



NEW YORK STATE

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NY STATE, THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE AAUW LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND

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The members of the Ithaca, NY Branch were determined to support 11 brave resolute female professors who had brought a class action lawsuit against Cornell University for denial of tenure. They all attributed the decision to sex discrimination. As a direct result of this case, AAUW created the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund in 1981 as a 2-year pilot project. LAF became a permanent entity in 1983 at the AAUW Convention. Since we were the birthplace of this wonderful fund, we need to lead the nation in our support!



The Branch LAF awards to be given at the AAUW NYS 2001 Convention will be based on contributions received as of December 31, 2000. Anyone who contributes \$100 or more will receive the new LAF pin.

Remember, once we open doors through the Educational Foundation it is crucial to keep them open through the Legal Advocacy Fund. Our job is to help our scholars combat discrimination so they can fulfill their educational promise. We are "promoting equity for all women and creating societal change." Your contribution helps to make our mission a reality!

Sylvia Newman, the LAF President, wrote a letter to *U.S. News and World Report* in response to their *America's Best Colleges* issue of September 11, 2000. It read,

"Many of the universities ranked among the best in the country do not make the grade in their treatment of women. Since 1981, The American Association of University Women Legal Advocacy Fund has provided over \$650,000 in direct financial assistance to more than 60 women who have sought judicial redress for sex discrimination in higher education. These cases involve issues ranging from tenure denial and pay inequity to sexual harassment and Title IX violations. Currently, we are supporting seven cases that involve universities named among your top 50 schools. Can you count a university, that does not value a women's contribution, equally among our nation's best?"

While waiting for the Presidential election to be determined, it became very clear to me the *Power of One*, whether it be vote or contribution. We, as women, need to realize the power we have as many "ones" working together for change. The Legal Advocacy Fund gives us the opportunity to see our "one" contribution combine with others to produce significant change in society's recognition of all women's contributions.

Women professors, like the "Cornell 11" of the 70's, are still experiencing discrimination in other colleges in our country today. We, in NYS, need to continue to lead the support we instigated in the 70's! What better way do we have to implement the AAUW *Sister to Sister* and *Women to Women* programs? THINK LAF!

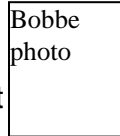
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FROM THE PRESIDENT:

AAUW "TODAY'S WOMAN"

Bobbe Fortunato, NYS AAUW President
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In my Fall *Focus* column I said that I had the courage to work hard in *Shaping Our Future*. For me that courage means I'm choosing to undertake changes which will enable NYS AAUW to move ahead in a world that is constantly presenting us with new choices and challenges.

I have asked your elected and appointed state board members to join me as we attempt to change how and when we do our work. Starting with the **July Summer Board Meeting, 2001**, we will ask our elected branch presidents to join us at a Leadership and Organizational Building meeting. At the present time we see the presidents taking the place of the District committee personnel this year. I hope this will start us on the path to building a process of choices for change. Branch presidents working with the state officers can begin a process within NYS that hopefully will enlighten the

path our organization will take as we start this 21st century.

The last few years we urged branches to try different paths to leadership—different ways of doing their business. Now we are taking our own advice to do things differently.

We will offer leadership workshops in July to seek direction for NYS AAUW from the branch presidents. Together we hope that we can improve all of our meetings—in the districts and at convention. I ask all members to support your presidents—offer them ideas and concerns to bring to the summer board meeting in July. Only if we all choose to make changes can we *Shape A Future* to challenge everyone.

**Remember
"Today's Woman"
Born Yesterday
Dealing with Tomorrow
Not Yet Where We're Going
But still not where we Were!**

AAUW'S FUTURE: WHO WILL SHAPE IT?

Helen Engel, Educational Foundation VP
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As a new year begins I like to take time to reflect on the past year and think about the future. In the last year I have thought about the Educational Foundation in the context of 'getting' and 'giving.' The 'giving' phase has been completed for 2000. My heartfelt thanks to you for the work that went into your contributions of time, effort and money. Congratulations to the **Bath** and **Southern New York** Branches for completing their Research and Project Grants in 2000. A special thanks to all who submitted the branch contribution forms to me by December 31. All of you make my job easier.

As 2001 begins, we start a new cycle. Think about honoring someone special in your life or giving a gift in memory of someone by buying a New York State Equity Future. This money (\$25) goes to the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund and a card is sent to the person you indicate. Utilize the New York State contribution form to purchase an Equity Future or to join the New York State's 21st Century Club. This form was sent out in the Fall Leadership Portfolio and should be available from your branch president. Plan to join in the fun and participate in the Third Annual EF Walk/Run at the State Convention in April. Details to follow later, but it's not too early to think about sponsors! Have you considered the Foundation in your estate planning? As branch members, what is your next fund raising project? Don't forget *Travel Connections 2*, the travel auction the Foundation is holding at the Association Convention.

Spread the word about the Foundation's grants and fellowships and utilize the research publications. By being able to offer grants and fellowships and to continue funding research, the 'getting' part, we help to improve the quality of life for all, especially women and girls. As Eleanor Roosevelt said "we need every single mind." Your gift to the Foundation will help make this possible, now and in the future.

ADVOCACY NEEDED IN NYS ON TWO IMPORTANT FRONTS

Ann Bish, NYS Public Policy Director
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Women's Health and Wellness Act

Representatives of the nearly 100 member organizations who are supporting the Women's Health & Wellness Act (WH&W) met in Albany in October. Betsy Forkas, Schenectady branch member, represented NYS AAUW. The expectation is that the bill will be presented early in the next session; it will be the **third** consecutive year that legislators will be asked to pass this bill! While the Assembly has passed it each time it has been presented, the Senate has opposed the Women's Health and Wellness bill. The opposition appears to center around contraception and increased insurance mandates.

Members of the coalition are urged to work together on the local level to sponsor public forums, to find effective venues to better educate the public, and to encourage the writing of letters to state senators to put pressure on them to pass the bill. The Senate has created its own task force on women's health and wellness (Chairs: Senator John Bonacic and Senator Mary Lou Rath) to research the best approach to women's health. The coalition members expect the task force studying women's health will involve the public in open discussion on the needs and issues.

Log on to www.northnet.org/nysaaaw/nyshelth.htm for further information about the Women's Health and Wellness Act.

Hospital Mergers

Hospital mergers are still in the news. Testimony was presented at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association in November dealing with problems created when religious and community hospitals merge. If there are undercurrents or discussions about hospitals closing or merging in your area, contact Barbara Schwarz or call Lois Uttley at Family Planning Advocates (518/436-8408).

NYS Public Policy Committee and Issues Chairs

This year each member of the public policy committee is focusing on a specific area of legislation. If there is information that needs to be disseminated or legislation that needs to be supported, there are public policy representatives who are studying and tracking those particular concerns. They are as follows:

Child Care	Rosalind Renouard	516/747-4236	rrenouard@dellnet.com
Economic Self-Sufficiency	B. Delores Thompson	716/484-8289	
Education	Judy Weidemann	716/655-3649	weideman@gateway.net
Environment	Judith Wagner	315/393-7531	jisg@gisco.net
Health	Barbara Schwarz	631/587-8865	ellronn@optonline.com
Listserv	Betsy Forkas	518/377-6919	betsy_forkas@compuserve.com

EQUITY IN EDUCATION

Ann Walker, Director
631/563-2678 walkerab@aol.com

Here's an idea for an easy Women's History month project: The **Jamestown** Branch donated a book, *Side by Side - A Photographic History of American Women in War*, to the local library as a Veteran's Day gift. The branch publicity chair arranged for a photo and a brief story in the local paper. The book was selected from the National Women's History Project catalog. Order a catalog at www.nwhp.org

Carrie Sears and Claudine Edwards, **Westchester** Equity in Education Action Group, presented a symposium, *Becoming a Tech Savvy Young Woman* at the Chappaqua Library. They are now seeking those interested in reaching out with a continuing program. They intend to prove to girls that you don't have to be nerds to succeed in technology. There are lots of interesting jobs that require a technology background and they pay really well! Wilma Gitchell is organizing a beginning computer class for Westchester members who want to improve their 'tech savvy'

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF VOLUNTEERS
Donna Seymour, Director of Communications
315/265-6985 onthego@northnet.org

There is no more critical component in branch success than membership. Everyone in AAUW is busy; we lead complex lives that revolve around family, work, and the causes we elect to give our time and support to.

Those outside activities which reward us are the ones we remain committed to, volunteering our talents and energy because we believe we can truly make a difference. As branch members and leaders, we need to be realize that each of us plays a critical part in nurturing that spirit of volunteerism which makes AAUW possible.

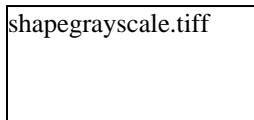
Recognize that not everyone brings the same passion or enthusiasm to AAUW, at least at the beginning. But with support, encouragement, and mentoring, each member can become a vital link in our mission to promote equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. Here are some suggestions:

Be Welcoming - When people join AAUW, they are taking a risk. They don't know much about the organization or the people in the branch. Make sure you welcome them; create such a positive first impression that they **know** they made the right choice. Don't sit with your friends at a branch event - sit with the person you don't know and make a new friend!

Be Understanding - Let members know that you appreciate whatever level of involvement they can bring. In our branch, we borrowed a couple of ideas from PTA: **Guilt-Free Membership** and **Call Me Once**. With Guilt-Free Membership, you don't have to do everything the branch offers; participate when and where you can; paying dues is also valuable support to further the work of the organization. Call Me Once is a promise to a busy member to only ask for help once during the year. We have found that people usually have such a good time when we call them, they often say, "Call me again!"

Recognize Volunteer Fatigue Syndrome - Don't let members burn out. Some people don't know when or how to say no and it is all too easy to keep asking the same people to assume more and more responsibility. Taken to an extreme, these folks will just quit one day. Don't let this happen.

Appreciate People - Nothing is so simple to say as "You did a great job! Thank you." And nothing energizes volunteers like hearing it said. "How can I help?" are also good words to hear!



shapegrayscale.tiff

4: Kingston
1: Islip Area & North Fork

SHAPE THE FUTURE MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN
Jeanette Knapp, Membership VP
607/254-7115 jdk4@cornell.edu

Women generally prefer cooperation to competition. However, when the Association asked New York to set a goal for how many members we would recruit through the new *Shape the Future Membership Campaign*, President Bobbe Fortunato and I picked a number fitting for an empire state: **200 new members in 2000**. With 55 branches, an average of 4 new members per branch recruited at membership events will easily put us over the top. Here are the new members I know about:

5: Ithaca & Jefferson County

Let me know how many members your branch has enrolled so I can add you to our list. To date, the champion seems to be the Anderson, Indiana, Branch, which has recruited 27 new members.

The "join with a friend" incentive is particularly effective. At Ithaca's *Sister-to-Sister* event, two teachers who wanted to join rounded up two friends to join with them, saving them each \$20 in Association dues. The branch gets a free membership for every 2 new members it recruits, and you can use those bonus memberships this year or next year to reward a board member who may be short of funds but is doing a terrific job for

your branch. For more information on *Shape the Future*, see the New York Membership Campaign kit or www.aauw.org

VOTER EDUCATION PROJECT

Jane Smith, Director

607/868-3243 blufview@ptd.net

I started college in 1969. As the oldest child in my family I was the first of my siblings to leave a conservative small town, comfortable family upbringing, and go out into the world. I went to a small Catholic women's college in Pennsylvania, not a big leap, but enough for me at that time. As the grown-up I thought I was then, my first exposure to government was the Vietnam War Era. Unless you were young in the late 60's and early 70's you will not understand the effect it had on me, just as I cannot understand the same experience of someone coming of age in the mid 40's. During that time, we expected the worst from our government, the President and the police. We were getting the worst from those people. Our friends, our brothers, were going to a jungle and coming back mentally or physically maimed, or not coming back at all. In Ohio, student protesters were shot at and killed by the National Guard. Friends were tear-gassed and arrested in Washington because they were representing the youth of America by protesting an unethical war in a part of the world where we had no business. We survived those horrible chaotic times. Our government survived. Presidents were elected after LBJ. Watergate arrived and we survived that fiasco. Presidents were elected after Nixon. Our country and its voters, the public, have survived.

The newest trauma in American political life—Election 2000—was unusual. Not knowing who won the Presidential election for days, an occurrence that never happened before in our lifetime, was another event that we survived. Men, most of the leaders, will have to learn what women have known forever—how to work in a coalition.

Neither party has a majority anywhere in government. It will require great skill and patience to go about the job of government in this new millennium. Women's skills will be sought and valued. Our time to begin shining has arrived. We made a difference in this election. Our voices were heard. Now we really have to get to work.

You will need to contact your representatives when an issue important to you is in discussion and up for vote. A subscription to *ACTION ALERT* from AAUW will help you. New York AAUW's website <http://www.northnet.org/nysaauw/ee.htm> is another valuable tool. Next year will see redistricting based on the 2000 Census. New positions will be up for

elections. Women can fill those jobs. If you have experience in government, consider running or support a woman candidate who will be running. School board and some local government elections are held in the spring. These are great places for women to start in government. Find your issues. Ask your neighbors for support and run. Don't be afraid of losing in an election; someone has to. If you lose, run again. Run until you win. Don't be afraid of winning and not being able to do the job. You can. You are college-educated women. You are intelligent. You have skills as a woman that you do not even know you have. After all, who but a woman can do the number of things we all do every day, and do them well.

I was so proud in November, to be a member of AAUW and know what an impact we had on events shaping our history. I was so proud of you for all you did to change our history in New York. We all know now the **Power of One Vote**. We will survive this turbulent time in our history, and we, as women, will make a difference.

Welcome NYS's Newest Branch!

AAUW at SUNY Geneseo

President: Helena Waddy

4128 W. Lake Rd.

Geneseo, NY 14454

716/2243-0254

waddy @geneseo.edu

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Send all address changes to AAUW Records Office, 111 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Questions and articles should be addressed to the *NYS FOCUS* Editor, Mary J. King, 77 King George Rd., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603, 845/462-0567, e-mail thekings@surferz.net.

Spring Issue deadline: January 15, 2001

Summer Issue deadline: May 1, 2001

Websites: www.northnet.org/nysaaauw
www.aauw.org

INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Peggy Coe, International Relations Director
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Please remember AAUW's international component. The fact that we are ALL members of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) and that we have an AAUW representative to the United Nations, should remind us to keep looking at the world picture. NYS AAUW is offering you an opportunity to do just that by supporting the two excellent Bina Roy Projects in Development through IFUW. It is interesting to note that although the obvious purpose of these projects is the learning of marketable skills, the more subtle agenda is the operation of a health clinic and education on child care, hygiene, AIDS/HIV, etc. It should be noted also that IFUW members monitor both programs.

- **BANGLADESH:** Started in 1982, the project at Uttarkhan Health and Vocational Centre provides sewing and tailoring skills for 16 women, a primary school for 20 children, and educational classes for 8 other women. The Centre also runs a health clinic serving about 25 women and children each week. Members of the federation monitor and run the project.
- **TURKEY:** The Turkish Association of University Women (TUKD) started this project in 1997 to teach reading and writing skills to illiterate women in the Gaziantep Region of southeastern Turkey. The course is 90 hours. A professional teacher teaches the literacy course and is assisted by two other teachers. Members of the Gaziantep Branch provide informal education on child care, family planning, AIDS/HIV, hygiene, women and the environment, and consumers' rights.

In the case of these projects a very small amount of money goes a long, long way. Fifty cents from each of our NYS AAUW members would meet our goal. We need one or two members from each branch to take it upon themselves to pass the hat at a meeting or two and send a check, made out to NYS AAUW (noting that it is for the Bina Roy IFUW Fund) to:

Mary Thompson, NYS AAUW Treasurer
5 Orchard Lane
Waterford, NY 12188

BRANCH ACTION NOTES

Happy Anniversary
80th - Adirondack Branch
110th - Albany Branch
110th - Buffalo Branch

The **Adirondack Branch** cosponsored a meeting with the local LWV on Restorative Justice. Also, the branch held another successful annual dessert theater presentation by a local theater group, earning almost \$400 for EF.

The **Buffalo Branch** held a weekend retreat for board members to focus on implementing a branch leadership plan. In November the branch sponsored *A Woman to Woman* Summit, a launch of a 5-year dialogue on issues surrounding high quality childcare.

In response to public concern about safety at the Plum Island Laboratory, the **North Fork Branch** sponsored a public forum. Experts responded to questions posed by the public about West Nile Virus and other health issues. AAUW member Mary Travers served as moderator.

The **Massapequa Branch** recently held a meeting on osteoporosis. Another meeting featured a Newsday columnist who discussed candidates running for election.

In November, the **New York City Branch** sponsored a benefit Wine and Cheese party for LAF. Thanks to the hard work of Dawn Arlotta, LAF chair, the branch received corporate gifts and sponsorship.

Save the date!
27th Triennial IFUW Conference
August 10-17, 2001
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
www.ifuw.org/ifuw2001

Ottawa, one of the world's loveliest, liveliest, cleanest, safest, friendliest, cosmopolitan capitals in the world is our neighbor across the border and a bargain also.

When again will you have the opportunity to meet with your IFUW sisters from around the world, attend sessions with simultaneous translation and take part in a whole host of cultural events? The women of the world are anxious to meet you, to hear your stories and to tell you theirs.

CONVENTION 2001 REGISTRATION INFORMATION

To receive convention registration information via E-mail in January 2001, notify Betty Preble of your E-mail address, Bettyp6935@aol.com

If you want convention registration information mailed to you, send the coupon to:

Betty Preble
6935 East Quaker
Orchard Park, NY 14127.

Your branch president will also have the convention registration information.

NYS AAUW Convention 2001

April 27-29

Rochester Marriott Thruway

Please send Convention Registration information to

Name _____

—

Address _____

—

City/State/Zip code _____

APRIL 27-29

NYS AAUW CONVENTION 2001

ROCHESTER: A CITY OF HISTORY

The theme of the 2001 NYS AAUW Convention is **Peace Building**. A new event is scheduled for Friday afternoon. New methods of achieving peace for self, family, and community will be explored at a participatory workshop.

Linda Souter, President of International Federation of University Women (IFUW), will be our keynote speaker Friday night. Linda will also be available for a workshop on Saturday. Workshops and forums are planned for Saturday and Sunday.

The third annual EF Walk/Run, LAF Basket silent auction, and local tours will also be included in the agenda.

The NYS AAUW Board program planning committee and the Rochester convention committee are working together to have a weekend packed with information, activities, challenges, and opportunities to renew our vision.

Rochester's history helped shape America. Susan B. Anthony, one of Rochester's most famous residents, campaigned tirelessly for the Women's Rights Movement. Her home is a National Historic Landmark, and her gravesite a place of pilgrimage. Rochester also offers a range of sites and exhibits of Native American and African-American history.

We look forward to seeing you in Rochester!

CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS 2001

Resolutions that underscore the mission of AAUW will be presented at the NYS Convention in Rochester in April. These resolutions will direct our attention to those issues of critical importance to our members, communities, and state.

Resolutions must be submitted by **March 12, 2001** if they are to be considered at the NYS AAUW Rochester Convention April 27-29, 2001. This will give the committee adequate time to review them before convention.

Resolutions should meet the following criteria:

- Have relevance to our mission and public policy program
- Engage the group in a worthwhile effort that is capable of producing meaningful results
- Have realistic goals, a timetable, and possible action ideas

Resolutions may not be in conflict with other Association business and should not repeat resolutions already adopted. Each resolution must be submitted with a logical, well-documented explanation of why it merits consideration.

Resolutions provide impetus and direction for branches and the state. It is important for branch members/leaders to begin to give thought to possible resolutions and to submit them by the deadline.

Send resolutions to: Ann Bish, AAUW NYS Public Policy Director, 5177 Willowbrook Drive, Clarence 14031. Call 716/741-3964 or e-mail ashicks2@juno.com if you have questions.



New York State *FOCUS* (USPS-390-570)
Fall 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, disability, or class.

Important! All mailing labels are prepared at AAUW headquarters. Attention postmaster: Dated Material. Please do not delay.

Sister to Sister

They're so young, so shy
6th & 7th, 8th & 9th graders
dressed so alike in jeans,
short T-shirts, nylon jackets
advertising Tommy and Calvin.
Up early on a Saturday morning
dropped off by mothers ticking off chores
sticking close to buddies
they edge into the Women's Community Building
past tables draped in purple and hot pink.
"Love your body" displays warn
this will be no ordinary day.

We hope not.
I've forgotten my Vote button
with its 40's factory worker
saying, "Women Count!"
but that matters to me, not them.

In words and music
the girls are encouraged to voice issues, their issues.
In small groups they advance
from chat rooms to action rooms
thinking, talking, reflecting on me
my body, my image, my future
all part of the journey of creating ourselves.

Sistertosister.tiff

We hope they will take courage
from voicing fears and hopes
from finding others who share their dreams
and learn, as we have, to work together.

Sitting at my folding table
I urge parents and volunteers to join us
in fighting sexual harassment and making sure
girls get fair shares of sports and computers.
We who once besieged the county board
to get father's into the delivery room
and hospitals to stop forcing formula on breast-
fed babies
feel one with the women before us who
marched
for temperance, the vote, and equal rights.

The Ithaca High School Step Squad swings in.
Watching these spirited girls slap on name
tags
and rhythmically step and clap, I think
Yes! the sisters who follow us
are carrying on already.

-Jeanette Knapp

Written following the Ithaca's Sister to Sister event
on November 4, 2000. Jeanette is the NYS AAUW
Membership Vice President.