

EMERGING LEADERS 2016

Adirondack - B. Lynn Havens



Lynn, our Branch Co Vice President for Programs, has worked to ensure that our programs were interesting and thought provoking. Meetings were held in different locales this year, which created more challenges for Lynn, but were well received by our members. In addition, Lynn has continued to make contacts with the speakers, restaurants and our newsletter editor during an unexpected extended stay in Texas. The programs which she made arrangements for and were presented to our members have ranged from the "Women Out to Work Exhibit" at our local Chapman Museum to our upcoming meeting with Benita Zahn focusing on "Women's Health Issues. We applaud Lynn for all that she has done for our branch and recognize her as a very capable, willing and enthusiastic member.

Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown - Jennifer Garren



Jennifer Garren is the 2016 Emerging Leader of the AGJ-AAUW because of all she has done and continues to do for our branch. She joined in 2012 because she believes in the mission of advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research. She majored in Psychology and minored in Women's Studies and is a self-proclaimed Feminist. She has been Public Policy VP, submitted articles to the Newsletter, advocated for Equal Pay Day and participated in a lobby day for the Women's Equality Act in Albany. Jennifer has attended NYS Summer Leadership Conferences as well as two NYS Conventions, each time chauffeuring several members and returning with great program ideas. For our first major fund raiser for local scholarships, she was successful in obtaining business donations. She chaired a very significant program hosting Jennifer Lee, writer, speaker and filmmaker of the movie "Feminist Stories for Women's Liberation", a movie night and discussion open to the public at FMCC. She also headed a committee to bring Ronna Glickman to speak to the students of the Gloversville Middle School on topics of bullying, internet safety and cyber bullying. She participates in Lunch Bunch and Adelante book club and advocated the start of a new theater group.

Bath - Shirley Herrick



Shirley Herrick has been a member of the branch since 2013 and has been active from the start. She is the branch treasurer and has been involved in all of the branch activities. Assuming a leadership role in many events, she is in charge of decorations for our EOF May event Embracing Diversity 2016, a merging of our heritages into the culture of the USA. With her novel ideas, she is coordinating the food, music, and decorations. Shirley was instrumental in the 2015 EOF event, where her committee provided cleverly decorated bag lunches for Telling Tales Out of School. She helps every project become a successful, well-coordinated event and is a tremendous asset to the Bath Branch.

Buffalo - Laurie Eikemeyer



The Buffalo Branch nominates Laurie Eikemeyer for the 2016 AAUW-NYS Emerging Leader Award in recognition of her dedication and hard work. Laurie has assumed the duties of Branch newsletter editor for the past two years. Each edition of the Advocate is superbly prepared and edited by Ms. Eikemeyer. She always meets deadlines and the newsletters are sent out both electronically and on paper. Her attention to detail, graphics and lay out are excellent. Our officers and board of directors are truly proud of each edition that is sent out. Laurie has also volunteered to be the treasurer for our annual used book sale last year and will continue again this year. She did a tremendous job of keeping track of all income and expenditures. As a member of the Buffalo Branch's Board of

Directors, she is enthusiastic and supportive of our Branch's programs. She is most deserving of the Emerging Leader Award.

Empire State Virtual - Michelle Messenger



Michelle Messenger is a member of the Empire State Virtual NY Branch who was approved by the AAUW NYS Board during to be the first member of the AAUW NYS Student Advisory Board. Michelle will be participating in our AAUW NYS Convention in Saratoga Springs, NY and will also be working with the Empire State Virtual Branch and the New York Institute of Technology on a one day joint conference on Friday, April 22, featuring the Start Smart workshop and a Career Fair. Michelle is a senior at the New York Institute of Technology and will be graduating as an engineer in May 2016. She loves math and science and she founded the Society of Women Engineers at the NYIT. She was drawn to engineering because both her mom and grandmother were computer programmers. Michelle's career aspiration is to create better things for people who need them. She is interested in bionics and would like to work on creating a device to help people walk or hear again.

Greater Rochester Area - Cheryl McKeiver



Cheryl McKeiver said yes to the call of working with the Women Helping Girls Program at the American Association of University Women and immediately assisted the program financially by maintaining the finances for our events and assisted with our grant applications. This was certainly no ordinary task but then she kicked it up a few notches by securing for us Beverly Bond of Black Girls Rock, who is a national figure that was recently recognized by the First Lady, Michelle Obama. The BLACK GIRLS ROCK organization seeks to build the self-esteem and self-worth of young women of color by changing their outlook on life, broadening their horizons, and helping them to empower themselves. Since 2006, this organization has enriched the lives of girls aged 12 to 17 years old through mentorship, arts education, cultural exploration and public service. Cheryl garnered her resources namely our Black owned radio station, WDKX 103.9, and resources connected with the station as well as secured the Blue Cross arena to host this event and all the details pertaining to it. Cheryl has meticulously addressed every aspect of this event which is no small task. Our goal for the event is 5000 girls! An event of this caliber and size will offer the American Association of University Women at the Greater Rochester Area Branch its "WOW" moment in the city like no other group. To say nothing of the exposure for our Women Helping Girls Program that is dedicated to girl empowerment through its mentoring program to help young girls gain self-esteem, professionalism and power. Cheryl currently serves on our AAUW Board of Directors as the Vice President of Development and is a proven leader among women and girls. She deserves to be recognized as an Emerging Leader in our community and as an advocate for young girls through her dedication, public service and community activism.

Jamestown - Christina Marsh



Christina has demonstrated consistent and innovative leadership within the Jamestown Branch through her work organizing our International Women's Day dinner meetings. She collaborated with other organizations, including Zonta Club of Jamestown and Jamestown Community College (JCC), to facilitate these successful events. She also serves as a vital leader for the development and expansion of our JCC/AAUW Women's Issues Advisory Group which serves as one of our key College/University collaborations with Jamestown Community College. Christina was a leader in the development of our first annual Clothesline Project event at JCC which was highly successful, received front page newspaper coverage, and engaged a large number of students and agencies. Christina demonstrates her commitment to advancing equity for women and girls through the several roles she has assumed within our Branch with professionalism, skill, and good humor. She is a strong,

positive role model as a life-long learner who achieved her graduate degree after raising four sons to be fine young men, and launched a new stage in her career in social work. We are proud and pleased to name Christina Marsh this year's Emerging Leader for the Jamestown Branch!

Jefferson County - Erika Shiota Montandon



Since joining the Jefferson County Branch in 2012, Erika Montandon has been active and engaged in moving the AAUW mission forward. As a woman in a non-traditional career field (technology), Erika has shared her passion for STEM by leading a Branch Committee in planning and executing an "hour of code" workshop for elementary students in December 2014; a full-day STEM conference for girls in grades 4-6 in May 2015; a half-day STEM conference for girls in grades 1-3 in October 2015 and a technology workshop for AAUW Branch members in January 2016. Jefferson County Branch is grateful to Erika for her leadership in this critical initiative for AAUW.

Massapequa - Helene Berk



Helene Berk joined the Massapequa Area Branch of the AAUW in 2012. Last year Helene took over as the Branch Scholarship liaison for our high school scholarship award that is presented to a deserving female high school senior each year. This year Helene is our Vice President of Programming for the Massapequa Area Branch. She is also the contact person for the Chordalaires, our singing group and assists their director. We are glad Helene is one of our branch officers as she contributes to the Board meetings and has planned interesting programs for our regular branch meetings. Helene is a retired Special Education teacher who worked in the Massapequa School District. She is certified in Special Education for grades K-12 but worked primarily with elementary level children. She also assists people who have diabetes and helps out with child welfare projects.

North Shore - Diane Chichura



Diane Chichura was on the AAUW North Shore Branch Board of Directors 2014-2015. For the past two years she has been Co-Chairman of the Music Study Committee. She is also on the committee which is sponsoring an essay and poetry contest with the Shelter Rock Public Library and the Great Neck Public Library for students aged 12 to 15 to select a woman to appear on the ten dollar bill. Diane worked in education first as a teacher, then as a supervisor and later as a district director for the West Hempstead Public Schools. She was part of the School I Support System for BOCES providing professional development in English Language Arts for high-needs schools in Suffolk County. She wrote articles in professional journals and co-authored a book published by Van Nostrand Reinhold, "Super Sculpture, Using Science, Technology and Natural Phenomena in Sculpture".

Poughkeepsie - Katherine Friedman



Kathy Friedman speaks for many when talking about why she has become such a devoted member of AAUW. "The women in the organization are very 'real' – they're not just trying to impress. We're all making an effort to enrich our own lives and the lives of others." She first joined the organization in the '80's when her children were small, but went back to work full-time as a teacher and school librarian (her first love) in the '90's. Kathy rejoined in 2011 shortly after she retired. This was good news to those who knew how talented she was, and she was quickly tapped to become the Recording Secretary, a role she has agreed to fill for a second term. Kathy also supports the Branch's premier initiative, "Leading to Reading"; and coordinates the Interest Group calendar for the newsletter, saying she "really whittled that into shape." She helped recast the Bylaws as well, and very much enjoyed problem-solving with other Board members at a recent retreat. We are so happy to recognize our richly-deserving and well-respected friend with this year's Emerging Leader award.

Rockland - Sandra Blasy



Sandra Blasy has been a member of the Rockland AAUW Branch for the past 18 months. She has brought with her an enthusiasm for AAUW's mission. In 2015, Sandy was nominated to serve as a Treasurer and won that position. She dug in immediately: reviewed our treasury history, asked questions and found answers from knowledgeable sources, as well as put into place "best practice" for handling our monies. Our books are organized: we are on target with our budget and making our financial deadlines. Sandy attended the N.Y. AAUW Leadership Conference in July at Cazenovia. She interacted and asked questions about how other branches conducted their business. She gathered ideas. She used the Internet to continue exploring and searching to improve the Rockland Branch. Sandy's proficiency at computer technology has become a shining achievement for the Branch. During the past several months, Sandy's curiosity has led her to Newsletters from branches of AAUW, no matter what state nor community. She gathers ideas, takes initiative to make changes and works well with other members to implement them. She took our webpage (rocklandcounty-ny.aauw.net) and shaped it into a thing of beauty! We are so proud! It is up to date and interactive. When you visit our webpage you will see what the Rockland Branch is doing to advance the mission of AAUW. We reach out to collaborate with other organizations in our community. We are really proud of Sandra Blasy's dedication to our branch. She has brought enthusiasm and organization skills. She contributes in helping us stay true to the branch mission of advancing equity for our girls and local women.

St. Lawrence - Relani Prudhomme



Relani Prudhomme joined the St. Lawrence County Branch three years ago and was first elected as the Branch Secretary. In 2015 she became Branch Membership VP. Relani is skilled at outreaching to the community as our outreach and education coordinator and always brings passion and energy to any task. She has, through her work for the Occupational Health Clinical Center of the North Country, helped the Branch network and outreach to the health care community, a major employer in the county. She was instrumental in bringing the Worker's Memorial Theater Project to the community in 2015, which illustrated the health and safety hazards of workers. In addition, she has worked to educate North Country people about the Low-Wage Workers' Health Project, a study that focused on the health effects of low wage jobs on workers in the Syracuse area, but reflects trends nationally, as well as what is happening across the OHCC's 26 county service area.

Westchester - Natasha Rose



Natasha Rose has been a wonderful addition to our Branch. She joined less than two years ago, and immediately became a very active member. She currently serves on the Branch Board as Co-Recording Secretary and writes excellent minutes. She also participates in a wide variety of action and interest group activities such as book groups, current issues group, Start Smart and our Explore Your Opportunities STEM conference. Soon after joining, she started a new book group because one of the existing ones was filled to capacity. Natasha is also very welcoming of branch members in her home, hosting many meetings there. Professionally, she is a retired lawyer who had a consulting practice representing public employee labor unions in partnership with her husband. We feel very fortunate to have her as a Branch member.