WOMEN CULTIVATING PEACE: Climate Warming, Food Sovereignty, and Regenerative Agriculture (W1)
World-wide women farmers are increasing in numbers, but their power and control over their lives has not followed. Yet, there is hope in the alliances they and their male allies are building, as together they practice and promote a sustainable food system. What are the challenges they face today? And how can all of us be a part of reclaiming agricultural interdependence and responsible food production around the world? A successful ecological revolution, from the ground up, is a model for all resistance to multi-national corporate takeover of our lives.

KNOWING WHAT’S POSSIBLE: Change the Story, Change the Future (W3)
Belief in seven scarcities keeps us from seeking the livable future that may be just within reach. Yet, the hard evidence exists to turn these beliefs around: We can reverse climate change. We can restore the health of our world. We can meet the needs of all without harming the planet. Solutions already exist for most of our problems. And, the means exist to get our hands on the money—and the power—to do what’s needed to bring these solutions into widespread use.

In this session, we’ll look at the evidence—and the stories—and how we can infuse these empowering truths into every action and every campaign to spread them as wide as possible. We’ll consider how such shifts in belief could awaken the disheartened, the disaffected, and the divided and thus mobilize far reaching response and action. And, we’ll envision how it might be that even as “things fall apart,” such a rapidly expanding belief in what’s possible points the way to how peace and freedom are becoming not only achievable, but also necessary to the very survival of our species.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT: Change the Rules, Change the Outcomes (W8)
Community empowerment is the effort at once to bring money and decision-making power back to local communities—and opening up that power to all affected by its exercise. It is to take hold of the levers of change and thus to open up new ways to affect just about everything else we care about.

In this session, we look closely at a few of these levers: participatory budgeting, public banking, and shaping local rule-making. Each constitutes a substantial change in the rules of the game—and points the way to a viable economic, workplace, and collaborative democracy. We’ll hand out the “CARTE Community Democracy Toolkit” and go over its use.

THE PRACTICUM/LOCAL2GLOBAL PROGRAM: INTERNATIONAL AND WILPF US AT THE ANNUAL UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN: CSW (Saturday Morning Plenary)
Over the past years, WILPF US has sponsored and helped fund the Practicum/Local2Global Program, a week of seminars and attendance at the many programs, panels and workshops, and listening sessions during a week at the United National Commission on the Status of Women.
University and College students make up the Practicum group, while WILPF US Branch and at-large members apply for and are selected for the Local2Global group.

This Plenary will provide the chance for WILPF US members to learn about this exceptional opportunity for students to meet WILPF women and learn about WILPF’s history and programs. Together all learn much more about the UN, the importance of the CSW, and whose voices are at the UN table and whose voices still must be lifted up.

You’ll hear from Melissa Torres and Dixie Hairston, Directors of the Practicum/Local2Global Program, and several 2017 Practicum students and Local2Global WILPF participants.

This year’s sixty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 13 to 24 March 2017. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attended the session. The Themes of CSW 61 were:

• Priority theme: Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work.
• Review theme: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (agreed conclusions of the fifty-eighth session)
• Emerging Issue/Focus area: The empowerment of indigenous women.