

EMERGING LEADERS 2008

The Emerging Leader awards are presented to branch leaders who are first term board members or officers or AAUW members for less than 3 years who demonstrate leadership potential through their enthusiasm, creative ideas, and commitment to AAUW's mission.

Following is a list of the women honored at the New York State Convention in 2008:

Adirondack – Kathy Black

Kathy Black developed a PowerPoint presentation on the history of AAUW and the Adirondack branch to kick off the membership drive in September. She is the co-program chairperson for the branch. She hosted the program development meeting, secured locations for programs and obtained ads for the newsletter. She was Equity Director in 2006 and she also served on the Human Trafficking project committee. Kathy initiated a project making quilts for South African children through Skidmore's Edu Program.

Alfred-Hornell – Rebecca Shick

After joining in the fall of 2006 Rebecca Shick accepted the position as Secretary and Communications Director. Becky set up a website for the branch, wrote articles for the newspaper, and took photos at meetings. Becky works with the Director of the Woman's Center at Alfred University on an AAUW grant to educate college women about the gender pay gap and financial management. The student team is working on a documentary to be release in April. Becky was also involved in raising money for the fight against cancer in the Hornell Community Relay for Life.

Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown – Dianne Kierpiec

Dianne is a second year member of the branch. This year she is co-chairing the Sister to Sister Summit and presenting at the event. She brought new committee members and sponsors to the event. Dianne is also involved in the planning and coordination of the monthly programs and she plays an integral part of the community donation project which benefited soldiers serving in the Middle East. She is an enthusiastic and motivated member and is always willing to give of herself.

Bath – Virginia Murphy

Victoria Murphy won the branch's Mature Woman's Scholarship in 2006. As a first-year member, she contributed program ideas and participated in several program presentations. Last year she was Program Vice President.

Buffalo – Dr. Susan McClary

Dr. Susan McClary became Program Vice President within a short time of joining the branch. She chaired the Velma Cobb Scholarship, took on large responsibilities for Tech Savvy and is always willing to help.

Elmira-Corning – JoAnne Krolak

JoAnne Krolak organized the branch's Equal Pay Day activity under the sponsorship of Elmira Business & Profession Women at the Community Book Store. She gathers and prints packets for the Unhappy Lunch Hour. She has tweaked the membership brochure, revamped the website, and prints fashion show flyers and tickets for fundraisers. She is the newsletter editor, printer and mailer.

Fairport Area – Dr. Mary Palamar

Dr. Mary Palamar collaborated with the United Nations Association of Rochester and the faculty at Nazareth College to develop a community awareness presentation on Human Trafficking. She is the Public Policy Chairperson and is on the State Public Policy Team. She chaired the District 2 Fall Conference last October. She also organized a theatre trip to Niagara-on-the-Lake for Fairport branch members.

Greater Rochester Area – Heide S. Parreno

Heide Parreno is the leader of a new interest group, Women Helping Women. The group is connected to the Sojourner House, a home for women in transition from area shelters. Women who have been helped by Sojourner House identified their most pressing needs as mentoring, tutoring and visits to area colleges. Heide is the guiding force in helping to advance the lives of these women.

Islip Area – Rose Passannante

Rose Passannante contacted Adelphi, St. Joseph's, Farmingdale State and NIT in regard to the National Conference of College Women Student Leaders. Islip Area raised funds to send a college student to Washington. Rose is the liaison to these colleges. She also sold chances on a quilt for a fundraiser, registered participants for branch events, registered voters at Dowling College and assisted with LAF fundraisers.

Jamestown – Brenda Johnson

After retiring Brenda Johnson became completely involved in the publicity for the Jamestown major fundraiser, "The What's New Fair." She is currently Membership Co-Vice President. She was instrumental in helping her branch to have the second highest percentage increase in membership.

Kingston – Ruth Wahtera

Ruth Wahtera served as newsletter editor and created the Communications Committee. A former hospital administrator, she used her leadership skills and technology expertise to become the web consultant. The web/blog has 700 unique visitors from 158 countries, a calendar, essays and community enrichment.

Mid-Island – Mildred Becker

Mildred is treasurer of the Mid-Island Branch. She handles the account professionally. Mildred initiated some changes in the way events are booked and keeps records that the branch can easily follow. Mildred is also on the New York State Convention Committee.

New York City –Dr. Chigurupati Rani

Dr. Chigurupati Rani, an IT Professor at City University of New York, is a director at large for the AAUW NYC and the Communications Chair. She publishes the monthly newsletter, the Courier.

NorthShore – Jill Hackett

After Jill Hackett retired as a second grade teacher she joined AAUW. Within two years she recruited ten other retirees from her North Shore school district. She is co-chair of the Music Study group and a member of the program committee. Her second grade students artistically designed two quilts in her honor and their parents assembled the squares.

Poughkeepsie – Geeta Desai

Geeta Desai volunteered to be the Diversity Chair shortly after joining AAUW. She planned "A Global Gathering" which was attended by 75 diverse women. Partnering with the Catharine Street Center, the Diversity Committee assists with learning experiences for intercity children. At AAUW NYS Convention 2007, Geeta presented a workshop, "The Real Digital Divide: How the Information Age Has Widened the Equity Gap" and spoke on "Globalization and Women in India" at the Bina Roy breakfast. She is planning a Diversity Conference for next fall.

RocklandCounty – Ann Brennan

Ann Brennan is the Corresponding Secretary. She started The Rockland Readers, a daytime book club which meets once a month at Barnes and Noble. The program which serves AAUW members who don't want to drive at night is growing. It has resulted in a new member for the branch and others who are interested in joining.

St. Lawrence County – Innam Dajany and Maureen Sayles

Innam Dajany and Maureen Sayles established a High Peaks satellite of SLC branch. They organized two AAUW membership and programming events in their area and hosted the 2007 District 7 Fall Conference. As a team, they enrolled eight new members in the Saranac Lake area. They have done exemplary work to expand AAUW's impact in Northern New York

Skaneateles Area – Mary Beth Bronk

Mary Beth Bronk initiated the first International Women's Day. Women administrators from a shelter spoke and AAUW members and friends read their poetry and essays. The second year she collaborated with the Chamber of Commerce. Two hundred people attended the function. The third event was held in March. Mary Beth also developed a database for visitors to the "Celebrating Women in Art" show. She encourages others to join AAUW as she serves the PTA, the Symphony Guild, and a writers' group.

Smithtown Area – Nancy Ellis

Nancy Ellis, an attorney and professor at Suffolk Community College, joined the branch because she was supportive of the accomplishments and goals of LAF. She was instrumental in 2007 Pay Equity Day, handing out Pay Day bars at the railroad station. She is a member of the Public Policy Committee. She spoke at the District 6 Fall Conference about her personal experience, emphasizing the research in "Behind the Pay Gap."

Southern NY – Catherine McGowan

Catherine McGowan is the representative to the Status of Women Council, a networking organization for local women's groups. She encouraged people to attend the AAUW honoree awards dinner, organized a new member mixer, and volunteered to work with the program committee this year. .

Staten Island –Edwina F. Martin

Edwina F. Martin accepted the position of Program Vice President to fill a vacancy. She has very creative programming ideas and has worked hard to obtain outstanding speakers such as Christine Quinn, Speaker of the New York City Council. She arranged a collaborative program with Staten Island Out LOUD, a local arts group, and Vive Voce, a musical quintet, in recognition of Coretta Scott King. She is planning other programs on domestic violence and pay equity.

Syracuse – Mary Buckley

Mary Buckley, a retired social worker, volunteered to research stored archives at Syracuse University to find the court decision on the Hazel Clark endowment. She also provides transportation for non-driving members to branch meetings.

Westchester – Barbara Sarver

Barbara Sarver is a member of the Board of Directors and the Branch Record Keeper. She maintains a data base for each member. As Yearbook Coordinator she designs, edits, proofreads and supervises the printing of the Yearbook. She also helped to update the strategic plan, policy sheet and goals. As a part of the Expanding Your Opportunities Committee she designs and edits the Journal, writes thank you notes for contributors and volunteers on the day of the conference.