



NEW YORK STATE

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Come to Convention:



Women Shaping Our Future

at the
New York State Convention
April 14-16, 2000
Tarrytown, New York

Bobbe Fortunato, NYS Program Vice President
516/665-4689 bobbef@juno.com

As you look around you, on TV, in the pages of newspapers and magazines, you hear and read about women who are **Shaping Our Future**. There are those who are still trying to make it through the “glass ceiling,” but most are working to make a difference for girls and women and the communities in which they live.

AAUW members are these women, shaping the future from within their communities. April’s AAUW convention in Tarrytown will offer workshops from Board and branch members to help you to work to shape and change the future in your community. The coalitions that so many of our branches have formed between schools and universities, service groups, health and wellness groups, and local family centers are just a few of the ways to help change the future. All of us can do this - just replicate what another branch or its members are doing. Don’t “Reinvent the Wheel” when your sisters have already done it. Just make it better!

Any branch, small or large, can make a difference. The program ideas that came from the Association last fall can be put to work as you plan your next year of programs. Small pieces like the *Tech Check* can be done with just one or two people in just one school. Larger branches can decide to approach a school in their area to complete the *Signposts* check list, to become a gender-fair school in several program areas.

Talking with AAUW members from around the state is often the best part of each day at state convention. Women who live in a city can learn how our rural area groups effect change. Members from far flung places learn that the problems other branches encounter and solve are similar, regardless of branch size or location.

Come with a desire to learn more about AAUW for yourself and your branch. I think you will leave with new ideas, renewed enthusiasm and a better understanding of what all we try to accomplish for our branches and the future here in New York State.

Membership Matters:

NO STATE DUES FOR STUDENT MEMBERS

Jeanette Knapp, New York Membership VP
607-272-3367 jdk4@cornell.edu

Branches that recruit undergraduate student affiliates or members who are graduate students will no longer have to collect state dues from these members. At its January meeting, the board of AAUW New York State voted unanimously to waive state dues for student members and any first-year graduates who were enrolled under the Association's "Give a Grad a Gift Program."

Kay Kraatz, AAUW New York president pointed out, "Most of these young women are or soon will be young professionals, the group that all branches need as new members to grow and thrive. Our action supports women who are pursuing higher education, often at great personal and financial sacrifice. This is our way of saying, 'AAUW believes in you.' I also encourage all branches to consider waiving local dues for student affiliates, graduate students, and first-year graduates."

Watch for Member-at-Large Lists

The **Poughkeepsie Branch** and others have been very successful at recruiting members-at-large as new branch members. Branch membership chairs should watch their mail for a packet of information, sample letter, and lists of members-at-large in their area. Special-project funds are available from AAUW New York to cover the costs of copying and postage for branch MAL recruitment.

Questions? Contact Jeanette Knapp, the New York Membership VP, at 607-272-3367 or e-mail jdk4@cornell.edu.

Stand Up, Speak Out Video

Ann Bish, Director of Public Policy
716/741-3964 ashicks2@juno.com

One of the most impressive videos I've ever seen on advocacy, coalition building, intergeneration partnerships, and broad community involvement is **Stand Up, Speak Out. How One Community Stopped a Hospital Merger**. It is instructional, inspirational, and entertaining! If you are interested in previewing this video or using it for a program, contact Ann Bish.

Branch Action:

AAUW at work in New York State

Thayer Miller reports the **Cortland Branch** co-sponsored a fund raising dinner for a local Aid to Victims of Violence Program with the YWCA. The branch also be co-sponsored a Women's Conference in January at SUNY Cortland.

Massapequa Branch members watched an IFUW film on the history of women in third world countries & Mid-Eastern countries and the problems they must overcome to achieve equity and recognition.

Smithtown Branch held a fashion show that raised \$2000 for the Educational Foundation.

Julie Fehler, Ed/Equity Chair for the **Garden City Branch**, reports they invited a Director of Physical Education and Athletics and two outstanding female athletes to speak to members about the current status of girls and opportunities based on the Phys Ed program. Garden City also invited Judge Evelyn O. Connor to speak on Social Justice.

The **Kingston Branch** holds a monthly Film Discussion Group at the library to promote or camaraderie among members, husbands, friends and significant others. At 5 pm on a Sunday, everyone brings a covered dish (no one complains over too many desserts), watches the movie, then has a brief discussion. Using off-beat films, they've developed a loyal following and new members.

Islip Area Branch held a Woman-to-Woman Program with key women in the community to discuss youth concerns.

The *NYS FOCUS* (USPS-390-570) is published for the American Association of University Women. The subscription rate of \$2.15 is included in the NYS dues. Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, DC, and additional offices.

**Send all address changes to AAUW Records Office,
1111 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.**

Questions and articles should be addressed to the *NYS FOCUS* Editor, Donna Seymour, 8 Cedar St., Potsdam, NY 13676, 315/265-6985, e-mail onthego@northnet.org

Summer Issue Deadline: May 1, 2000

NYS website: www.northnet.org/nysaaaw

April 14-16, 2000 in Tarrytown, NY - AAUW NYS Convention News

Registration: NYS Convention materials have been sent to all branch presidents, NYS board members, and to members who attended the conventions in 1998 and 1999. Information and registration materials are also available on the NYS website. If you do not have access to the Internet or to someone in your branch with the materials, you may request a convention packet (which includes the convention information and schedule, workshop descriptions, registration forms, local tours, and directions to the Hilton Tarrytown) by contacting Ann Hicks (716/741-3964 or ashicks2@juno.com).

There is a \$40.00 registration fee for the convention which covers the program and all printed convention materials. The convention registration **deadline** is **March 24**. If you register after March 24, there is an additional late registration fee of \$15.00. Each person attending the convention must complete a registration form and submit payment for the total amount due. Make checks payable to **AAUW NYS Convention**.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hilton Tarrytown on a first come, first served basis. **Hotel reservations** must be made by **March 27, 2000**. All rooms must be guaranteed by a major credit card or by one night's deposit. Reservations made without a credit card or advanced deposit will not be accepted. The hotel package of \$389/for single occupancy, \$269/per person double occupancy, and \$229/per person triple occupancy includes two nights' lodging, six meals, and gratuities. Parking is available. Send your hotel reservation form to Hilton Tarrytown, 455 South Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591. Questions? Call the Hilton Tarrytown at 1-800-445-8667 or 1-914-631-5700.

VOTER EDUCATION NEWS

Judy Weidemann, Voter Education Director
716/655 - 3649 weideman@gateway.net

2000 is a presidential election year. In addition to electing all House members from New York, we will also be electing a US Senator. The Voter Education Workshop at the State Convention will include: Instruction and Practice in building Voter Education Coalitions; Instruction on Preparing and Distributing Voter Guides; Guidance in Planning Get Out the Vote Campaigns; and Guidance in Planning a Candidate Forum. Many branches did an outstanding job in 1998 with a variety of Voter Education projects. These new Association materials will ensure an even more successful Voter Education campaign this year.

First Timers' Reception

Members attending their first AAUW NYS Convention are invited to a special Friday night reception. This is an opportunity to meet AAUW leaders and other "first timers." Be sure to indicate on your registration form that this is your first convention. You will receive an invitation in your registration packet.

Legal Advocacy Fund News

Evelyn M. Currie, LAF Director
518-399-3711 ecurrie@gateway.net

Sharon Leder, one of our LAF litigants, will be our guest speaker at convention. Sharon settled her case with SUNY – Buffalo last summer. Sharon's expert witness, Mary Gray, found a substantial pay equity disparity between women and men at SUNY-Buffalo. Her study was enough to move the university to offer a settlement which Sharon accepted. Her story will inspire us with the importance of LAF.



The Saturday luncheon program at convention will list the donors in LAF Partners, LAF Amicus and LAF Circle, as well as all the branches which earned the LAF Star. Teal blue LAF cups on the tables will be available for contributions. To insure that your branch is credited with your contribution, please use a check made out to **AAUW LAF** with your branch indicated on it. All contributions at the luncheon will be credited for the 2000 contribution year.

New York State AAUW Needs You!

Bobbe Fortunato, NYS Program Vice President
516/665-4689 bobbef@juno.com

No, we are not Uncle Sam; we can't reach out and make you serve your branch or your state. Still, we would like to have you consider doing just that. If all branches around the state had the ability to place someone on a state committee it would help the state serve its members in the branches more efficiently. Everyone's ideas are important, and no matter where in the state you live or the size of your branch, you have the ability to do a fine job.

Send your name to Evelyn Currie, chair of the 2000 Nominating Committee, and help us as we work to Shape the Future. Contact: Evelyn Currie, 37 Forrest Road, Box 16, Burnt Hills, NY 12027.

AAUW Public Policy Action Needed in NYS in 2000

Ann Bish, Director of Public Policy

716/741-3964

ashicks2@juno.com

Public Policy Report: Someone once said, "We can't be more interested in blaming others; we **must** assume responsibility ourselves." AAUW NYS has for many years been actively involved in monitoring legislation and advocating for women in New York State. It's critical that we keep this effort going. We must be informed to impact what is happening in our New York State Legislature that has a bearing on our lives.

Pay Equity: Legislators must amend the state Constitution and Labor Law to ensure **pay equity** for all people who perform work of comparable skill, effort, and responsibility (**A.818; A. 5147; A.5031**, as well as a bill that allows women to file class action suits charging pay discrimination - **A. 1881**). According to a recent report released by the AFL-CIO and the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a typical New York woman brings home **\$118 less** per week than a man.

Hate Crime Bill: New York is one of only 11 states that have not adopted stiffer penalties for bias-related crimes. **A.1573** would carry an additional maximum penalty of 15 years in the state prison for criminals that committed crimes based on race, religion, sex, nationality, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The Women's Health and Wellness Act (A.5457-B, S. 2996-B): AAUW NYS joined a coalition of more than 80 organizations to support this bill that would promote the availability of preventive health services for women. Members of AAUW NYS attended a press conference in Albany on January 18 for the reintroduction of the bill. The bill allows for coverage for early detection and treatment of osteoporosis, breast and cervical cancer screening, and ends insurer discrimination against women who are forced to assume the full costs of birth control prescriptions.

Take Action: The Senate has not acted on any of these bills. Reach your Senator by writing his/her name, NYS Senate, Albany, NY 12247 or by calling 518/455-2800.

Legislative Victories in New York State in 1999 A number of important bills were passed and signed into law in 1999. Among these were the **Clinic Access and Anti-Stalking Act**, the **Safe Schools-Safe Children Act**, the **Health Care Reform Act 2000 (HCRA 2000)** and **Increased Child Care Funding**. Thanks for all your public policy advocacy.

Connecting through Coalitions

Save Our Services - Long Island (SOS - LI) is a coalition of more than 20 organizations, including AAUW, working to protect the rights of patients and physicians affected by the pending sale of facilities to religious-based health services on Long Island.

Women's Action Coalition (WAC) of the Erie County Commission on the Status of Women includes over 100 women's agencies and organizations, including AAUW, that support women's issues. The Women's Health and Wellness Act has received the active endorsement of WAC in the past two years.

AAUW participated on a sub-committee of an 80-plus member coalition to develop a brochure to advertise the benefits of the Women's Health and Wellness Act (A.5457/S2996). The brochure will be distributed to New York legislators and the state community as a whole to generate support for the passage of this bill.

AAUW Federal Priority Issues

In 2000, several of AAUW's priority issues will continue to be under attack. Conservatives will try to overturn federal education dollars into block grants, pass private school vouchers, and roll back women's reproductive rights. While election year partisanship will make it difficult to predict what legislation will be considered in 2000, AAUW will work to advance our agenda in priority areas, including elementary and secondary education, improving access to domestic and international family planning, and managed care reform. If you would like background status and talking points on any of these issues, contact me at 716/741-3964 or write 5177 Willowbrook Drive, Clarence, NY 14031. Be sure to check the public policy area on the state webpage for additional material and periodic updates, as well.

Thank You: I wish to acknowledge the special efforts and contributions made to the public policy program by the following AAUW members: Pat Binzer, Eleanor Filburn, Betsy Forkas, Bobbe Fortunato, Kay Kraatz, Jann Mirchandani, Karen Noonan, Jeanne Riger, Rosalind Renouard, Barbara Schwarz, Donna Seymour, and Judy Wiedemann.

Ann Bish, Public Policy Director

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present the following members for election to the AAUW New York State Board of Directors for the 2000-2002 term.

Evelyn M. Currie- Nominating Committee Chair



**Roberta A. Fortunato
for President**

Bobbe is a 40-year member of AAUW and has held several offices in the **Islip Area Branch**. She was the NYS Educational Foundation Vice President for four years and is completing two years as Program Vice President. Among her many community activities, she was a Trustee and Deputy Mayor of Brightwaters for 10 years. She is active in her church and represents AAUW on the Women on the Job Task Force. She was a board member and Treasurer of VIBS (Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk) for 10 years. She retired from the Bay Shore School System in 1998. Bobbe will make a dynamic President for AAUW New York State.



**Marjorie Smith
for Program Vice President**

Marjorie is a 20-year member of AAUW and holds dual membership in the **Cortland** and **Ithaca** branches. She was the AAUW NYS Treasurer from 1992-1996 and the co-coordinator of the 1998 and 1999 conventions. She has been on the state audit committee since 1996. Her community activities have been many and varied, including co-chair of her church new addition building committee. She is a retired School Business Administrator. Marj is committed to AAUW ideals and issues and will lead NYS in implementing them. She will help our state board to work as a team to make a difference.



**Helen Engel
for Educational Foundation
Vice President**

Helen is a 25-year member of AAUW and has held several offices in the **Oswego Branch**, including President. She is completing two years as NYS Educational Foundation Vice President and has agreed to continue providing leadership in that important part of the AAUW mission in NYS. At the present time, she is the Laboratory Director of the Water Department of the city of Oswego, NY. She is also on the Board of Directors of the NY Association of Approved Environmental Laboratories. Her knowledge and experience in dealing with the Educational Foundation will benefit our state greatly.

NYS AAUW Time Capsule

Bobbe Fortunato and Ann Hicks

As we start this new century, AAUW New York State is celebrating the start of its 80th year. As part of this celebration we want to recognize branch achievements but also look ahead to our centennial. We invite the Branches of New York State AAUW 2000 to contribute to a Time Capsule at our Convention in Tarrytown. We would like each branch to contribute something unique to show what it and its members have done to "Shape Its Own Future" and thus the "Future of AAUW NYS." Some ideas include: pictures of a project, a special program you have done, a recipe book you put together, a yearbook, or an item your branch sells to raise money for AAUW. We will place all the items submitted in the capsule and then store it in the AAUW NYS archives with the intention of opening it during the 100th anniversary of AAUW NYS in the year 2020.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

*** Deadline: March 24, 2000 ***

Mail to: **Betty Harrel**
28 Laffin Lane, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

PLEASE PRINT:

Name _____
Preferred first name _____
Address _____
City/Zip _____
Phone () _____
e-mail _____
Branch _____
Position _____ District _____

Please check: (check all that apply)

- Delegate Alternate Guest
 First Convention NYS Board
 Past NYS President Association Officer
 Non-voting Branch member
 Member-at-Large Dual Branch member
 College/University Member _____
_____ (List College/University name)

Advance registration: \$40.00 _____
Companion registration \$20.00 _____
(non-AAUW member)
Friday registration: \$12.00 _____
Saturday registration: \$34.00 _____
Sunday registration: \$17.00 _____

**After March 24 add \$15 late fee
to above rates: \$15.00 _____
Total Registration: \$ _____**

Reserve for meals separately **ONLY** if you are not registered for the hotel package. Prices include gratuity and sales taxes.


Friday dinner: \$44.75 _____
Saturday breakfast: \$15.25 _____
Saturday luncheon: \$31.00 _____
Saturday banquet: \$44.75 _____
Sunday breakfast: \$15.25 _____
Sunday luncheon: \$31.00 _____

Total Meals Registration: \$ _____

Total Meals and Registration: \$ _____

Make checks payable to **AAUW NYS Convention**.

Special dietary needs _____

 **Handicapped necessities required.** _____

Circle one (1) workshop for each day.

Saturday Workshops I: A. B. C. D. E. F.

Sunday Workshops II: G. H. I. J. H. I.

Registration Refund Policy
March 27 - April 7: 50% refund
After April 8: no refund

HOTEL REGISTRATION FORM

*** Deadline: March 27, 2000 ***

American Association of University Women
New York State Convention
April 14-16, 2000

Mail reservations to:

Hilton Tarrytown
455 South Broadway
Tarrytown, NY 10591

Telephone: 1-800-445-8667 or 1-914-631-5700

Fax: 1-914-631-0075 or 1-914-524-6734

www.hilton.com

PLEASE PRINT:

Last Name _____
First Name _____
Organization _____
Street _____
City/State/Zip _____
Day Phone () _____
Evening Phone () _____
Names of person(s) sharing room:

Arrival Date _____ Time _____
Departure Date _____ Time _____

Credit Card: _____ Expiration Date _____
Number: _____

Check-in after 3 pm. Check-out by 1 pm.

Hotel package rates quoted below include
two nights' lodging, six meals, and all gratuities.
Rates subject to applicable sales taxes.

Check Accommodations requested:

- \$389 Single occupancy
 \$269 Double occupancy (per person)
 \$229 Triple occupancy (per person)

- Single room - one bed
 Double room - one bed
 Double room - two beds
 Smoking room Non-smoking room

Special Dietary Needs _____

A block of rooms has been reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. **Deadline is March 27, 2000.** All rooms must be reserved with a major credit card or one night deposit.

Cancellation of reservations must be done 48 hours prior to the day of arrival. If you wish to reserve a room for just one night or to extend your stay a night, request the group rate for AAUW NYS when you contact the Hilton Tarrytown.



AAUW

EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION

The new donation year for the Foundation is now the same as the calendar year; the current year started with January 2000.

At the next AAUW National Convention (2001), the Educational Foundation will have a travel auction. It is not too early to start planning what trips could be donated by your Branch for this fund raising effort.

The **1999-2000 Directory of Fellowship, Grant and Award Recipients** has been sent to all Branch EF Chairs. Make use of the information to invite a recipient to one of your meetings. Learn firsthand what your money is doing!

Use the **Branch Clearing House** developed by the Foundation for fund raising ideas. Call the Help Line (800/326-AAUW) for information.

New York State did not have an Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellow in 1999-2000. When the new Grant information comes out, consider placing this information in the local schools in your area.

New York State Equity Futures are a perfect way to honor or memorialize someone. The \$25.00 is designated to go to the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund. Forms can be obtained from me or your branch EF chair. They will be available at the State EF display and sale area in the resource room at the convention. It is a great way to increase your branch donations and a perfect gift for that person who has everything!

When sending money directly to the Foundation, you can designate what fund you want it to go into. This is especially helpful to your branch if you are trying to complete an endowment. If you are not sure of the designation number, check with your branch EF chair or me. All endowments are listed with their numbers in the Names Honored 1998-99 booklet put out by the Foundation and sent to EF Chairs last Fall.

Defining Diversity:

Achieving Accessibility and Inclusion

Sharon Frayne, Diversity Director

Notes for 2000

Helen Engel,
Educational Foundation VP
315/343-9678
rengel@oswego.edu

The new donation year for the Foundation is now the same

914/962-7009 Dave_Frayne@prodigy.com

One AAUW branch program that recognized diversity among people with disabilities received a New York State Peacock Award in 1999. **Adirondack Branch** members and guests met at the Center for Independent Living to investigate and to understand the broad scope of human disabilities, and to recognize the continuous effort individuals face and surmount in their lives. The Center offers its clients classes to assist in independent living. Among these are a culinary training, a program for clerical skills, physical education, and artistic classes. As a result of this evening's experience the branch made a commitment to involve themselves with the Center through volunteering, sponsoring a walk-a-thon, and enrollment in ceramics classes at the Center for Independent Living. In continuing their association with the Center the Adirondack Branch formed a partnership with the Kiwanis Club to work together to benefit the community. Congratulations!

The **Americans With Disabilities Act** has been instrumental in increasing accessibility in our communities. Branch meetings held in barrier-free facilities do encourage wider community participation. Day or night transportation for older members increases attendance. Awareness of religious holy days and food restrictions, lighting and a sound system, plus a welcoming committee make your branch meetings accessible and inclusive! Accessibility does not just happen! Awareness of the diverse makeup of our New York State communities will result in AAUW branches becoming a more significant presence in our neighborhoods.

Branch Recognition

Alene Wyatt, NYS Communications Director
607/273-0259 alene@lightlink.com

Is your work as a branch receiving the state-wide recognition it deserves? Have you submitted entries for the various Communications Awards given at the Convention? Entries are evaluated in three groups based on branch membership numbers, so small, medium, or large, you can be a winner! These include awards for Newsletters, Media/Public Relations, and Progress in Technology? Look for the applications in the *Spring Leadership Portfolio*.



New York State *FOCUS* (USPS-390-570)
Spring 2000

PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID at Washington, D.C. 20036 And all Additional Entries USPS-390-570

The **American Association of University Women** promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change.

The **AAUW Educational Foundation** provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change.

The **AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund** provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.

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 or disability.

Important! All mailing labels are prepared at AAUW headquarters.

Attention postmaster: Dated Material. Please do not delay. Send form #3597 to AAUW Record Office, 1111 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

INITIATIVE FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: Program Planning for 2000-2001

Ann B. Walker, Director - 516/563-2678 - walkerab@aol.com

Now is the time to look for program ideas for 2000-2001. **Choices for a Changing World** continues to be the program theme for Education & Equity. Why not replicate a program tried in another branch? Consult with neighboring branches about their recent successes. Here are some ideas gleaned from branch newsletters:

TRANSITIONS - How can your branch help women with educational decision making? The **Westchester Branch** is helping assist women who would like to go back to school through a new community mentoring group, TSTT (Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers).

SOCIAL JUSTICE - How might you bring together a diverse group of women who share similar goals? The **Mid Island Branch** held a program on elder abuse. Garden City sponsored "Seeking Solutions," to ask the question, "Can stricter gun control legislation prevent violence?"

SIGNPOSTS - How might you bring recognition to local schools for their support of equity? In the **Poughkeepsie Branch**, their *Project: Signposts* recognizes schools with exemplary programs.

TECH CHECK - How might you encourage your local schools to encourage girls to become technology competent? The **North Shore Branch** will co-sponsor their second "Women in Cyberspace" panel to hear

several women discuss their experiences in the new technological age. The **Oswego Branch** has a program to recognize 8th grade girls who excel in math & science.

SISTER-TO-SISTER SUMMITS - How might you bring together a group of girls, girls and mothers, or young men to discuss their generations challenges? Several have been held already, with several more planned for New York State in 2000.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH - How are you Celebrating Women's History Month? The **Buffalo Branch** is holding a Women's Hall of Fame Luncheon on March 30 with a Women's Hall of Fame essay, art, web page design for high school students. In the **Jamestown Branch**, they are collecting biographies of high school girls...potential leaders of tomorrow.