. Since its inception, the Foundation has awarded over \$500,000 to women in the jewelry and watch industries.

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