

It's Time to Act!

Ann Bish, NYS Public Policy Director
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Social involvement helps us enter new worlds.
We take on new priorities, gain new skills,
meet new people, hear and heed new stories.

Issues once at the margins of our vision
become the focus of our lives. Upon accepting
the challenge of trying a different future,
we feel a sense of larger purpose.
We become linked with others who share our vision.
Paul Rogat Loeb
Soul of a Citizen

Through our discussions of issues with members or by attending AAUW meetings at the state or national level or in reading articles in the Outlook, we become keenly aware of the role of legislation in fulfilling our mission. Involvement in the legislative process, then, means that we must take responsibility now - individually and collectively -- to affect change that will benefit women and girls. We must continue to inspire and encourage activism on the state and federal levels

- to achieve quality public education;
- to oppose education block grants and education savings accounts;
- to expand athletic opportunities for girls and women at both the high school and college levels;
- to stand together to protect a woman's right to choose;
- to press for hate crime prevention legislation that is motivated by gender, sexual orientation, and/or disability;
- to work to make women's economic self-sufficiency, including pay equity, retirement and pension benefits, a fact today, not just a dream of the century;
- to continue to support affirmative action;
- to work to enact meaningful health care reform from which women and families can truly benefit;
- to work to ensure the economic well-being of women when Congress considers proposals to reform the Social Security system.

On the personal level, political activism offers one an opportunity for expanding and building friendships and partnerships within AAUW and without through collaborative community projects. Purpose and pride evolve as new skills are learned and obstacles are confronted. New experiences give confidence in coping with the complexities of life. Dave Hall, President of Physicians for Social Responsibility, has so aptly said, "I draw strength and energy from anybody who is doing something constructive about issues that matter." AAUW has a long and impressive tradition of individuals and branches working to shape the future for women and girls. It is now our responsibility to continue this tradition.

AAUW NYS RESOLUTIONS

To help us focus our attention on critical and timely issues, Buffalo and Queens branches presented three resolutions at the convention in Rochester, April 27-29, 2001. The resolutions were passed overwhelmingly

by the delegates and are as follows: To Work for Reform of New York State's Public School Aid Formula, To Oppose the "Global Gag Rule" and the Devaluation of Women's Civil Rights, and To Support the Maintenance of Separate Psychiatric Facilities for Children.

An action plan for members and branches is included in each resolution. Every branch president has been sent a copy of the three resolutions and is urged to inform members about them as soon as possible. However, you can also go to the NYS AAUW homepage at www.northnet.org/nysaauw, read the text of each, and then take action!

A special "thank you" to the following AAUW members who have contributed to the public policy program this past year: Betsy Forkas, Rosalind Renouard, Donna Seymour, Barbara Schwarz, B. Delores Thompson, Judith Wagner, and Judy Weidemann

2001 AAUW NYS Action for Equity Recognition Awards

These awards and certificates are given for branch projects that promote AAUW and are in keeping with the NYS Strategic Plan for Education Equity.

Branches participating in the awards:

Garden City, Islip, Ithaca, Rochester , St. Lawrence County

HONORABLE MENTION CERTIFICATES

Gender Equity Forum - ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

"Girls Soar" (eGRSL) - ISLIP AREA BRANCH

Health on the Internet Workshop - ST LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Sponsorship of Local Girl Scout Troops - ST LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

SPECIAL RECOGNITION CERTIFICATES

Domestic Violence Awareness Day - ST LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Essay Content in Honor of Women's History Month - ISLIP AREA BRANCH

"Looking At Early Childhood" - GARDEN CITY BRANCH

Registering High School-aged Voters -ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

ACTION FOR EQUITY AWARDS

#1 Action for Equity Award for the outstanding project in a branch with a membership of fewer than 100 members

"PROFESSIONAL CLOTHING FAIR" St. Lawrence St. Lawrence County Branch

#2 The Action for Equity Awards for the project in branch with a membership of more than 100 members

Becoming a Tech Savy Young Woman Westchester Branch

#3 The Action for Equity Award for the outstanding project in a branch with more than 200 members goes to
Women Helping Girls Make Choices - Rochester

#4 The Action for Equity Award recognizing a branch working in Coalition with community organizations goes to:
Ithaca for their Sister to Sister Summit.

Descriptions of the Action for Equity Awards has been sent to all branch contacts

The Action for Equity Projects for 2001

Becoming a Tech-Savvy Young Woman - WESTCHESTER AREA BRANCH

Project Date: October 17, 2000

Description: To draw attention to the findings of the AAUW Commission on Technology, Gender, and Teacher Education, the Westchester Branch of AAUW presented a free panel presentation for females grades 5 - 12, parents, educators, and the community on how to succeed in a computer culture. The panelists included Marcella Gonzalez, a high school student, Jose Palomino, a private e-business design provider, Rena Schlowsky, and elementary school teacher and AAUW Fellow, and Janice Weinman, VP in marketing at Mt. Sinai NYU Health. Topics addresses by the panelists were: how to pursue a career in technology, how to motivate young women to develop advanced computer skills, and what advanced math and science courses are needed. The program included a question and answer period. A pamphlet, "Beyond Equal Access: Gender Equity in Learning with Computers," was distributed.

Project Partners: Westchester-Putnam Girl Scouts, local Parent Teacher Associations, and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services and Chappaqua Library.

Contact Person: Carolyn R. Sears 20 Scofield Road, Pound Ridge, NY 10576 (914) 763-3219

E-mail: ersears@mindspring.com

Domestic Violence Awareness Day - ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Project Date: March 10, 2001

Description: AAUW worked with the Girls Scouts of St. Lawrence County to present Girl Scout curriculum, an age appropriate instruction in Domestic Violence. Fifty girls attended. The youngest girls made collages illustrating that "Hands Are Not for Hitting," 1st - 3rd graders made maps of safe places; and 4th - 6th graders painted T-shirts to raise awareness of domestic violence issues. The junior high girls watched a video on dating violence and then discussed issues relating to this topic. This group continued on after the others had finished, indicating a real need for further information in this area.

Project Partners: Thousand Island Girl Scout Council, Renewal House (for victims of family violence) St. Lawrence County Branch, AAUW.

Contact Person: Betty Graham 8843 State HWY 56, Massena, NY 13662 (315) 384-3193

E-mail: rgraham2@twcnny.rr.com

Essay Content in Honor of Women's History Month - ISLIP AREA BRANCH

Project Date: March 2001

Description: Students grade 5 to 9 are invited to submit an essay on the topic "An American Women in the Field of Science Whose Work Has Made Life Better for All of Us." (\$100 savings bond awarded.)

Project Partners: 11 school districts in Islip Town

Project Person: Carol Morley 95 Corey Ave., Blue Point, NY 11715 (631) 363-6040

E-mail : USER106688@aol.com

Gender Equity Forum - ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Project Date: March 8, 2001

Description: On March 8, 2001 International Women's Day, The St. Lawrence County Branch of AAUW held a Gender Equity Forum. Branch members and the public were invited to discuss gender equity in education. A brief overview of AAUW research was given using the video, "Girls Can".

Additionally, examples of the EF- funded research projects were displayed, including Shortchanging Girls, Short Changing America; Growing Smart: What's Working for Girls in School, Girls in the Middle: Working to Succeed in School, Gender Gaps: Where Schools Still Fail Our Children, and Separated by Sex: A Critical Look at Single-Sex Education for Girls.

Project Partners: St. Lawrence "County AAUW, Partners in Engineers, a NSF Grant at Clarkson University, Lab to Life, an AAUW Community Action Grant.

Contact Person: Sandra Sarkela 715 Jay Street, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 393-7720

E-mail: sarkelsj@potSDam.edu

"Girls Soar" (eGRLS) - ISLIP AREA BRANCH

Project Date: 1st meeting February 2001 completion date September 15, 2001

Description: Girls Soar is a rocketry program designed especially for girls. Girls will build and launch their own rockets. Each Girl will be accompanied by a parent for support and encouragement.

Project Partners: Northshore Science and Technology Museum, scientists, business person, science teachers, parents and Girl Scouts

Contact Person: Geraldine Ossana 1059 Brookdale Ave., Bay Shore, NY 11706 (631) 586-8440

E-mail: USER106688@aol.com

Health on the Internet Workshop - ST LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Project Date: January 10, 2001

Description: The branch held several successful introduction to the

Internet workshops a year ago and wanted to build on that experience by providing a workshop devoted to exploring accurate health-related information on the Internet. The workshop was held on the St. Lawrence University campus and was run by their electronic service librarian during the break between the fall and spring semesters. St. Lawrence County is engaged in a long term study of the major health trends in the county and a major education effort to improve people's lifestyle choices which have a major impact on their health. Encouraging more self-education in the health area is an important part of this process.

Project Partners: St. Lawrence University and St. Lawrence County Health Initiative

Contact Person: Katherine Briggs 30 Sullivan Drive Partridge Know Unit 102, Canton, NY 13617

E-mail : briggsrk@slic.com (315) 386-1630

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"Looking At Early Childhood" - GARDEN CITY BRANCH

Project Date: monthly starting January 26, 2001

Description: The Garden City Branch of AAUW is proud to have originated a month column entitled "Looking At Early Childhood," in the Garden City News, a newspaper with a readership of 22,000. Network partners, each of whom are contributors to the column, will address child development issues and the supreme importance of early childhood education will be brought home to parents, the general public and our local legislators.

Project Partners: six Garden City Nursery Schools, the Adelphi University Child Activity Center and the Child Care Council of Nassau, Inc.

Contact Person: Georgene Harrison 14 St. Paul's Place, Garden City, NY 11530
(516) 747-0688

E-mail: GHARRISON@iopener.net

Professional Clothing Fair - ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Project Date(s): October 6-7, 2001

Description: This event was targeted at students and women and men in the greater county community ready to join the work force, those job-hunting as soon as they finish their current educational/training/upgrading program, or those looking to move up the employment ladder. The Professional Clothing Fair provided an array of "gently used" clothing and accessories for men and women to browse and take whatever items they could use at no charge.

Project Partners: St. Lawrence County Branch (AAUW), St. Lawrence County Business and Professional Women (BPW), Massena College Club, Ogdensburg Area and Potsdam Zonta Clubs, SUNY Canton Connection, Women's Concerns (a SUNY Canton student Organization), One Stop Career Center.

Contact Person: Faye White 30 County Route 28, Ogdensburg, NY 13669 Tel 393-2215

E-mail: whitefw@twcny.rr.com

Registering High School-aged Voters -ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Project Date(s) : October 2-6, 2001

Description: Members of several local PTAs and the St Lawrence County AAUW worked together during the first week of October to together to encourage eligible high school students to vote in the 2001 elections. Volunteers from both organizations contacted local high schools and offered to personally register students and/or assist with the classroom registration project.

Project Partners: St. Lawrence AAUW, PTAs and schools: Edwards'Knox, Heuvelton, Madrid-Waddinton, Massena, Morristown, Norwood-Norfolk, Ogdensburg and Potsdam.

Contact Person: Betty Graham 8843 State HWY 56, Massena, NY 13662 (315) 384-3193

E-mail: rgraham2@twcnny.rr.co

Sister-to-Sister Summit - ITHACA BRANCH

Project Date: Nov. 4, 2000

Description: The Mission of Sister to Sister is to invite 60 middle school girls from the Ithaca and Cortland areas to participate in a day long event sponsored by the Women's Community Building and AAUW to provide middle school girls with information and inspiration to strengthen them; to provide educational and empowerment activities; and to provide workshops on the health-beauty connection, body percussion by Ithaca High School step squad, health relationships and body image; and to recognize the efforts of many community organizations and individuals to support adolescent girls in the Ithaca area.

Project Partners: AAUW(Ithaca branch, Cortland and NYS), Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cornell's Family Life Development Center, Girls Scouts- Seven Lakes Council, GirlSmart, In This Together, Planned Parenthood of Tompkins County, Task Force for Battered Women/Child Sexual Abuse Project, Women's Community Building, United Way of Tompkins County, NOW of Tompkins County, and many others.

Contact person: Mary Grainger 421 Highland Road Ithaca, NY 14850 (607)257-3268

E-mail: mmgithaca@aol.com

Sponsorship of Local Girl Scout Troops - ST LAWRENCE COUNTY BRANCH

Project Date : ongoing / yearly

Description: The Branch has for several years sponsored twl local Girl Scout troops (and sometimes a third troop, as well.) Every troop is required to have a community sponsor. So this is an excellent opportunity for an AAUW branch to work in coalition with a community organization which is girl-centered. In addition to being the troop sponsors, the branch

provides Public Relations expertise to the troops, submitting articles and photos about troop activities to the local media. In addition, branch members occasionally helped out with badge projects, giving them direct contact with the girls. One of the troops annual service projects is to attend our Holiday Tea for members in December and help with coats and serving.

Project Partners: Raquette Valley Neighborhood Junior Troop #214 and Cadette Troop #298.

Contact Person: Donna Seymour 8 Cedar Street Postdam, NY 13676 (315) 265-6985
E-mail: onthgo@northnet.org

Women Helping Girls with Choices - ROCHESTER AREA BRANCH

Project Date: on going

Description: Project is designed to help middle and high school girls make positive choices and feel confident about their future. Matches girls with mentors and has a school based program.

Project Partners: Links, University of Rochester Women in Science and the Rochester City School District.

Contact Person: Penny Townsend-Quill 494 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607
(716) 244-8893

ITHACA SISTER2SISTER NOV. 4, 2000

Local Women Leading "sister2sister" Event for Girls

When middle school girls from throughout the Ithaca area gathered Saturday, November 4, 2000 at the Women's Building to participate in the first local "sister2sister" - an event for girls", they were greeted by many outstanding adult and teenage females. These women were involved with the event because they believe in the importance of information and inspiration for girls as they move toward high school and adulthood.

Volunteers from the Ithaca branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and numerous other parts of the Ithaca community had been building to create a special day for the girls. Registration was accepted by calling 257-3268 or checking the web site at www.sister2sisterithaca.com.

The all day event opened at 9:30 a.m. (after an hour of registration and refreshments and getting comfortable) with Alicia Cardina, high school senior from Trumansburg, played piano and sang two original songs: "No Need to Compare" and "Pretty Girl". The messages of these songs hit at the

"sister2sister" mission of empowering girls to believe in themselves and take action when faced with the typical stresses of adolescent girls.

Gwen Webber-McLeod gave the keynote remarks which encouraged girls to "lead calm lives while fulfilling their personal, academic and professional dreams," She is a partner in Treble Associates in Auburn and is special assistant to the President of Wells College in Aurora. Webber-McLeod has also worked with the Seven Lakes Girl Scout Council and the National Women's Hall of Fame.

Co-authors of "Girls to Women, Women to Girls" Deb Traunstein and Bunny McCune introduced the girls to various components of the dal-long program. They also founded the educational organization, "In This Together", which uses an experimental model for young people, parents and teachers to examine their personal and cultural attitudes toward adolescence. In addition to working with the girls during the opening and closing activities, and orienting the adult and teen facilitators, Traunstein and McCune led a workshop for interested adults Saturday starting after 10:30 a.m....

Girls participated in two "chat rooms" and two "action rooms". The discussion groups focused on "Me, Myself and I" and "Me and the World". Each "chat room" had a teen and an adult facilitator who assisted the girls in expressing themselves about the topic and creating "focus statements" about what is known and what can be done about these issues which complicate the lives of adolescent girls.

Three different interactive workshops were offered during the day. Heather Campbell of the Task Force for Battered Women/Sexual Abuse Project led an "action room" on healthy relationships. Lynn Stack, volunteer from Planned Parenthood of Tompkins County, helped girls explore what "body image" is in a society full of contradictory messages about appearance health and happiness. Rhonda Morton of Corning, founder of GirlSmarts retreats for girls, guided the girls to "Create Your Self" with art, movement and writing.

In the middle of the day, the girls had a lunch break. There was a "Love Your Body " fair for them to attend with information and demonstrations about different aspects of health and beauty. For example, skin care, fitness, nutrition and natural healing through massage were highlighted. Resources about organizations that serve young women were featured.

Before returning to the chat rooms and action rooms, the girls saw a performance of the Ithaca High School Step Squad. This student organization does body percussion performances in the community and taught the girls several moves, and explained why belonging to a group is an important part of their high school experience.

"Sister2sister" was supported by the following sponsoring organizations:
Women's Community Build

Spring FOCUS Article

Congratulations to the Communications Award Winners

Donna Seymour, Communications Director

onthego@northnet.org 315/265-6985

Many branches took home communications awards at the 2001 AAUW NYS Convention in Rochester. It has been a real pleasure to see the many ways the branches of New York State have promoted AAUW through their creative use of technology, the media, and through the pages of the branch newsletters during the past year. NYS has a dedicated and talented group of people who volunteer their time and talents to keep the rest of us informed about local, state and national issues. Be sure to thank the people who do so much to make your branch visible to the world.

The 2001 Technology Awards were awarded to branches who submitted a description of how they use technology to further the work of the branch.

"Hooked-Up": Adirondack, Garden City, North Shore, Schenectady

"Plugged-In": Massapequa, Poughkeepsie, St. Lawrence County

The 2001 Media/PR Awards went to:

"Nova": Adirondack, Massapequa

"Super Nova": Garden City, St. Lawrence County, Schenectady

The 2001 Newsletter awards were awarded to every branch who put the Communications Director on the regular mailing list. Based on the number of points earned, newsletters were judged according to criteria in three categories.

Noteworthy Newsletters: Huntington

Newsletters of Distinction: Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown, Corning, East Hampton, Elmira, New York City, Queens, Skaneateles Area, Smithtown, Staten Island

Newsletter of Excellence: Adirondack, Bath, Jefferson County, Garden City, Greater Rochester Area, Islip Area, Ithaca, Mohawk Valley, North Shore, Poughkeepsie, St. Lawrence County, Schenectady

The guidelines for next year's awards are all ready in place. You can check the NYS website (www.northnet.org/nysaaauw) for an advance peek! Congratulations to all and I look forward to even more submissions next year!

New York State
Board of Directors
2001-2002

President-Roberta [Bobbe] Fortunato, Islip-bobbef@juno.com

Program Vice President-Marjorie B. Smith, Cortland & Ithaca-

Educational Foundation Vice President-Helen Engel, Oswego-rengel@oswego.edu

Congratulations to our newly elected officers:

Membership Vice President-Jeanette Knapp, Ithaca-jdk4@cornell.edu

Treasurer-Cindy Smith, Poughkeepsie- MDRCTJ@aol.com

Secretary/Bylaws-Barbara Luther, Elmira-barbaraluther@ekotrope.net

Appointed Directors for NYS will be:

Communications Director-Donna Seymour, St. Lawrence Co.- onthego@northnet.org

Public Policy Director-Jane Smith, Bath-blufview@ptd.net

Administrative Director-Carmen Wyszomierski, Islip-wyszcarmen@msn.com

College/University Director-Cira Markuson, Oneonta-Markusonc@Hartwick.edu

Education & Equity-Ann Walker, Islip-walkerab@aol.com

Diversity director-Jane Sheeran, Saratoga Springs-sheeran176@aol.com

International director-Peg Coe, JeffersonCo.-bpcoe@imcnet.net

Branch Council-Eleanor Filburn, Oswego-

LAF Director-Evvie Currie, Schenectady-ecurrie@gateway.net

Convention Director [to be filled]

Separate piece.

New Business from the State Convention deals with the establishment of a group to work for all the branches and members.

New York State Task Force for the Future
Established April, 2001

The Officers and Board of Directors announced at the Rochester Convention that a Task Force had been formed to help the State with its' passage into the Future. The TF has been given two years to find ways to help the state become more economic, develop more technological processes for communications and develop more efficient procedures for branches to learn about and perform their AAUW work.

Task Force leader is Loreen Ginnitti, out going State Secretary/Bylaws. Loreen and her group will try to have a survey for the Presidents and board at the summer board meeting. Followed by contact with branches this fall.

A Future to Shape - Join Us

Bobbe Fortunato

While looking at old NYS Focus pieces I came across one from 1995. Then president, Vicki Marshall, titled her article “Equity, Diversity, Leadership - NOW!” It pains me sometimes to realize we’ve come along way but we have not come far enough.

For over eighty years AAUW has worked for Pay Equity and changes to benefit women - we are still doing it. We have been in the trenches and on the line for educational equity, civil rights, social security, welfare and health care reforms. Yet, the new congress is set on changes that will slowly erode all that we and the first pioneers have obtained and continued to work to make better.

The state convention in Rochester just one week ago was really a terrific place to be and even better to preside over. Everyone who had even a small part did it with great enthusiasm and spirit. Hopefully your members that attended have come back to the branch and shared all the excitement and information. As a whole, your state board hopes to build on this well of enthusiasm at the summer board meeting [**where we hope to have all branches represented**]. We do expect that ideas will flow both ways and then we can really try to help each other.

In the next two months I am sure, most of the branches will hold their yearly officer elections and I hope that each new or continuing officer will take the time to communicate with her counterpart on the state board or with me. The open ended exchange of concerns and good ideas are the way we can all move to the **Future**. I know that I have hopes for us to keep our members interested in AAUW ideas and issues, add new members, add many more College and University connections / members and become diverse, educated and real advocates.

I will share a piece written by Dale Wimbrow and adapted for me:

“THE GAL IN THE GLASS”

When you get what you want in your struggle for self
And the world makes you queen for the day,
Then go to the mirror and look at your self
And see what the gal has to say.

For it isn’t your mother, your boss or your spouse
whose judgment on you must pass.
The person whose verdict counts most in your life
Is the gal staring back from the glass.

She’s the person to please’ never mind all the rest
For she’s with you clear to the end;
And you’ve passed your most dangerous and difficult test

If the gal in the glass is your friend.

You may be like Jack Horner and chisel a plum
And think you are a wonderful gal,
But the gal in the glass says you are a bum
If you can't look *her* straight in the eye.

You may fool the whole world- down the pathway of years
And get pats on the back as you pass;
But the final reward will be heartaches and tears
If you've cheated the gal in the glass.

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FOCUS on Members

We have something special planned for the fall issue of the NYS FOCUS. That issue will go to nearly 4000 branch members, as well as the 3000 MALs (Members at Large) who live here in New York. In order to accomplish this, we will combine the Fall and Winter issues into one which will be mailed out to every AAUW member in NY.

This issue will focus on the unique ways branches here in the Empire State put the AAUW mission into action. Each branch is invited to write a short description of your best event or project, something that you are especially proud of, and something that will make MALs want to know more. In order to grow our state membership, we need to reach out to MALs, the college and university campuses across the state, and younger members.

This is a great opportunity for your branch to reach out to the MALs in your area and let them know how exciting branch membership is. Contact the FOCUS editor or any member of the Board (see the list on page 8) for more information. This special issue will showcase the very best of AAUW in NY - make sure your branch participates.

The deadline for copy for this issue is Friday, Aug. 10, with the issue to be mailed in mid-October.

Educational Foundation-Helen Engel, New York State

Thanks to every one who gave to the Educational Foundation in the year 2000, the contributions from New York State totaled over \$107,000. Congratulations! Thank you for the time and effort spent in fund raising and for your monetary donations.

The top ten Branches for total contributions and for per capita contributions in 2000 were:

Place	Branch-total Contributions	Branch-Per Capita Contributions
1	Buffalo	Ithaca
2	North Shore	Mid-Island
3	Ithaca	Bath
4	Mid-Island	Buffalo
5	Garden City	Smithtown Area
6	Islip Area	Southern New York
7	Smithtown Area	Islip Area
8	Southern New York	Oswego
9	Bath	North Shore
10	Westchester County	Jamestown

Over 30 people got up early on Sunday morning to participate in the EF Walk/Run at the State convention. Let's see if we can top that number next year. Since money raised by your sponsors is credited to your Branch, this is a good way to start or add to your Branch Fund-raising activities and get some community involvement. It's not too early to think about joining the group at the 2002 convention in Lake Placid.

Remember to spread the word about Grants and Fellowships available through the Foundation to your community. Plan to use a Grant recipient at a Branch meeting. Share the Foundation publications with others. Each Branch should have received a copy so you should have access to them.

Good luck with fund raising for 2001. I know many of you have already started. Contributions to the AAUW Educational Foundation are tax deductible. Remember the work of the Foundation helps all of us. Working together, we make a difference.

NYS LAF Article for the summer NYS Focus 2001

AAUW NYS LAF 3rd in the USA in 2000
Evelyn M. Currie, NYS Legal Advocacy Fund

Director

The Legal Advocacy Fund Luncheon at the AAUW NYS Convention celebrated 20 years of helping women combat discrimination. Sylvia Newman, the LAF President, came to offer us greetings and present Evvie a plaque in appreciation of her work for the fund, which moved us into 3rd place. Barbara Lavin-McEleney, the LAF litigant who won her case against Marist College, told us of her struggles to achieve equity at Marist. Sylvia and Barbara presented a very informative workshop after the luncheon.

Our total 2000 NYS LAF contribution is \$27,092, just \$482 behind Oregon, which placed 2nd. We made this happen by doubling our NYS LAF Circle donors and increasing our LAF Amicus donors from 22 in 1999 to 56 in 2000. All of the Branch LAF Chairs are to be congratulated for the work they did to produce this result. Nancy Mion, the Islip LAF Chair, brought her Branch in 1st in per capita giving (\$28.59) and 1st in total giving (\$2,802). Special congratulations to her and her branch!

The other branches honored for total contributions or per capita contributions in 2000 are: Schenectady, North Shore, New York City, Buffalo, Ithaca, GardenCity, Westchester Co., Mid-Island, Queens, Fairport Area, Oswego, and Syracuse.

The following are also LAF Star Branches (\$5.00 or more per member): Adirondack, Albany, Alfred-Hornell, Amherst, Bath, Chautauqua-Westfield, Cortland, Dunkirk-Fredonia, East Aurora-Southtown, East Hampton, Elmira, Farmingdale, Greece Area, Huntington, Jamestown, Jefferson Co., Kingston, Massapequa, Mohawk Valley, Nassau Co., North Fork, Ontario Co., Peekskill, Rockland Co., St. Lawrence Co., Smithtown, Staten Island, and Yates Co. THANK YOU ONE AND ALL !

We are off to a wonderful start for 2001! The LAF Cups at the Luncheon produced \$771.09 and the LAF Baskets at the Silent Auction produced \$3,312.17 making a grand total of \$4,083.26 (\$714.26 more than last year). Many thanks to the 34 branches (3 first-timers) who brought 66 baskets and all of you who bid on them to accomplish this feat.

Our new goal this year is to attain more major donors. Please consider contributing \$50 or more to LAF before December 31st. The new LAF pin, inscribed "20 years" will be given for a contribution of \$100 or more to LAF. Wear the 2001 LAF pin as a symbol of your commitment to end sex discrimination in higher education.

We in NYS need to continue the support we instigated in the 70's when we supported the "Cornell 11" in their fight against sex discrimination. Your contribution to LAF will help NYS lead the way to produce significant change in society's recognition of the importance of equity for all women!

Membership Matters
29 Star Branches Honored at Convention
14 Branches increase membership.

Name: Jeanette Knapp Position: MEMBERSHIP Vice President

Fourteen New York branches grew in membership this year according to the association's February 1 membership report. For a year when there was a big association dues increase, that's very good news. Membership in all New York branches now totals approximately 3,800. That is 5.2 percent fewer members than in 1999-2000, but the rate of decrease is better than last year's 7.8 percent decline. The 14 branches that have increased their membership this year are

AAUW at SUNY Geneseo (our brand-new branch!)

Alfred-Hornell

Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown

Bath

Farmingdale

Greater Rochester

Islip

Ithaca

Jefferson County

Kingston

Mid-Island

Skaneateles

Smithtown

Westchester County

Special commendations to Jefferson County with a 38 percent increase over four years, from 78 to 109; to Skaneateles with a 36 percent increase this year, from 22 to 30; and Greater Rochester with a 14 percent increase this year, from 185 to 211.

Some of this success is due to the association's membership incentives and to our state membership campaign. But most of it is due to the enthusiasm and hard work of every branch member. All branches go up and down in membership from year to year, so don't be discouraged. With creative programs, inspiring officers, and thoughtful members who bring friends, neighbors and co-workers to your dynamic, welcoming branch, your branch will continue to grow. See the AAUW New York website for some secrets that New York's fastest-growing branches shared at the state convention.

Congratulations to the all-star branches that received awards at the state convention in April:

Albany - 5 stars

Alfred-Hornell - 7 stars

Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown - (I have to check the number; I'll e-mail you tomorrow)

Bath - 6 stars

Buffalo - 6 stars

Chautauqua-Westfield - 5 stars

Dunkirk-Fredonia - 4 stars

East Hampton - 5 stars

Farmingdale - 2 stars

Garden City - 6 stars

Greater Rochester - 5 stars

Islip - 7 stars

Ithaca - 5 stars

Jamestown - 5 stars

Jefferson County - 6 stars

Kingston - 5 stars

Massapequa Area - 6 stars

Mid-Island - 7 stars

Mohawk Valley - 5 stars

New York City - 6 stars

North Fork - 5 stars

North Shore - 6 stars

Poughkeepsie - 5 stars

Queens - 5 stars

St. Lawrence County - 6 stars

Schenectady - 6 stars

Smithtown - 7 stars

Staten Island - 6 Stars

Westchester - 7 stars

The association will be introducing a new branch recognition program this summer. Watch the fall Leadership Portfolio for information about state awards.

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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.

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Spring FOCUS Article

Attracting Younger Members

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At the 2001 state convention Rochester, we conducted a CHAT Room for Younger Members. Several common themes emerged from the round table discussion. Branches interested in attracting and retaining younger members should be aware of a couple of key points.

First, each of the younger members said that when they wanted to learn more about AAUW, they turned to the Internet to find about the organization in general and if there was a local branch. Branches without an Internet presence are, for all purposes, invisible to young people, who rely on the World Wide Web as their quick reference guide.

Secondly, they all mentioned how difficult it was to attend the most interesting branch programs and meeting because they were either held during the day, or were always on the same night of the week or day of the month. Meeting inflexibility creates real barriers to younger member participation.

Fortunately, all branches can address these issues. AAUW NYS offers support and space on the state webpage for all branches to have a homepage. Just contact me and I will be glad to get you started. The problem of meeting inflexibility is one you will have to solve internally. The key to branch survival is adaptability - make sure you are not a fossil branch unable and unwilling to embrace the flexibility you need to survive!