

Re: Recognition Awards

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT/PROGRAM: VOTER EDUCATION

Public Policy, Visible leadership, education and participation in Election process - *Sept. 26, 2008*
October 7, 15, 2008

The Mohawk Valley Branch arranged for the showing of all Presidential Debates on the big screen at the Uptown Theater that is located in downtown Utica where it is easily accessible by bus and car. The Uptown is seen as an avant garde theater and is frequented by all socio-economic groups and ages.

Scott Anderson, Manager, only charged \$5.00 admission and served refreshments. The event was co-sponsored with the Evening Division of the Business & Professional Women. The AAUE posters were prominent in the glass doors of the Theater where all could see as they walked or drove past. The theater is next door to a popular restaurant, The Balkan. Planning and event presentation involved 2 chapter members, participation of more than 10 and many non-members who attended the debate filming. Over 100 people attended the four debates. This publicity for the AAUW had a big impact on the community because we were providing a service during a very exciting pre-election period. The programs were listed in the local newspaper, the Observer Dispatch. A branch goal was to encourage voter participation and voter turnout. Many hours were spent organizing this event, coordinating with the BPW and being in attendance at the Debates.

Lessons learned: Opinion Forms and Handouts were not effective as attendees were focused on voter education through the highly publicized Debates. The Vice-Presidential Debate was the best attended. Late night is not conducive to recruitment efforts. It's good to co-sponsor with another well-respected women's group. Our AAUW posters created high visibility for the organization.

Sincerely yours,

Joan Rajchel
Joan Rajchel, President

