

Empower Yourself! Geeta Desai, Program VP sets our *FOCUS* on the 2017 AAUW NYS Convention.

AAUW Funds: Programs and Initiatives. Nancy Mion, Development VP, talks about all of the great work being done with your contributions.

Membership is Everybody's Business! by Peggy Tiffany, Membership VP.



FOCUS



American Association of University Women • New York State

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Reaching Out to Our Communities

By Betty Harrel
Administrative Director

Middle school girls got excited about hands-on STEM activities. Young children's faces lit up when they received two new books to call their own. Specific internet safety strategies were presented to middle school students. High school students wrote compelling essays on who should appear on the new \$10 bill. These programs and many more were funded in part by grants from AAUW NYS.

For the past several years, state program grants have been available. Each branch or district may apply for up to \$500 to help build AAUW visibility, provide mission-based programming, and increase membership. Applications which include goals, a project outline, a statement demonstrating membership and visibility aspects, and a detailed budget may be submitted throughout the program year. A brief final report showing expenses and results is also required.

To apply for a 2016-17 grant, please use the following link: www.aauw-nys.org and click on the Treasury tab. Here's to great future programming!



LOOKING AHEAD

BY ROLI WENDORF
PRESIDENT, AAUW NYS

"I feel renewed and more energetic. It was fun, relaxed, and informative." "It was a relaxed atmosphere and topics were pertinent." "I liked the easy feel of joining with women from around the state in a feeling of cooperation." "I enjoyed meeting so many interesting women from around the state." These were some of the comments from our very successful Summer Leadership Conference held this July in Cazenovia, NY. The weather was sunny and perfect as 64 members from around the state met to learn about leadership, effective programming, and much more. Materials from the conference are available on the AAUW-NYS website aauw-nys.org.

Looking ahead to the fall, most districts are planning conferences in the month of October on a variety of interesting and relevant themes. Wherever you live in New York State, chances are you have a wonderful conference being held somewhere near you! We hope you will take advantage of it. These conferences provide opportunities for branch members to meet others in their geographic area and share experiences and best practices. All districts can apply for grants of up to \$500 from NYS to use toward their district conference expenses.

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Inspiring Young Women: College/University Initiative by Jane Pendergast, College / University Partnership Director.

AAUW NYS District Conferences by Janet Forbes, District Director.

Amending Your Branch Bylaws by Laureen Ginnitti, Secretary / Bylaws Chair.

AAUW New York State Convention 2017: Empower Yourself!

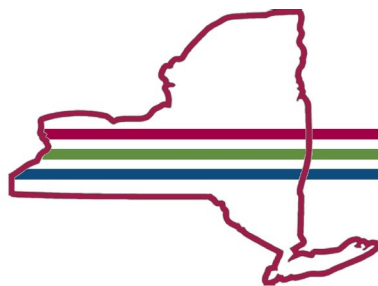
By Geeta Desai, Program Vice President

Do you want to change your life for the better? Would you like to have the power to impact your career, your community, the world? What if you could be fearless knowing that you had the power to help others and in that process help yourself? Would you empower yourself?

If the answer is “yes,” plan to come to the 2017 AAUW NYS Convention to be held April 21-23 at the Double Tree Inn in Syracuse. With its focus on Women and Power, our next convention will inspire and motivate you!

Although women now have more power than ever before, power still remains unequally distributed, fragmentary, limited, and largely elusive. We have the vote, but we still have trouble effecting real and lasting change in our personal and professional lives, in our communities, our economy, our country, and the world.

As it turns out, men still dominate most decision-making in the public and private sectors. In fact, more often than not, women aren't even invited to the deci-



AAUW 2017

New York State Convention

WOMEN & POWER

sion-making meetings, nor is their opinion solicited in any other way. Men still own the power matrix. Whether they are politicians, CEOs, corporate directors, superintendents, line managers, or policymakers, they make up rules for this matrix that naturally exclude women. **AAUW NYS wants to change that.** The 2017 convention will help you understand how to access power and how to wield it for the greater good.

The convention will offer an assortment of workshops that will show you how to take your rightful seat at the decision-making table; to influence decisions that impact

you at work, in the country, and in the world; to understand how to make real change to create the lives and communities you envision for yourselves and your children; and to lead in a global society.

2017 marks the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in New York State, three years before the passage of the 19th Amendment. Fittingly, our convention will celebrate that which has been hard-won and honor the challenges that lie ahead.

Come to the AAUW NYS Convention and be a part of history. You're in the great game now!

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 Laurie Eikemeyer, (for address, please call)
Phone: 716.440.7596.
Email: focus@aauw-nys.org.

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

Call for AAUW-NYS Bylaws Amendments

By Loreen Ginnitti, Secretary/ByLaws

Members may submit proposed amendments to the AAUW NYS bylaws to the Secretary/Bylaws, Loreen Ginnitti at loreen@fairpoint.net by the October 15th deadline. The current AAUW NYS bylaws are posted on the website at aauw-nys.org under the “NYS Guidelines” tab. Board-approved suggested amendments will be published in the **FOCUS** and presented at the business meeting for member approval.

Save the Date!

2017 AAUW National Convention



June 14-17

Washington, DC



THE AAUW FUND: Programs and Initiatives

By Nancy Mion, Development Vice President

You and I belong to AAUW because we believe in our mission of promoting equity for women and girls. AAUW has responded to the changing needs of today's women and girls by instituting a dozen new programs and initiatives over the past 10 years. To provide adequate funding for our now over 20 various programs, we have the AAUW Fund. Your gifts to the AAUW Fund can be used where there is the greatest need and the greatest opportunity to forward our mission.

AAUW has, from the beginning, used available funds to support worthwhile issues. In 1885, we funded our first study to refute the claim that education adversely affected a woman's reproductive ability. A fellowship was given in 1888 to Ida Street. Marie Curie received money to buy a gram of radium in 1920. In 1940 we assisted European scholars and university women displaced by the Occupation. The Legal Advocacy Fund started in 1981 in response to changing needs. Meeting the challenges faced by women and girls in the 21st Century has resulted

in the development of new types of programs. Contributions to the unrestricted AAUW Fund can be used where they are needed most to further our mission.



One of the programs supported by the AAUW Fund is **ELECT HER - CAMPUS WOMEN WIN**. This is the only national program encouraging and training college women to run for student government and future political office. The goal is to diminish the political

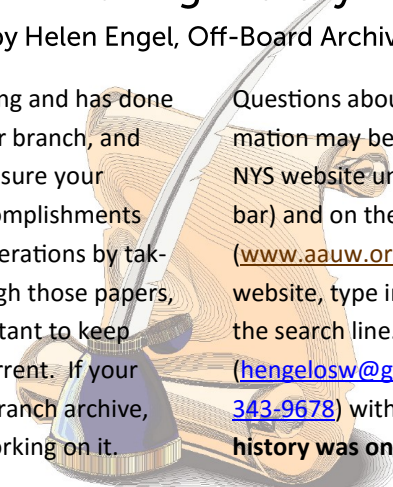
leadership gender gap. During this one day workshop, students practice hands-on campaign skills, hear from inspiring local speakers, and discuss research on women in government. In 2015, over 1,000 students on 50 campuses were trained; 76% of those who ran for student office won, and 99% would recommend it to a friend. Consider working with a local college and hosting an Elect Her workshop.

Your generous donations make it possible for AAUW to support all these programs and initiatives that promote equity for women and girls.

Making History

by Helen Engel, Off-Board Archivist

What your branch is doing and has done is important to you, your branch, and your community. Make sure your branch records and accomplishments are saved for future generations by taking the time to go through those papers, pictures, etc. It is important to keep your branch archives current. If your branch doesn't have a branch archive, form a group to start working on it.



Questions about how and where? Information may be obtained on the AAUW NYS website under the History tab (side bar) and on the Association website (www.aauw.org). In the Association website, type in resources, archives in the search line. You may also email me (hengelosw@gmail.com) or call (315-343-9678) with questions. **Remember, history was once today!**

AAUW-NYS ELECTED OFFICERS

President

Roli Wendorf (wendorfr@aol.com)

Program Vice President

Geeta Desai (geetadesai@optonline.net)

Membership Vice President

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Development Vice President

Nancy Mion (myown220@aol.com)

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Diane Jablonski (dianejablonski@gmail.com)

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Diversity Director

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Focus Director

Laurie Eikemeyer (laurie.eikemeyer@gmail.com)



Membership is ... Everyone's Business!

By Peggy Tiffany, Membership Vice President



Yes, really!! In AAUW, membership is everyone's business. Membership isn't only the collective term for all the members, it is also the process of engaging people who are not currently members in the mission and work of AAUW. And it's everyone's business, not just the responsibility of the national, state, and branch Membership VP's.

So why and how is membership everyone's business? The "why" is simple: the more of us there are engaged and committed to fulfilling the mission of AAUW – *Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research* – the quicker the goal of real equity will be achieved. The "how" part is where "everyone" comes in. What can we do through our branches to engage more people? (Remember

that men can be members also!)

Well, we can start by always keeping in mind the goal of attracting new members, especially when we're planning. That's true for just about everything we plan: our branch meeting topics for the year, when and where the branch meets, special programs and events the branch conducts or sponsors, and community events in which our branch participates. Getting the word out in advance is key. Do a news release to local media inviting the public. (If there's a cost involved or you need a count because of space, include a deadline with sufficient response time.) And always include a name and contact information for someone in the branch who is willing to take calls or e-mails. This all seems pretty obvious, I know, but one

missed detail could cost your branch a potentially great new member.

Finally, these are tasks in which you can involve some of your newer members or those not in leadership positions. The branch board can't and shouldn't do everything. Asking someone else to take on one thing not only spreads the work around, but also opens the door for others to hop on the ladder to leadership – truly a "win-win" situation! That kind of dynamism in a branch is often attractive to potential members. So yes, membership is everyone's business!

Looking Ahead (Continued from page 1)

Once again this year, AAUW-NYS is giving out grants of up to \$500 to each branch to be used for mission-based programs. Application forms are available on the state website. We hope each branch will take advantage of this opportunity.

Another funding opportunity for branches is the NYC Metro Area Fund for mission-based programs held in New York City and some surrounding counties. Funding in the range of \$2,000 - \$10,000 is available. Application forms are available on the national website for 2016-2017. The submission deadline is November 15.

This fall, we will run our "Branch Liaison Program" once again. Each branch will be contacted by a member of the State Board in the September/October

time frame. Please do share your successes and challenges with them, and let them know how we can help. Our Board members are very talented and look forward to working with you. They come from a variety of large and small branches across the state, and can help you by sharing what has worked in other branches. Also, keep the state leadership in mind when you need speakers for your events. We maintain a "Speakers' Bureau" on the State website listing topics on which Board members are willing to speak. We would be pleased to visit you. Do invite us!

Looking beyond the fall, preparations are already under way for AAUW-NYS Convention 2017 to be held April 21-23 in the Syracuse DoubleTree Hotel. 2017 is special as it marks the centennial of women's right to vote in New York State, a very



Roli Wendorf, AAUW NYS President

significant milestone. We have an exciting year ahead!

As we move forward, this is a good time to thank Immediate Past President Edwina Martin and the 2014-2016 Board for their dedication and service to AAUW-NYS. The assistance provided by Edwina and several Board members to us has made our transition very smooth.



Inspiring Young Women

By Jane Pendergast, College/University Partner Director

Is inspiring young women to get started on a path of effective community activism one of your passions? If so, the new College/University Partnership state project offers you the opportunity to do exactly that.

As the new NYS College/University Partner Director, I am beginning a statewide coordination effort with the goals of retaining and expanding New York State's C/U Partnership network (currently at 80 colleges) and also expanding AAUW programs within the Partner schools. I hope to facilitate sharing our successes and ideas through emails and conference calls and in-person events and meetings.

Paige Robnett, who works with college programs at AAUW National, told me that in her frequent discussions with college students, the issues they are passionate about are *Equal Pay*, *Campus Sexual Assault*, *Getting Out the Vote – Voter Registration*, *Title IX*, and *Student Debt*. She urges us to get in front of students as frequently as we can and to ask what issues are important to them, to work with them on these issues through our programs and grants or new efforts, to meet students where they are. She went on to share her direct experiences talking with colleges.

Paige emphasized that the biggest reason schools are interested in memberships are the discounts on AAUW programs – Start Smart, Elect Her, etc. Other reasons are that students have access to AAUW resources, can form a student affiliate organization with direct help from branches and national, and are eligible for free AAUW membership the first year after graduation. For staff, professional development through sitting on workshops and building networks through

AAUW, can be a strong selling point. In addition, faculty can apply for fellowships and grants. For the college, C/U Partners receive priority for some programs, including student action groups and national leadership. And C/U Partnership shows commitment to women's issues, which resonates with students.

For student organizations, C/U Partnerships offer the valuable opportunity to form AAUW student organizations – in recruiting schools or working with existing Partners, ask if the school has women's or feminist organizations or a gender studies program, or professors or staff with an interest in forming an organization, emphasize AAUW affiliation can help students with their careers and the National Student Advisory Council – 10 students each year. *Perhaps the strongest reason is that AAUW offers free staff support for student organizations, a growing on-line community. Paige also noted that right now, voter registration is a hot topic;* many schools have organizations doing this, but others do not. October 14th is the deadline in New York State to be registered for the November elections – offering a good starting point for working with colleges now.

How do you get involved in this timely state and branch-level coordination project? If you are a branch president, a branch member working with colleges in your area, or you are a member interested in this project, please email me at jpendergast2@msn.com with information about your work and your branch's work. I will contact you with information and conference call meeting dates.

WHO WE ARE

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is a national, non-partisan, grassroots organization promoting equity and education for women and girls since 1881.

WHAT WE DO

AAUW advocates for women by examining and taking positions on critical issues affecting women and girls.

AAUW grants more than \$3.7 million each year to help women pursue graduate studies.

AAUW empowers women to challenge sex discrimination in the workplace with financial and case support from the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF).

AAUW creates change through more than 170,000 members and supporters, 1000 local branches and 800 university partners across the country.

JOIN US

You can **make a difference** in the lives of women and their families. **Join AAUW.**

www.aauw.org



empowering women since 1881



**CAZENOVIA
LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE**



July 22 - 24, 2016



SAVE THE DATE

State Board Members
Next Board Meeting:
November 11-13
in Albany



Deepti Gudipati
AAUW Vice President, Programming





AAUW NYS District Fall Conferences

By Janet Forbes, District Director

The line-up of AAUW NYS District Fall Conferences is diverse and engaging as we focus our programming across the state on these three key pillars: recruiting new members, retaining and engaging current members, and creating social impact. We encourage the conferences to be open to the community while collaborating with organizations that support our AAUW mission.

District I

Saturday, October 8, 2016 10:30 am - 3 pm

Jamestown Community College

"Building a Pipeline to Leadership"

6:00 pm. SUNY Fredonia - Free performance of SEVEN The Play

Contact: Janet Forbes, Jamestown Branch Program VP

District II

Saturday, October 29, 2016 9 am - 3 pm

Rochester Institute of Technology

"Preparing Women to be Leaders in STEM Career Fields"

Contact: Sheila Abeling, Fairport Branch Co-President

District III

Saturday, October 15, 2016 9:30 am - 3 pm

Steamers Restaurant, Oswego

"Women's Rights Under Attack"

Contact: Juanita Tschudy, Oswego Branch Co-President

District IV

Saturday, October 15, 2016 9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Glen Sanders Mansion, Scotia

"Beyond Barriers & Bias: Fulfilling the Potential of Women"

Contact: Robin Eddy, Schenectady Branch Conference Chair

District V

Saturday, October 15, 2016 10 am - 2 pm

Mount Sinai, New York City

"Diversity & Inclusion in Today's Workplace"

Contact: Suzanne Young Mercer, District V Coordinator

District VI

Saturday, October 22, 2016 10 am - 2 pm

New York Institute of Technology

"The World - Our Neighborhood"

Contact: Geraldine Ossana, District VI Coordinator

District VII

Postponed until Spring

Janet Forbes, AAUW NYS District Director - jlforges@hotmail.com
Home: 716.664.3499 o Cell: 716.490.2616

**REMINDER: The submission deadline for the Winter FOCUS is
December 1, 2016**

Girls Go STEM

presented by

Adirondack Branch



The first annual **Girls Go STEM** day at SUNY Adirondack on May 16, 2016 was a great learning adventure for 80 middle school girls from 4 area schools. Our many branch volunteers were valuable helpers in providing support for the fast-paced day. For many of the young women, this day was their first experience on a college campus. For most of them, it was also their first experience to do hands-on work on STEM-focused projects in the workshops.

Seven workshop choices were presented from which the girls could choose three to attend. The choices were How to Extract DNA, Introduction to Nursing, Math Angles, Papermaking, Soil Basics, The Chemistry of Clean, and The Marshmallow Challenge.

Many of the girls commented that they wanted more time to explore the campus and try different workshops. All of them seemed to leave the campus buzzing with what they did and showing their friends what they made. The responses from the girls, the workshop evaluators, and the school chaperones were all positive with the hope of being able to participate in the future.



MISSION STATEMENT

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

AAUW VALUE PROMISE

By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls 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.

Attention postmaster: Dated material. Please do not delay.
POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to AAUW Record Office,
1310 L Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005

Amending Your Branch Bylaws

By Loreen Ginnitti, Secretary / Bylaws Chair

In order to be sure that local branch bylaws amendments comply with NYS and national bylaws, branches must submit proposed amendments to the AAUW NYS Secretary for approval. It is my duty to be sure you do not violate laws or organization policies. I can also help you word proposed amendments to be sure that they say what you intend.

As I have indicated to branches before, consider amending regulations in your bylaws that restrict the branch leadership too much. For instance if you are having a hard time finding leaders, are there term limits that are too restrictive? If you have not already done so, allow for positions to be divided by co-officers in positions where it is practical. The law requires each board mem-

ber to have a vote which means you can not limit co-offices to one vote. There may be months when officers reside out of town or when travel weather restricts board attendance. Consider limiting the number of required board meetings by putting a minimum number of board meetings in the bylaws; more would not be prohibited. Do you have trouble getting members to come to meetings because you have a "transient" branch membership during the year? Consider lowering the number of meetings required by the bylaws or eliminating the statement on the number of branch meetings required altogether. You must, however, have a statement on your annual meeting and voting.

Think about the issues that cause your branch problems and consider if there is



anything you have now or could add to your bylaws to help solve the problem. Bylaws are not the answer to everything, but they might be the answer for some things. If I can help you try to solve problems by using your bylaws, please do not hesitate contacting me at loreen@fairpoint.net.