



International Women's Day: A Call to Accelerate Action with Zonta Blackall Range

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International Women's Day (March 8th), first celebrated in 1911 is a day to recognise the social, political, cultural, and economic achievements of women. It's also a vital call to action for the changes still needed.

This year's theme, *#AccelerateAction*, emphasises the urgency of achieving gender equality. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report estimates it could take until 2158 to reach true parity across key measures like economic participation, education, health, and political empowerment. Education is a powerful driver of change, breaking cycles of poverty, leading to healthier families, offering protection from violence, raising income, and benefiting future generations.

Everyone can contribute to accelerating action. The Zonta Club of Blackall Range engages in various local and global projects:

- Fundraising for priorities including education scholarships (from high school through to tertiary study) and donations to local community services. More information about available scholarships will be released this month. Zonta's scholarship program empowers women through education, a key driver of economic independence and social change, aligning directly with International Women's Day's emphasis on educational access and opportunity for women. These scholarships help women achieve their full potential, contributing to a more equitable society.
- Sending birthing kits worldwide to reduce mother and infant mortality in vulnerable regions. These birthing kits directly address the International Women's Day focus on women's health and survival, providing essential resources to reduce preventable maternal and infant deaths in vulnerable communities. By supporting this project, you are contributing to a healthier future for mothers and babies, a crucial aspect of gender equality.
- Campaigning to end violence against women and girls. Ending violence against women and girls is a critical International Women's Day priority. Zonta's advocacy work and support for organisations like Speak Up Now based in Maleny, directly addresses this issue, working towards a world where women are safe and free from violence. This is a fundamental aspect of achieving gender equality
- Awards recognising young women at high school who excel in community service and leadership.

Zonta Blackall Range is also a founding member of Speak Up Now – Stop Domestic and Family Violence – Maleny and Blackall Range, a vital collaboration of local service clubs and organisations using advocacy, information, and public awareness to reduce family violence and elder abuse.

“More rights and opportunities for women doesn’t mean less rights for others,” says Zonta President, Margy Henderson. “It’s about creating a fairer world for everyone to thrive. Even by simply sharing information about women’s issues and achievements (like this International Women’s Day article!), and having open discussions, we can make an impact together.”



Zonta President, Margy Henderson

Zonta Blackall Range is celebrating International Women’s Day and Queensland Women’s Week (March 2nd – 9th) with these upcoming events:

- **Dusk on the Deck/Woman of Achievement:** March 7th
- **International Women’s Day:** March 8th
- **“Meet Zonta” Coffee Meetup:** March 12th, 1 pm at La Botiga, Mapleton. Come enjoy a casual coffee, learn more about Zonta Blackall Range, and connect with its members.

Zonta Blackall Range is involved in a variety of activities that support women and the local community. A key initiative is the Zonta Blackall Range’s Young Women in Public Affairs (YWPA) Award. This program recognises and empowers young women who demonstrate leadership skills and a commitment to public service. The club proudly congratulates Kelly Schofield, the 2024 recipient of the Zonta Blackall Range YWPA Award! The award highlights the club’s commitment to recognising and supporting young women with leadership potential in the Blackall Range community.



Kelly Schofield & Linda McElrea.

In February, Zonta held two successful fundraising events: a plant stall and a fun Trivia Night. Along with their Hinterland Business Directory, these events raised funds to support the club's various projects.

Zonta International's mission is to empower women worldwide through service and advocacy, a mission that resonates deeply with the core principles of International Women's Day. Its work in education, health, and advocacy directly reflects the International Women's Day call for action to achieve gender equality. Zonta Blackall Range is committed to advancing the rights and opportunities of women and girls, a commitment that aligns perfectly with the goals of International Women's Day. As Zonta Blackall Range president, Margy Henderson said, "we believe that by working together, we can create a more equitable world for all".

Beyond March 8th, commit to making a difference in the lives of women and girls. Volunteer your time, donate to organisations working for gender equality, and advocate for policies that promote women's rights.

Connect with Zonta Blackall Range:

- **Website:** www.bit.ly/ZontaBlackallRange
- **Email:** membership@zontablackallrange.org.au
- **Social Media:** Stay up-to-date with Zonta's activities on Facebook and Instagram. (Facebook: @zontablackallrange, Instagram: @zontablackallrange – search and follow for updates.)