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FOCUS



Why Your Branch Should Plan a Transitions Conference

Jeanette Knapp, Membership Vice President
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The seven Ithaca Branch members who met in February 2002 to begin planning our Transitions Conference discovered that we had much in common. We had all been non-traditional undergraduates or graduate students and highly valued that experience. Our first task was to determine if there was a need for this project in our community. Over the next several weeks, we put all of our coalition training to work. We contacted community groups that worked with women who could benefit from returning to school and might be willing to help us.

The response was very positive. By spring, women from Cornell University, Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) and the Women's Information Network had joined our committee. The questions seemed endless: Where and when to hold the conference? How much would it cost and how would we pay for it? What topics would we cover? Who would be the speakers? How much should we charge? What if people couldn't pay? Would colleges send representatives? Should we offer day care? Would anyone come?

The community college offered us free space, but insisted that we couldn't wait until next spring. We had to hold it in the fall (less than six months away!) so women who decided to enroll for the next academic year could apply for financial aid.

Panic set in. None of us was willing to be conference chair, but we did set a date (Saturday, October 26) and met every other Thursday straight through the summer. We listed and divided up tasks: inviting colleges to participate, planning topics and contacting speakers, publicity, fundraising, taking notes and sending them out, preparing the agenda for each meeting. E-mail turned out to be crucial.

With no overall chair, we each took responsibility for our task and felt free to do additional things when a good idea occurred to us, as it often did. We were too late for funding from most community groups, but our members, the branch, and AAUW-NYS chipped in along with Cornell and the First Presbyterian Church. We distributed a thousand copies of our printed registration form. We reached more people when we created an e-mail registration form that everyone could forward to their friends and co-workers. Colleges from as far away as the Rochester Institute of Technology, which offers many technical courses online, sent representatives.

In all, 37 women registered, and 34 came and stayed all day on a cold rainy Saturday. They asked question after question in each session.

continued on page 8



In This Issue:

- President's Message..... p. 2
- Educational Equity p. 3
- Convention p. 4 & 5
- Nominations p. 6
- EF p. 7
- Bina Roy Projects..... p. 8
- Branch Action Notes.... p. 9
- Communications..... p. 10
- Sexual Harassment p. 11
- Public Policy..... p. 12

**Living
the Mission**





President's Message

Evelyn M. "Evvie" Currie,
AAUW-NYS President
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"Whenever you take a step forward you are bound to disturb something..."
Indira Gandhi, 1967

In the process of moving into the 21st Century, the AAUW NYS Board is disturbing old procedures and changing them to meet the needs of our members today. At the Winter Board meeting it was decided to divide one of our large districts in two. This will make travel to the District meeting in the fall more convenient. District III will continue to include Ithaca, Cortland, Skaneateles, Southern NY, Syracuse and Waverly. I will appoint a District Representative for it. The new District VII, with District Representative Diane Turo-Hughes, will consist of Jefferson County, Mohawk Valley, Oswego and St. Lawrence County.

The Board also decided to set the dates of the Fall District Conferences so we avoid the overlap we experienced in 2002. The host branches need to make their commitment at the state Convention District meetings and provide the firm location commitment at the Summer Board meeting. We have reserved the weekend of Oct. 3-4 for the Induction Ceremony at the National Women's Hall of Fame at Seneca Falls. AAUW NYS will be supporting this important venue as it recognizes extraordinary women in the United States.

The Board assigned dates for the District meetings in 2003 are the following:

District I	October 11
District II	October 18
District III	September 20
District IV	October 25
District V	September 13
District VI	October 25
District VII	September 20

This schedule of dates will enable the President and the other Board members to participate in more district meetings around the state.

Another new change is the presentation of "Living the Mission" Certificates that go to NYS Branches for organizing a major mission-based event. Since July 2002, they have been presented to **Rochester** (Women Helping girls with Choices), **Buffalo** and **Ithaca** (Transitions events), **St. Lawrence County** (Four College Forum), **Skaneateles** (Art Day) and **Ithaca** (3 Sister-2-Sister events this year).

AAUW 101 (and fun!) at Delta Lake in July 2002 started our trend to effect changes in AAUW-NYS. This event will occur again July 11-13, 2003 at Delta Lake. Your Board has interesting plans for learning, sharing and having fun together. **WE NEED YOU TO SHARE THIS EXPERIENCE WITH US!** Our goal is at least one leadership person from each branch in the state. Won't you put the date on your calendar right now to come and join the fun? I guarantee you will go back to your branch with loads of ideas about "Living the Mission."

Change is never easy, even when it is necessary to strengthen an organization. Together, as women helping women, we will step forward and welcome necessary changes. AAUW-NYS Board and Branches together will strive for success "Living the Mission" in 2003!

Living 
the Mission

LAF News

Susan P. Sontup, LAF Director
tresswann@yahoo.com
516/679-6274

I would like to thank everyone who contributed or worked for LAF last year. We were not able to raise as much money as we did the previous year. I do not want anyone to be unduly discouraged by this. We are facing a very difficult economy and there are many worthy causes competing for the few available dollars. The new year offers us all an opportunity to start again so I encourage us all to approach LAF with renewed dedication and enthusiasm.

Our New York State theme is "Living the Mission" and an integral part of this mission of promoting lifelong education, equity and positive societal change involves support of the Legal Advocacy Fund. I have had feedback from branches and members indicating that they do not realize the importance of LAF. Can we truly accomplish our mission if we do not support LAF fully and completely?

continued on page 11

Initiative for Educational Equity

Janet Forbes, *Equity Director*
Jlforbes@hotmail.com 716/483-3525

Educational Equity eGroup

An Educational Equity eGroup has been created to share ideas and resources. The chairpeople of branch Educational Equity committees are a part of this group along with other interested AAUW members. If you would like to be a part of this dynamic group, please contact me.

Support Girls and Women in Sports



Many of our AAUW branches celebrated **National Girls and Women in Sports**

Day (NGWSD) on or around February 5, 2003.

In addition to these annual events, I'd like to challenge you to be a leader in supporting girls and women in sports in your community throughout the year. For ideas for a community action project visit:

www.northnet.org/nysaauw/ee.htm
www.aahperd.org/nagwscentral
www.womenssportsfoundation.org
www.real-sports.com

Please share your project successes and challenge with AAUW-NYS!

Cultural Interest

Inez Alston, *Cultural Interest Director*
713ipa@madbbs.com 716/763-1226

I am thrilled that I am beginning to hear from branches about their Cultural Interest Chairs. Please realize that our program is just revived, not revised. When we speak of cultural interests, the field is very, very broad.

However, as we work with our new theme, "Living the Mission," we had to take a good look at our Mission Statement. One part states that "AAUW. . . fosters lifelong education." Cultural means "development of the intellect through training or education." Therefore, we are enlarging the scope of our program to include this phase of our Mission Statement. The question then becomes, "How are we fostering lifelong education, or how can we?"

Living the Mission



A New Generation of Pioneers

In her January 9th newspaper column, Ellen Goodman writes "There is a moment in Allison Pearson's adrenaline rush of a novel that stopped me cold. Kate Reddy, the 35 year-old heroine of *I Don't Know How She Does It*, is comparing her life as (over)working mom in the macho world of London money movers to that of a first-generation immigrant in a new world.

"You know it's probably not going to get that much better in your own lifetime," she muses to herself, "but just the fact that you occupy the space . . . all that makes it easier for the women who come after you." Then she says, "We are the foundation stones. The females who come after us will scarcely give us a second thought, but they will walk on our bones."

I should know by now that the changes of one generation in this long movement produce the choices and conflicts for the next. We are walking on Golda Meir's bones and our daughters are walking on ours. We made a new place; to our daughters it's the old place. And it needs some fixing up."

As we work together in our communities on projects that improve the lives of girls and women, let's think of ourselves as the "foundation stones" for those who will come after us. Even though much progress has been made around issues of gender equity, so much remains to be done.

And as our foremother, Margaret Mead wrote, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Let's go change the world!



The Third Shift: Women Learning Online, the new study by the AAUW Educational Foundation found that online learning is on the rise and women make up the majority of the students.

"Technology does not create more hours in a day, but leaves women—who shoulder most of the family and household responsibilities—improvising to squeeze in education," said Jacqueline Woods, AAUW Executive Director. "We need to deal with the time bind that all parents and older students face if we want to make the rhetoric of lifelong learning for the 'information economy' a reality."

For more information about the study visit www.aauw.org/2000/3rdshift.html or email foundation@aauw.org, or call the Foundation INFOLINE at 202/728-7602 weekdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

continued on page 7

Living the Mission



AAUW-NYS 2003 Convention

• April 25-27, 2003 •

Islandia Marriott, Long Island

Registration Forms available from Your Branch President
Carmen Wyszomierski: wyszcarmen@msn.com or 631/472-9377
www.northnet.org/nysaauw/longisld.htm



5K Walk for EF

Sunday, April 27, 2003
6:30 a.m.

- Tote Bags for participants
- Awards

For details, see Convention Packet

Living the Mission on Long Island



KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Jackie Woods, AAUW Executive Director, will be followed by a Town Hall. Learn key issues facing AAUW today.

WORKSHOPS developed from the ideas you presented at Delta Lake will be repeated. The five workshops detailed descriptions listed in the Winter *Focus* and on the website.

EF FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS will share educational adventures with us at the EF Celebration.

AAUW NYS BOARD MEMBER TOWN HALL will give attendees an opportunity to find answers about implementing mission-based programs and present positive suggestions.

LEGISLATIVE FORUM will feature NYS women in the U.S. Congress and NYS Legislature discussing AAUW issues.

NETWORKING time has been built into the schedule.

WINE AND CHEESE RECEPTION AT SNAPPER INN ON THE BAY will give you magnificent vistas and the quintessential Long Island experience –partying at the water's edge with friends. Cost \$20.

VISIT ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, home to seven Nobel Prize winners, limited to 60. (Cost \$10) or L.I. Museum of Art, History and Carriages, housing the largest collection of carriages in the country. (Cost \$ 15)

TOUR L. I. ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON. Explore Long Island's East End - The North Fork (Cost \$15) or take a Tour of Westhampton Beach. (Cost \$ 25)

TRAVEL BY BUS from Syracuse, Cortland or Binghamton. Sleep/read/socialize with friends. Local AAUW members will host you Thursday night. (Cost \$80)

COST: Islandia Marriott Long Island-two nights with six meals - \$439.06 Single, \$319.98 Double per person, \$289.29 Triple per person.

For more information check the website or request a Convention Packet.

ITS 2K3. . . THIS CONVENTION'S FOR ME!

2nd Annual

IFUW Bina Roy Lap Swim

Ask your friends for the suggested amount of \$.50 - \$1.00 per lap
 Chart your own laps at the pool



All proceeds go to IFUW Bina Roy

Awards to winner of the most laps and to the most \$\$ raised
 Pledge sheet in Convention Packet

Questions: Joan Monk, 914/245-7704 • ftmaven@bestweb.net

LAF BASKET SILENT AUCTION AAUW NYS CONVENTION 2003



FRIDAY, APRIL 25 - 4:30 P.M. TILL
 SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 10 P.M.

EACH BRANCH CAN BRING 3 BASKETS
 FUNDS ARE RAISED FOR LAF

- BRANCHES RECEIVE CREDIT FOR BIDS
- WINNERS RECEIVE CREDIT FOR DONATIONS
- SHOP, BID AND SUPPORT LAF!

We Will Be Waiting For You At The Islandia Marriott On April 25

Jane Pfeiffer Smith, Program VP
janeinvt@surfglobal.net • 802/874-4478

When I was much younger and had small children at home, the idea of going to a AAUW-NYS convention for a weekend was my idea of heaven. I got to go with friends from my branch. I got to eat food that someone else cooked. I got to stay in a hotel where my bed was made in the morning. I got to talk to adults. I got to meet new people who were somewhat like me from around the state. I got to see old friends that I had met before and oh yes, of course, I got to hear and see exciting ideas about AAUW topics that were of interest to me.

It hasn't changed!! The AAUW-NYS Convention at the Islandia Marriott will be doing the same things for me now that countless conventions in the past did for me then. I am now also thinking what I can contribute to the Convention that others will be able to take away with them.

The program committee this past year has put together some great experiences for all of you to carry back to your branches. We have five great workshops that will be repeated twice. We have a legislative forum. We have the Executive Director of AAUW, Jacqueline Woods, as our keynote speaker and Town Hall moderator. We have a chance to contemplate national AAUW issues that will be heard and voted on in Rhode Island later in the year. We have built into the schedule time to interact with each other, to share ideas for your branches. We have included special Long Island experiences for you to keep in your memory bank.

We are giving you the opportunity to come to a wonderful place in New York, to share, to grow, to rejuvenate, and to reenergize your branches to "Live the Mission".

*The entire board of NYS AAUW
will be there waiting for you!*



Keynote: *Jacqueline Woods, AAUW Executive Director*

Jackie Woods has more than 30 years of experience as an educator. Her professional experiences range from classroom instruction in Speech Pathology and Special Education to program development and management activities. Her areas of expertise include early childhood education, adult and vocational education, resource development, and higher education administration, management, and governance.

In addition, she has been a speaker and consultant for the White House Office of Women. Prior to joining AAUW, Ms. Woods served as a presidential appointee in the U.S. Department of Education as the Director of the Community Colleges Liaison Office. She has held positions at colleges from Pennsylvania to California. Throughout her career, she has authored and edited a number of education publications and served on several education and editorial boards. A native of Detroit, Ms. Woods received her B.A. degree from Michigan State University. She received her M.Ed. and completed her doctoral coursework requirements from Wayne State University.



Professor Graciela Chichilnisky LAF Litigant To Address April 26 Luncheon

This year's LAF luncheon to be held on Saturday, April 26 will feature Graciela Chichilnisky, Professor of Statistics at Columbia University and UNESCO Professor of Math and Economics. Professor Chichilnisky's case was just adopted by LAF in November 2002. She is suing Columbia for sex discrimination and retaliation and breach of settlement agreement. Chichilnisky had been the lead plaintiff in a class action lawsuit against Columbia, alleging that the university had committed violations of both Title VII and the Equal Pay Act. The suit was settled in Chichilnisky's favor in 1995.

However, the promises made in the settlement have either been unfulfilled or retracted. There have been various instances of retaliation. Plan on attending what promises to be a stimulating and informative event. This is an opportunity to see how our contributions are being used to support women as they "Live the Mission". For more information on Professor Chichilnisky, visit www.aauw.org/7000/laf/cases.

**Living 
the Mission**

Nominating Committee Report

Jane Smith, *Nominating committee Chair*

The Nominating committee presents the following members as qualified to stand for election to office in AAUW-NYS for 2003-2005.



Membership Vice President
Diane Silvestro

One rainy Sunday in 1989, a friend and I went to an AAUW Buffalo Branch Membership Tea instead of bicycling. Before joining, I was asked to establish an investment club for the branch because women lacked familiarity with

finance. The next year, I became Branch Treasurer, after that Book Sale Chair, which I tackled three times, a huge project with at least 100 tables of books. I've organized programs for the branch, served as Budget Officer, established then reviewed policy and interviewed applicants for the Chamberlin Loan, a legacy we administer. Ultimately I served as Branch President. At the State level, I was District I Representative. It hasn't been done alone. While I've been involved in other groups, AAUW is my touchstone. . . .Bertha R. Boston, the AAUW C/U Rep. for the University of Buffalo, writes "I work closely with Diane...and in other women's organizations...she is knowledgeable and hard working...and has recruited many active members to AAUW."



For Secretary/Bylaws
Bettye Medlock

Bettye Medlock is currently the President of the New York City Branch. Over the past fifteen years she has held many positions in her branch to assist in the functioning of

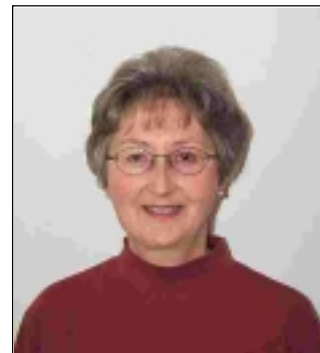
one of the most high profile branches in the state from Secretary to being a National Convention Delegate. Personally, Bettye graduated from Morris Brown College and Long Island University. She is very committed to her church, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, SOKAMA Partners and NAACP. . . .Lorrin Johnson, a past NYS Task Force Member, writes of Bettye: "Her experiences are broad and she would bring excellent organizational and interpersonal skills to our State Board."

Legal Advocacy Fund Vice President
Susan P. Sontup



"The Mid-Island Branch Executive Board unanimously voted to endorse the nomination of Susan Sontup as LAF VP for AAUW-NYS." No finer statement could a branch make in support of one of their own for such an important office in the state. Susan's personal and professional background has been grooming her to take on the job of LAF VP. Her extensive background in finance and as a technical trainer in the international banking sphere has paid off already for AAUW-NYS with the amount of money she helped raise in the second half of 2002 as the appointed LAF Director. Her experiences for the past twenty-five years in AAUW have been varied and demanding. Susan has been a leader and involved since being one of the first women graduates of Johns Hopkins University. Her active membership in many NYC based women's groups is another plus for NYS-AAUW.

For Treasurer
Mary King

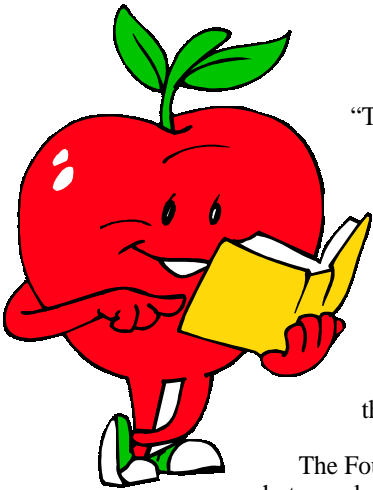


A member of AAUW for 39 years, Mary is a dual member of the Poughkeepsie and Adirondack branches. Currently *Focus* editor and Poughkeepsie Branch

webmaster, she has also served in Poughkeepsie as treasurer, secretary, bylaws chair, and newsletter editor. Retired from the Spackenkill school district where she did administrative computer work, she now lives in Brant Lake. . . . Elizabeth Harrel, Past President AAUW-NYS, writes: "In addition to her ability to maintain accurate accounts and provide information in a clear manner, Mary has a broad understanding of AAUW and its mission. She will be an effective member of the executive committee and able to build a budget which reflects the needs of the organization."

Living the Mission of the Educational Foundation

Phyllis Anderson, EF Vice President
EFVPforNYSAAUW@aol.com 631/234-2451



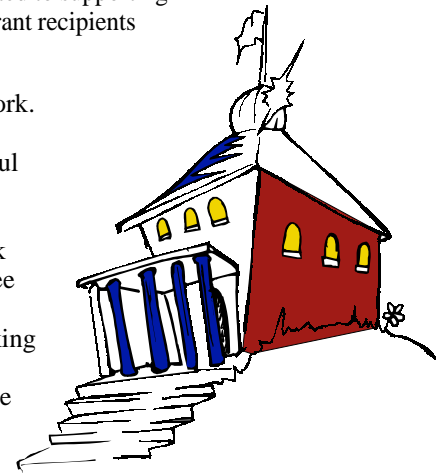
“The AAUW Educational Foundation provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change.” This mission statement parallels the Association mission and is a catalyst for advancing women’s career opportunities. Last year we distributed \$4 million in fellowships, grants, and awards. That is a huge accomplishment and we have come a long way from the very first grant of \$350 in 1888.

New York Branches were generous again this year. Eleven branches were able to contribute more money in 2002 than in 2001. Congratulations to **Bath, Greater Rochester, Islip Area, Ithaca, Kingston, Lyndonville/Medina/Middleport** (disbanding), **Massapequa Area, Oneonta, St. Lawrence County, Smithtown Area, and Westchester**. Thanks go to all the Branch EF Chairs who promptly responded to the annual notification for end-of-year reports.

The Foundation publishes a directory, *Recipients of Fellowships, Grants, and Awards*. This book contains photos and short descriptions of the proposed studies of the awardees. Panels of volunteers, usually AAUW members, read thousands of applications in the selection process. There are far more applicants who probably deserve awards, but the funds are limited. If you have never seen a directory, ask your EF Chair to share with you. The stories and plans of the recipients make you want to work harder to raise money so that more women can benefit! We should be proud of our achievements and dedicated to supporting the Educational Foundation at the suggested level of at least \$25 per member every year! The NYS grant recipients are listed on the state’s webpage.

At Convention (April 25-27), a recipient will speak to us about her current studies and future work. It has been my pleasure over many years to listen to the varied reflections of our studious and talented Fellows. Hearing a young woman tell of her journey in academia first-hand is a wonderful incentive to keep us motivated to support EF at every opportunity.

To give a boost to your Branch in the 2003 EF contributions, plan now to participate in the Walk for the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund. Early Sunday morning, April 27, you have the opportunity to see part of Long Island’s famous Greenbelt Trail. Our Islandia Marriott is very close to the trail that crosses the glacier’s terminal moraine. Wear jeans and sneakers to be safe and comfortable. Walking will take about an hour. Solicit lots of sponsors before the Convention (support from friends outside AAUW is perfect) and maybe you’ll win an award for the most dollars raised. If you raise \$100, you even get an Eleanor Roosevelt Fund pin! The more walkers we have, the more fun it will be. See the Long Island that tourists never discover! Details for registration are in the Convention Packet. Try something new; come to Convention!



continued from page 3

Cultural Interest

Save Outdoor Sculpture!
(SOS!)



This is a private/public initiative to document all monuments and outdoor sculpture in the United States and to help communities and local groups of all ages and interests preserve their sculptural heritage. In Phase I, 7,000 volunteers reported 30,000 publicly accessible outdoor sculptures. Of that total, 45 percent were determined to be in critical need of attention, nine percent

requiring urgent treatment to survive. In New York State 600 volunteers identified 2,650 sculptures. They found over 1,000 of them in need of preservation. In Phase II, SOS! volunteers of all ages are working to preserve sculptures and monuments as a gift to the next century. SOS! provides a multifaceted approach to increase preservation and appreciation of historical and contemporary public sculpture among a mix of learners. How many sculptures are there in your community? What is the condition of them? What can we as AAUW members do? For more information, visit www.heritagepreservation.org or call 888/767-7285 or e-mail SOS!@heritagepreservation.org

I feel that broadening the scope of our Cultural Interest Program makes it much more interesting and exciting. I like being able to tell how we can and are “Living the Mission!” Please let me hear from you, as a branch or as an individual, with any ideas or suggestions you may have.

Update on Bina Roy Projects



Joan Monk,
International Affairs Director
ftmaven@bestweb.net 914/245-7704

The "Bina Roy Partners in Development Information" arrived in December with an updated list of international projects in need of funding. As I read the list, I was truly touched by the wide range of projects and the wonder of possibilities contained within each one to help women and girls all over the world.

According to Christine Marijan, IFUW's Finance Officer, both projects selected by AAUW-NYS were fully funded for 2002-03 and new projects needed to be selected. In keeping with the intent of these former projects (Cameroon-Hairdressers as Educators: HIV/AIDS Prevention and Sierra Leone – Scholarship Program) two new projects were selected: The Zimbabwe **National Scholarship Fund** and Senegal **Science and Technology Scholarships for Girls**.

The current political, economic and social situation in Zimbabwe has had a dramatic effect on the education of girls and young women. The AIDS/HIV pandemic caused many girls to leave school prematurely to look after sick parents or orphaned siblings. In addition, massive unemployment means that many families cannot afford school fees. The **National Scholarship Fund** of the ZAUW aims to assist girls continue their formal education.

During 2001, the Senegal Association of University Women (ASFUDU) provided six scholarships for girls to attend further education courses, leading to university degrees in science and technology. High-performing students with financial difficulties were identified by ASFUDU members and college faculty, and were then selected by the scholarship committee. The association hopes to expand this scholarship program in the future and be able to sponsor more young women.

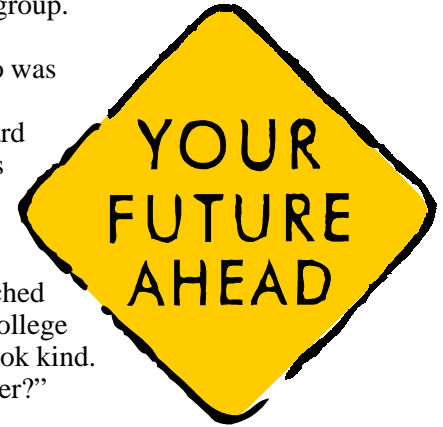
Additional information is available at the IFUW website (www.ifuw.org/brpid). If your branch is interested in funding a Bina Roy Project, please contact me. It is my sincere hope that we can fund more of these worthwhile projects in the future. There will be a Lap Swim at the Convention in April to raise funds for these projects so don't forget your bathing suit!

continued from page 1

Transitions Conference

Many of our speakers were college representatives or members of our own branch, who loved taking part: "This is what AAUW is all about, education!" Branch members wore "Living the Mission" T-shirts so we would be easy to find if someone had a question. One participant said seeing us all in our teal T-shirts made her want to be part of the group.

A branch member who was recently elected to the Tompkins County Board of Representatives was our keynote speaker. She had us in tears speaking of the brave older woman who reached out to her in her first college course saying, "You look kind. Could we study together?"



The money we raised, in-kind donations, and our \$15 registration fee covered our costs, including lunch. The evaluations were so positive that at our wrap-up potluck dinner we began planning for Transitions 2003.

What were the benefits of our Transitions Conference? Two new members joined that day, taking advantage of the Association's Shape the Future discounts. Our increase in visibility in the community is enormous through our college and community contacts, newspaper articles, a radio interview, a big display at the public library, and posters in beauty shops, laundromats, and grocery stores. Most important are the women who are making the transition to college, and the pride our members feel in furthering women's education in such a tangible way.

For more information and samples of our information sheet, poster, registration form, press release, op-ed article, study guides, or evaluation form, contact Ithaca Branch president Carol Stull, 607-257-0256 or carolstull@aol.com

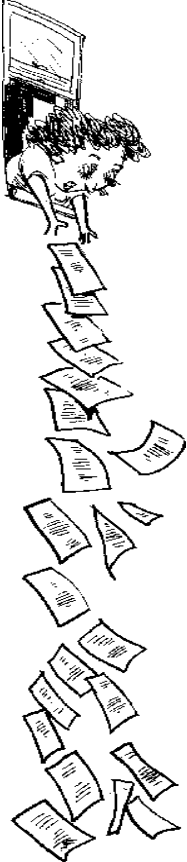
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Send all address changes to Buffalo Postmaster, Buffalo, NY, 14240, and AAUW Records Office, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Questions and articles should be addressed to the FOCUS Editor, Mary J. King, 5 Palisades East, Brant Lake, NY 12815, 518/494-4833, email: mary@kings-online.net
Summer Issue deadline: May 1, 2003

Branch Action Notes



Kingston Branch's recent program topics were "My Personal Adaption to Deafness", "Veterans Speak," "Women in Islam" and "Homelessness in Ulster County," plus a second discussion on Campaign Finance Reform. We're also collecting items for the local Domestic Violence Shelter.

In November the **Smithtown** Branch held a Fashion Show to benefit the Educational Foundation. The fashions were supplied by a local boutique and the lovely models were our own members. We had a terrific turnout and raised quite a bit of money for EF.

The **North Fork** Branch will celebrate Women's History Month with a talk on World War II Women Aviators by our own Ellie Faust. The talk will be open to the public and given at the Mattituck Library. We hosted another open meeting in October at the Peconic Center featuring a panel discussing issues on Social Security. An elder attorney and a representative from Social Security were the speakers.

The **Greater Rochester** Branch hosted and escorted a delegation of ten Russian women from Lesnoy. The focus of their visit was domestic violence and our AAUW scheduled activities associated with its prevention, as well as cultural activities. The delegation was under the sponsorship of the Russian Leadership Development Program of the Library of Congress.

In January Betsy Forkas, State Public Policy Director, spoke at the **Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown** Branch meeting. As a community outreach project, the branch members donate diapers to be distributed to needy families in Fulton County. For Black History Month author/member Audrey Bowman spoke to us on the history of blacks in Fulton County. In March we celebrated Women's History Month with a Readers' Theater, *The Two Thousand Year Old Woman*, written by Judy Farrall, Schenectady branch member.

Circulate your old issues of *Focus*!

Leave your old issue in a public place—a library, doctor's office, day care center, faculty room, etc. That way multiple people in the community can read each printed copy.

Dr Natalie Naylor, Professor Emerita at Hofstra, discussed "The Suffrage Struggle; Winning the Vote for Women in Nassau County and the Nation" at the March meeting of the **Garden City** Branch. Also, the branch prepared an exhibit for Women's History Month at Nassau Community College.

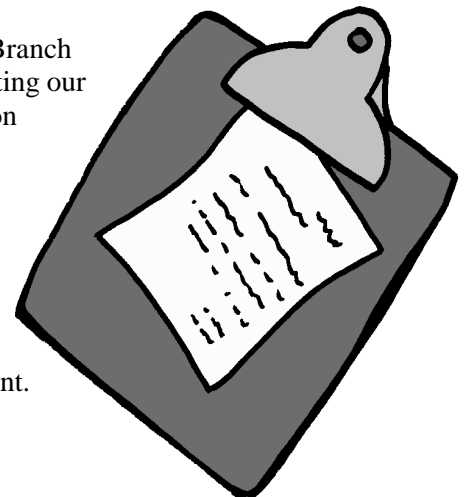
The **Syracuse** Branch is hosting author Miriam Grace Monfredo at its May meeting. Her *Seneca Falls Historical Series* champions women's rights. Since one of her works in progress takes place on the Erie Canal, the luncheon setting will be on a canal boat.

The **Southern New York** Branch recently completed a successful children's magazine sale for clients of the Salvation Army. As an alternative to toy donations during the holiday season, branch members and other women's groups donated yearly subscriptions to three different magazines put out for children by the American Wildlife Federation. By approaching other organizations about this project, the branch nearly doubled the number of subscriptions donated last year.

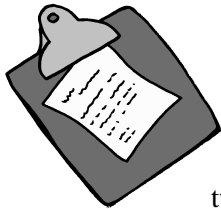
The **Westchester Branch** Diversity Action Group is expanding its successful "Courageous Conversations" series in partnership with several organizations, including a YWCA and SUNY Westchester Community College. The video film and conversation series will include two of the most popular from last year—"The Way Home" and "The Color of Fear". A third video "My America" will be presented. In a departure, one of our partners will lead a "Cafe Socrates" discussion on "The Global Village", and lastly, we will have a discussion on the book, "When I Was Puerto Rican", by local author Esmeralda Santiago.

The **Huntington** Branch was privileged in March to honor Bonnie Giebfried, one of the women included in the book *Women at Ground Zero*. As an Emergency Medical Technician Bonnie has not received the same level of recognition and support as the Firefighters and the Police. Our discussion centered around her plight and ways to assist the women involved in 9/11 in achieving equity and fair treatment. It was a very illuminating meeting!

Mohawk Valley Branch AAUW is celebrating our 90th anniversary on April 15, 2003. Our communications committee is busy writing our history for publication and member recruitment.



Branch Action Notes



Islip Area Branch focused their November and January programs on Diversity issues. November featured 'The Afghan Woman' with two vibrant speakers. AAUW member,

Homaira Mamoor, and Zolaykha Sherzad, Director of the School of Hope, spoke about the lack of educational resources in Afghanistan for Afghan children. A contribution was presented. January featured 'A Celebration of Mexico'. In addition to a festive pot luck supper, guest speakers related their immigrant experiences in the United States. Nadia Marin-Molina of the Work Place Project told us about the agency's work to promote fair work practices. Both programs generated high branch attendance and attracted many guests.

Interbranch Council, in collaboration with SCOPE and SNAP, sponsored the 5th annual **Sister-to-Sister Summit** at Adelphi University in November. Coordinator Pat Hogeboom reported attendance totaled 225 Long Island schoolgirls and 44 of their counselors from 23 school districts. The Summit realized it's goal to help teens to learn from one another, to assist counselors in building trust with their students, and to give a voice to the girls to send important messages about their lives to their parents, peers and schools. Ruth S. Harley, first dean of Women at Adelphi and a member of the Garden City Branch, came to meet the girls. She is 100 years old!

Congratulations to these Branches who Celebrate Milestone Anniversaries in 2003:

- 10 years:** Amherst (1993)
- 30 years:** Smithtown (1973)
- 45 years:** East Hampton (1958)
- 50 years:** Bath (1953)
- 65 years:** Alfred/Hornell (1938)
Garden City (1938)
- 85 years:** Oswego (1918)
- 90 years:** Mohawk Valley (1913)

It was a dark and stormy night. Communications in the 21st Century!

Donna Seymour, Director of Communications
onthego@northnet.org 315/265-6985

Actually, it was a dark and stormy weekend in early January when the AAUW-NYS Board met in Albany for our winter meeting. I got home to find my laundry room torn up. My 25-year old Maytag (may it rest in peace after four children and thousands of washing cycles) had finally given up the ghost. My husband was buying a state-of-the-art front loader.

The new washer has more lights than a Christmas tree, uses less water, washes more clothes, and spins them super dry to boot. It scientifically dispenses more laundry products that I have ever used, and senses operator error (like too much detergent) and has a feature to correct the problem. According to the tag, it will only cost \$23 a year to run with an electric hot water heater. At that rate, it will pay for itself by 2059!

I have never had an appliance that came with three videos to teach you how to run it. These included video instructions in German and a continuous loop video of the washer in action. There were three separate detailed instruction manuals (in three languages), and a full color "quick start" guide.

Deciding to take the "see the movie before you read the book" route, the 9-minute video did give me everything I needed to know about successfully washing a load of clothes. [By the way, one of the videos shows a man doing all the laundry - my model did not come with that feature.]

I share this story to illustrate how much communication techniques have changed. Something as simple as washing a load of clothes now requires fully supported audio-visual and written instructions. (No doubt an instructional CD-ROM will be the next step in washing machine evolution!)

We are seeing the same great leaps forward in NYS branch communication technology and innovation: newsletters printed electronically with color photos; event and membership brochures on eye-catching specialty papers; websites with music and animation; CD-ROM award applications!

Just as product manufacturers and politicians are using new, colorful and innovative ways to attract customers, branches must also make use of new ways to market AAUW and reach potential members. Take a good look at your community and find ways to use the existing technology and communication tools it provides. Explore new ways to get your message out. The world is changing – AAUW must continue to be part of it.



Rockland Trains Girls (and Women) to Deal with Sexual Harassment

A November 2002 a conference for girls entitled “What’s Really Cool?” was held at the New City Public Library. Its purpose was to help girls recognize and effectively deal with harassment. The conference was the result of the collaborative efforts of the **Rockland Branch** and the Mental Health Association of Rockland County. The Rockland Youth Council provided support as actors and discussion group leaders.

Charlotte Sorger, Co-President of the Rockland Branch of AAUW, gave a warm welcome, an informative explanation of AAUW’s goals, and discussed AAUW publications that pertain to girls’ issues.

The conference began with three skits in which girls faced sexual harassment but obviously did not have the skills to assert themselves. These skits were followed by discussions in small groups as to what had just happened to these girls.


In the next part of the program students filled out a survey to determine how assertive they were. They had an opportunity to share their responses with groups and tell how they would respond to certain situations. Patricia Lopez (AAUW) gave a presentation on assertiveness. Specific examples of how to respond to sexual harassment were given.

The program ended with three “after” skits. The girls showed that they were in control and addressed the boys’ inappropriate behavior quickly and effectively. Handouts of all information discussed and presented on the overhead projector were provided so that students may use them for future reference.

The target audience was girls in grades 7 through 9. About 60 girls participated. There was no charge for the program and all girls in the county were welcome. When reviewing the evaluations, presenters were surprised to see that some of the girls who attended were seniors in high school. At the end of the program, the adults who had been present (some parents, girl scout leaders, guidance counselors, and even a reporter from the local newspaper) commented that they had benefited from the program. Sexual harassment is a problem that is not age specific, so in retrospect, all junior high and high school girls should have been invited. We’ll know better for next time!

If AAUW members in other areas are interested in organizing a similar program, contact:
Patricia Lopez, P.O. Box 9019, Bardonia, NY 10954
or pmLopez@ivillage.com

Additional resource material:



The *School Secrets* packet provides a complete set of scripted dramatic scenarios to illustrate many of the types of sexual harassment that occur in the school setting, as well as the handouts and workshop leader’s guide to start the dialog for change. Produced by AAUW-NYS, it is available for a shipping and handling charge of \$2. You can find an order form online at: www.northnet.org/nysaauw/ssform.htm

continued from page 2

LAF News

If you believe that we are not supporting important work on behalf of women and our communities, I hope you will be able to attend our convention and listen to the LAF litigant speak at our luncheon. Our fund supports real people confronting real issues.

We can offer our support in different ways. I encourage every branch to participate in the LAF baskets at the convention. This is a painless way to raise money to be

credited to your branch. Additionally, please continue to reach out to your community and inform them of what the Legal Advocacy Fund does. Remember, in addition to case support, LAF provides campus outreach, a Progress in Equity award, and a support network of attorneys and professionals. In addition to monetary contributions, we can provide support to LAF by encouraging others to give, increasing awareness of LAF in our communities, providing moral support to litigants in our areas and assisting our colleges and universities in applying for Progress in Equity recognition.

If you need materials, information, assistance or a visit, let me know. I look forward to a fruitful and successful year. See you on Long Island in April.



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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN NEW YORK STATE

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. Send all address changes to AAUW Records Office, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036

Public Policy

Betsy Forkas, *Public Policy Director*
bforkas@earthlink.net 518/377-6919

During one of my visits to Seneca Falls, I saw a quote from one of the early suffragists. She said that we must be ever vigilant. I'd like to think we didn't need to be reminded of the need to be vigilant, but our work is not done. We celebrate the 30th anniversaries of Title IX and *Roe v. Wade* at the same time that we strategize to protect them.

AAUW has a long history of establishing Public Policy Priorities. Our priorities are consistent with the Mission of AAUW and, at the same time, focus on the needs of all women. Our history also includes building coalitions with other like-minded groups. AAUW-NYS joined over 100 other organizations in support of the Women's Health & Wellness Act; our collective efforts saw the eventual passage of that legislation. Currently, we are members of the New York State Equal Pay Coalition and join eleven like-minded organizations to work for equal pay for equal work.

All AAUW members need to stay informed on the critical issues at both the state and national levels. If you would like to receive email notices about legislation, critical votes, etc., please let me know (bforkas@earthlink.net). Messages are sent almost daily with the latest information from Washington and Albany and helpful directions—if needed—for communicating with elected legislators. It's an easy way to Live the Mission!

WANTED!

The AAUW-NYS
Board is looking
for leaders:

Diversity Director
Marketing Director

All inquiries to:
Evelyn M Currie,
518/399-3711
currie-em@northnet.org