



COLLEGIO NUOVO  
FONDAZIONE SANDRA E ENEA MATTEI  
VIA ABBIATEGRASSO, 404  
PAVIA

**Women's Education Worldwide Student Leadership Conference  
Collegio Nuovo – Fondazione Sandra e Enea Mattei**



All 5 continents - America, Asia, Africa, Australia and Europe – with 41 students who were selected by 18 institutions of the **Women's Education Worldwide (WEW)** - were represented on the occasion of the **WEW Student Leadership Conference** hosted and promoted by **Collegio Nuovo – Fondazione Sandra e Enea Mattei** - Pavia (6-10 June 2011), with the contribution by **Fondazione Cariplo**.

The event was the **first WEW students' conference to take place in Pavia** and it followed the meeting for president and deans hosted by Collegio Nuovo in 2008 with the official greeting of **Emma Bonino**, Vice President of the Italian Senate and the presence of the **Italian Minister for Equal Opportunities Barbara Pollastrini**.

**Collegio Nuovo** was among the first **University Colleges in Europe**, and the only in Italy, to be invited to join WEW from the very beginning when the network - which now numbers more than 50 institutions committed to women's empowerment - was first launched by **Mount Holyoke College** and **Smith College**. The first meeting of presidents and deans was held in 2004, with the presence of Nobel Prize Winner for Economics prof. **Amartya Sen**, Founding President of the Human Development and Capability Association on

whose board sits prof. **Enrica Chiappero**. As Professor at both the **University of Pavia** and the **Institute for Advanced Study**, she was also in the opening panel of the students' conference and introduced the results of a pilot study on education capabilities carried out by the Alumna Alberta Spreafico, the first Collegio Nuovo student to go to **Barnard College**, thanks to the agreement signed with the Collegio Nuovo. To some extent the survey suggests that the conference aimed also at continuing in the path of the very first WEW meeting.

Students from China to India, from Japan to the USA, from South Korea to Sudan attended a selection of lectures at the women's college founded by the entrepreneur and mathematician Sandra Bruni Mattei. "**These young women coming from all over the world study in the most prestigious colleges** – explains **Paola Bernardi, Principal of Collegio Nuovo** – they have been picked from among the best. This initiative is an important 'shop window' for the Pavia University system, as testified by the contribution of high-ranking teachers of the University of Pavia and of the Institute for Advanced Study. We highly appreciated the inauguration with the lecture held by the **Coordinator of the Scientific Committee for the UniPV's 650th Anniversary Celebration**, prof. **Dario Mantovani** and the closing ceremony that included the participation of both the **Rector of the University**, prof. **Angiolino Stella** and the **Director of the IUSS**, prof. **Roberto Schmid**, together with the **President of the Collegio Nuovo**, **Bruna Bruni**. The aim of the conference was also to contribute to the internationalisation of our university system: thus we are deeply grateful also to **Prof. Gianni Vaggi, Vice Rector for International Affairs**, who welcomed us in the prestigious Aula Volta, named after one of the most renowned scientist of the University of Pavia, the inventor of the electric battery!" Lectures covered subjects ranging from science (prof. **Lucio Fregonese** and prof. **Giorgio Mellerio**), history and economics (prof. **Maria Antonietta Confalonieri** and dr. **Alberto Botta**), but also literature (prof. **Carla Riccardi** and prof. **Anna Modena**), architecture (prof. **Angelo Bugatti** and prof. **Tiziano Cattaneo**) and fashion.



Alexa, student of **Wellesley College**, which counts Hillary Clinton among its Alumnae, is very clear about her ideas: "These days Italy is in the newspapers because of its economic situation" – she explains – "But even if the moment is not ideal, I believe that we can learn a lot during times of crisis." - "I truly appreciate the diversity of the lectures that you offered and the input of the students from Collegio Nuovo. I not only learned a lot about the University, the College, but also Pavia and Italy's culture. I am looking forward to sharing the knowledge gained with friends and faculty at Smith and elsewhere" said Himani of **Smith College**.



Despite the packed programme for the week, to which also **prof. Paola Profeta** from **Università Bocconi** contributed with an overview of the impact of Italian women in the workplace , there was still time for many social events and cultural visits. “We arranged an inspiring meeting with **Barbara Stefanelli, deputy director of *Corriere della Sera*** – says Saskia Avalor, coordinator of Cultural and Academic activities at Collegio Nuovo – and we made trips to **Turin**, the first capital of Italy, and to **Vigevano**, home to a preview of a Museum of Fashion, as expected by the **City Deputy for Culture and Arts Giorgio Forni**. Last but not least, let us recall the contribution of many Collegio Nuovo Alumnae - the President of the Alumnae Association - and of course, the **students who had the chance to be actively engaged also in the preparation of the conference with the help of their peers and mentors**”.

It is no wonder then, that, according to one of the international students’ accounts, Italy is a place where they feel that they can **plan for the future at the same time recalling the past**: the importance of building bridges in space and in time, between generations.

