

# AAUWNYSFOCUS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN ♦ NEW YORK STATE ♦ SUMMER 2015 ♦ VOLUME 64, ISSUE 3 ♦ ISSN 1056 3199



## They're on the right track

By KIMBERLY POLLARD  
and ANGELA CLARK-TAYLOR

**S**uccess! There is no better word than that to describe AAUW of New York State's first student-specific program at the 2015 State Convention. The one-day "Next Generation Leadership Track" engaged a small but energetic group of students from The College at Brockport, Daemen College, and St. Bonaventure University.

Students participated in workshops including Managing One's Digital Image; Internships 101: How to Determine the Good from the Bad, Market Yourself, and Write a Winning Cover Letter; and Promoting Equity & Social Justice -



Building Your Career Through Advocacy, Education, Philanthropy, and Research.

Students were empowered by our wonderful keynote speaker, Dr. Donna Fernandes, President/CEO of the Buffalo Zoo, who encouraged them to follow their passions, not to fear the curves in

the road, and to view barriers as opportunities to climb.

Students also met and mingled with AAUW members, local elected officials and each other – embracing the networking opportunities to ask provocative questions and share their visions for the future.

As a result of the Next Generation Student Track, all attendees are now e-student affiliates or AAUW members, SUNY Brockport officially recognized the AAUW Student Organization as an official club on that campus, and several students attended the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), and all of the students

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# Spring into action for a great year

Convention 2015 on beautiful Grand Island was a wonderful weekend of learning, reaffirmation of purpose, networking, and enjoying friends. We had an increase in both attendance (144 registered members plus guests and student attendees), and an increase in first-time attendees (one-third of registrants).

It was a weekend of highlights and firsts ... the New York State Lieutenant Governor addressed our convention; we had our first ever New Leadership Track for college and graduate students; and we offered our first continuing legal education workshop, in collaboration with the Women's Bar Association of the State of New York, for attorney attendees.

It was also a productive meeting in terms of counterpart sessions and district meeting planning, and as a result we already have dates and topics for several district conferences:

- ♦ District 1: A screening of "The Hunting Ground" followed by a discussion of Title IX
- ♦ District 2: Oct. 17



Jennifer Lee, filmmaker, "Feminist: Stories of Women's Liberation"

- ♦ District 3: Oct. 24; "From Mud Pies to Dinosaur Bones: Inspiring Girls' Interest in STEM"
- ♦ District 4: Sept. 26; "Food Insecurity: The Next Chapter"
- ♦ District 5: Oct. 3;

♦ District 7: Tentatively, Bullying 2.0

If you are looking for inspiration for program planning and events for 2015-2016, I encourage you to attend our AAUW-NYS Summer Meeting, which will be held July 24-26 at Cazenovia College. Time will be allocated during the weekend for counterpart sessions, district conference planning, Convention 2016 planning, and leadership development and transition planning.

For more assistance for your 2015-2016 program planning, you may also wish to review the AAUW 2015-16 National Priorities, a summary of which I re-

cently had posted on the President's page of the website.

Highlights include: following up on the report "Solving the Equation: The Variable for Women's Success in Engineering and Computing," with emphasis on Tech Savvy, Tech Track, Campus Action Grants, etc.; increasing emphasis on building C/U partnerships to cultivate new members and leaders and increase visibility; and keeping a focus on developing mission-based programming.

National public policy priorities will include a new toolkit for Title IX coordinators and re-authorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as No Child Left Behind.

I hope you all have joyous end-of-year-and-summer celebrations to recognize branch accomplishments, bestow scholarships and get energized for the coming year.

Attending the Summer Meeting is a great way to keep the program planning momentum going. Hope to see you in 'Caz!

## Celebrating nonagenarians

AAUW-NYS President Edwina Frances Martin was on hand May 26 to honor four longtime members of the Staten Island Branch. From the left are Louise Banks, Vickie DeLuca, Madeline Branen and Catherine "Mac" O'Callaghan.

PHOTO BY  
CLAIRE REGAN





# Summer Meeting workshops

## **New Leadership Models**

**Workshop:** This roundtable discussion, led by your peers, will include successful leadership development models, mentoring models, transition planning, and bylaws considerations to support the strengths of your branch and its leaders. These examples will stress the importance of matching leaders to their strengths, prioritizing quality over quantity, and avoiding burnout. Moderated by Loreen Ginnitti, AAUW-NYS Bylaws Chair, featuring panelists from Elmira-Corning, Ithaca and Westchester Branches.

## **Making the Community Connection**

**Workshop:** This roundtable discussion led by your peers will offer examples of processes branches have used to identify community needs and choose the right community partners. Moderated by Jane Russell, AAUW-NYS Program Vice President, featuring panelists from Cortland, Jamestown, Jefferson County and Poughkeepsie Branches.

## 2015 SUMMER MEETING PLANNING COMMITTEE

Edwina Frances Martin, Esq. AAUW-NYS President; Jane Russell, NYS Program VP; Janice Brown, NYS Development VP; Donna Seymour, NYS Public Policy VP.; Nancy Mion, NYS LAF Director; Lucienne Nicholson, NYS EOF Director; Mary Lou Davis, NYS Immediate Past President/STEM Chair/District Director; Valora Blackson, NYS Diversity Chair; Margaret Williams, Convention 2016 Chair; Kim Pollard, AAUW Regional Field Representative.



This year promises another fun and engaging AAUW-NYS Summer Meeting weekend, July 24-26. There will be sessions on New Leadership Models and Making the Community Connection, a keynote from Regional Field Representative Kim Pollard and brainstorming sessions for district conferences and Convention 2016.

Enjoy opportunities for networking on the beautiful campus of Cazenovia College, located just outside Syracuse.

To register, go to [www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org).



# Courageous enough to challenge Yale

By NANCY MION  
AAUW-NYS LAF Director

**S**usan Burhans v. Yale University is the most recent case adopted in May by the AAUW Board on the recommendation of the LAF Committee and staff.

What is her lawsuit all about? According to her complaint, Susan was hired by Yale University in 1999 into a newly-created position in order to improve campus safety and campus/law enforcement relationships.



During her tenure, Susan learned more about the problems of campus sexual assault and wanted to help the school and its students develop better procedures for handling complaints. As a result of her work, Susan suspected that Yale might be in violation of Title IX.

After she brought those Title IX concerns to the attention of Yale senior leadership, she alleges, she was systematically retaliated against and eventually driven out of her job.

She alleges that when she repeatedly called attention to Yale's non-compliance with Title IX and similar laws to administra-

tors or suggested remedy programs, she was rebuffed and even punished.

She alleges that Yale administrators met her initiatives with indifference, hostility and retaliation.

The "retaliatory actions" allegedly included taking away her supervisory and decision-making authority; denying her fair pay and reducing her wages; reducing the size of her office; rejecting her many applications for promotions and other employment, and ultimately terminating her employment. This despite the fact that for 10 years, she had received excellent performance evaluations.

It is worth noting that for a case to be considered by the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund for support, it must address sex discrimination in the workplace or academia and offer potential for significance beyond the individual case (either in terms of legal precedent or public awareness) I think you will agree this case meets these criteria.

Our AAUW research has brought the deleterious effects of sexual harassment to the forefront.

AAUW leadership has agreed that this is a landmark case, the first of many involving sexual assault on campus, where victims' advocates or Title IX coordinators who attempted to change their schools' procedures, faced retaliation as a result.

We have the opportunity to help these brave people who have placed their professional lives on the line. They worked to enforce federal laws that protect women's rights and are now in the courts fighting what happened to them as a result of their efforts.

Please support them with your donations to the Legal Advocacy Fund.

## Branch histories are worth preserving

By HELEN ENGEL  
AAUW-NYS Historian

Every member is a part of their Branch history. Make sure your Branch history is updated and the archives current.

Now is the time to go through all that paper and those emails to decide what should be included in your Branch archives, given to your successor, if you are a Branch officer, and what can be discarded.

If a board member, materials for the archives should include information from before your term, if it has not already been included, and materials from your term. Branch members, not on the board, may also have useful information that should be saved. If in doubt, be sure to consult with other members.

The items archived should include everything that you feel is important – correspondence (including emails), programs, awards (criteria, samples, recipients, date), presentations, publications (such as brochures), committee meeting reports, clippings (with source, date, and page), legal documents, photographs (with the identity of the persons, date and event on the back – if possible), financial statements, audit reports, copies of important speeches given, bylaws and revisions, press releases, minutes, audio visual recordings and scrapbook pages.

Make sure you use acid free paper for copies. Information that can be tossed might include: drafts, working copies, routine correspondence, duplicates, externally created publications, old forms, receipts, notes, and telephone messages.

For further information on archives go to the AAUW-NYS website ([www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org)), under the History tab, and to the National website ([www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)). The National website has two guides "Guidelines of Preserving State and Branch Archive" and "Record Management Guidelines for State and Branches," that can be downloaded. Both have useful information.

It is important to keep you branch history and branch archives current. If your Branch doesn't have either, form a group to start working on them now.

What your Branch has done is important to you and to others both now and in the future. Aim for historical significance, remember history was once today.





## NEW MEMBER PROFILE / **BILL BENZINGER**

# AAUW is his latest, greatest adventure

By **NANCY MION**  
AAUW-NYS LAF Director

Joining the Islip Area Branch in February is Bill Benzinger's latest adventure. Now retired, he holds an undergraduate degree from Southampton College of Long Island University and worked as an earth science teacher for Smithtown Central Schools for 34 years.

His wife, Debby, has been an AAUW member for 18 years.

"During that time, I was a supporter of the organization" and developed an inter-

est in its mission, Bill explains. He attended the state convention in Buffalo and participated in a long-distance swimming fundraiser, covering just over two miles in two days.

"In my years as an educator, I always insisted in fairness and equality for both genders," Bill says. "Men and women in my profession are usually treated this way. I was surprised to find that this is not the norm in higher education institutions and private business."

Bill hopes to support AAUW in its efforts against gender discrimination.

He recently completed a three-day hike in the Grand Canyon – 27 grueling miles covering 5,000 vertical feet. "I trained a year for this; it wasn't enough!" Bill admits. "The National Park Service has a slogan: 'Hiking down is optional, hiking out is not.'"

Even his reading list is full of adventure. His last good read was "Wild" by Cheryl Strayed, about a woman in her late 20s who undertakes a solo hike on the Pacific Crest Trail covering 1,200 miles from Southern California to the Canadian border.



## Save the date for Convention 2016

*April 15-17 at the Holiday Inn  
in scenic Saratoga Springs, N.Y.*





# State convention album

APRIL 24-26, 2015 ON GRAND ISLAND





**AAUW-NYS  
ELECTED OFFICERS**

**President**

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**EOF Director**

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**NATIONAL CONVENTION**

**NYS solidarity in San Diego**

By EDWINA FRANCES MARTIN  
AAUW-NYS President

From June 18 to 21, I joined members from AAUW-NYS for a productive national convention in San Diego.

I attended the presidents' meeting on Thursday and we scattered throughout the convention from Friday through Sunday to attend many workshops on topics such as diversity, recruitment, maintaining non-profit status and volunteer management.

In addition to the workshops, there were several inspiring plenary sessions on topics such as women in leadership, as well as AAUW updates.

As a brief recap of AAUW business accomplished at the meeting, voting results were announced:

Patricia Fae Ho was re-elected National President and Alicia Hetman was elected Vice President.

Beginning July 1, their job titles became AAUW Board Chair and AAUW Board Vice Chair, respectively.

From New York State, Eileen Hartmann was re-elected as a national board member.

And the bylaws proposal to remove the degree requirement for AAUW membership failed.

If you have not already had a chance to review, here is the link to the AAUW election results: [aauw.org/resource/national-election/](http://aauw.org/resource/national-election/).

I tweeted out many pictures and messages during the national convention; if you have moment, take a look; my Twitter handle is @EdwinaWinne.





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**MISSION STATEMENT**

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

**AAUW VALUE PROMISE**

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

**VISION STATEMENT**

AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

**DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

Focus, a quarterly newsletter, is published by the American Association of University Women-New York State. The distribution cost of \$4 is included in state dues.

Questions and articles should be addressed to: Focus Director Claire Regan, Associate Managing Editor, Staten Island Advance, 950 Fingerboard Rd., Staten Island, N.Y. 10305. Phone: 718-816-2845.

Email: [focus@aauw-nys.org](mailto:focus@aauw-nys.org).

Submissions are accepted at the discretion of the editor. Focus is a publication of the AAUW-NYS Board.

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# On the right track at convention

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have expressed an interest in applying for AAUW of New York State's first Student Advisory Council. From October through May, AAUW-NYS Student Advisory Council members will serve as AAUW ambassadors; advise AAUW-NYS board members, branches and staff on the needs of college students and lead gender equality projects on their campuses.

Serving on the Advisory Council provides college women with many opportunities to represent the voices of students, develop as leaders, network, and gain valuable résumé-building experience.

Applications are now available – please share with any students you think may be interested.

Promoting equity and education for women and girls is not just a slogan – it's a way of life for AAUW members. With more than 60 College/University (C/U) partners and over 600 student affiliates across the state, engaging young women in the decision-making process and empowering them to break through barriers is a priority here in



New York. This year's Student Track was an excellent start and we look forward to further engaging students on college campuses across the state this year.

We hope AAUW members and branches will reach out to local College/University partner members to strengthen the relationships with students, faculty and staff on campus, and to collaborate on upcoming events and activities.

Remember – these young women are our future, and will carry on the AAUW legacy.

More photos from the Student Track are available on the AAUW-NYS Facebook page ([www.Facebook.com/AAUW.NYS](http://www.Facebook.com/AAUW.NYS)) as well as on Twitter (@AAUWNY).