



**AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY  
WOMEN  
NEW YORK STATE**

Volume 54, Issue #1 • Fall 2004 • ISSN: 1056 3199

# FOCUS

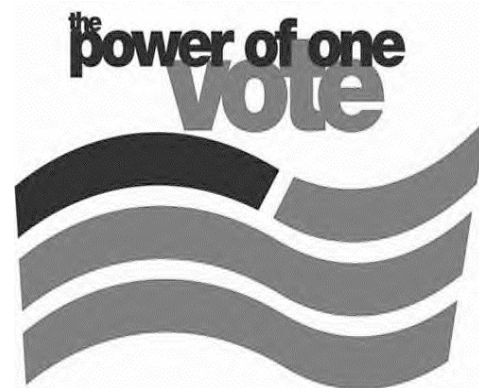
## Voter Education/Public Policy Challenge in NYS!

**Jan Mirchandani, Voter Education Director**  
914/245-8568-6919 jannmirch@verizon.net



For those of you who did not make it to Delta Lake, the NYS Board and Leadership Conference in July, you missed a lot of great information and a really good time! On Saturday morning Betsy Forkas and I addressed the group to talk about the Voter Education and Public Policy challenge for this program year. We stayed up late Friday night working on the presentation, making sure we had some laughs and doing our best to make it clear what is being asked of branches. Based on the feedback we got, I believe we accomplished our goal.

In a nutshell, branches are being asked to focus on making an impact in their communities through their voter education and public policy programs. The programs themselves should aim to educate voters and get them to the polls. After the election, the work is not over. Branches need to follow-up with their elected officials and look at the fallout of their actions or non-actions on the American Association of University Women's priority issues.



During our breakout session there was some conversation about the difficulty for some branches in working with other branches within their congressional districts. This type of coalition is desired, but certainly not a requirement. Branches should, however, make sure to work with at least one or two other organizations to maximize the impact of their programs.

We also announced a "little" incentive - \$150. The state board will give \$25 to the best voter registration program, \$25 to the best voter education program, \$25 to the best Get Out The Vote (GOTV) program, \$25 for the best public policy (follow-up) program, and \$50 for the best overall program. It is possible for one branch to get the entire \$150 if each component and the overall program are all truly exceptional.

In addition, the state is budgeting \$20 per congressional district for branches to work together on voter education and public policy. I have receive some calls for ideas and suggestions for getting started. I urge you, if you branch has not outlined its voter education and public policy program for the year, please let me know. I am here to help!

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**Sharing  
the Vision**

# Sharing the Vision

# It's Our Future!



**Nancy Mion,**  
AAUW-NYS President  
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The crisp bright days of autumn bring with them an excitement that stirs us. We American Association of University Women members know that part of the excitement is generated by the "Sharing the Vision" programs your branch has developed. Your participation in these activities, like the "Get Out The Vote" Campaign, will make a difference in this crucial election year.

AAUW of New York State has lost only 27 members in the last year. Congratulations everyone! Let's aim for a membership gain of one or more members per branch.

Unfortunately, membership nationwide is down. This has resulted in a loss of income. To prevent an anticipated one million dollar deficit this year, the AAUW board has instituted cost saving measures. They have reduced staff, eliminated programs, and requested a reduction of the 2005 dues paid to the International Federation of University Women.

Nancy Rustad, AAUW President, has begun a year long "One in a Million" Campaign to secure AAUW's future. Members, especially the 11,000 Life Members nationwide, are being asked to contribute \$120. If you donate, you will receive an "Equity is Still an Issue" pin and the knowledge that you helped.

We are the AAUW, a national organization of 100,000 members strong in our dedication to our mission. Without the national organization, we do not exist.

Changing the requirements for membership was discussed at the 2003 Association Convention. The AAUW

board was charged to find out what members thought about a change. To achieve this goal, the AAUW Membership Committee has requested that each branch have an open ended discussion with its members. The results are to be sent back to the Association on the report form by November 15.

*The future of AAUW NYS is  
in our hands.*



## 2005 AAUW NYS CONVENTION April 15-17, 2005

**Betty Harrel, AAUW-NYS Convention Co-Chair**  
845/462-2141 ~ bharrel28@juno.com

**Margaret Nijhuis, NYS Convention Co-Chair**  
845/635-8612 ~ RNijhuis@hvc.rr.com

AAUW NYS has a special convention planned for **April 15-17, 2005** at the Oneida Nation's **Turning Stone Resort** in Verona, NY (30 miles east of Syracuse and 50 miles west of Albany). The resort is located on beautiful property which will offer great golf, walks, spa, heated pool and, of course, a casino. Add this to an exciting AAUW Convention with outstanding speakers, stimulating workshops and interesting AAUW women, and you have the perfect weekend.

***The Convention & Hotel Deadline is March 18.  
Mark your calendar and plan to attend!!***

The  
**AAUW New England Region**  
and the  
**Middle Atlantic Region**

will present a  
**Fall Conference**  
on October 16, 2004 at Wellesley  
College Club, Wellesley, MA .

"High School Sports and Young Women's Sexual Behavior" will be the keynote speech. Workshops: Educational Foundation -Then and Now, and Leading with Confidence. Membership Dialogue and Town Hall with Association Board Members.

***For registration and more information  
call ASAP Nancy Mion, 631-472-9377.***



# Celebrating & Sharing the Vision

We know you are proud of your branches and the amazing number of things they accomplish. The state awards program not only allows us all to celebrate these achievements, it provides us a chance to share really good ideas and programs.

The Association has decided that the awards will be evaluated by the states. This led me to rethink the state award structure. There is a new, much simpler, state award system. Every branch should have a copy. Please get to know it right away and encourage your branch to apply.

One job of the program vice president is to work with branch vice-presidents. To that end I have contacted almost every branch. Another job is to plan the convention, which is in process, but suggestions are still welcome.

What a surprise! I was thumbing through last year's fall Focus and came upon Donna Seymour's description of elevator speeches. A good elevator speech gives a punchy, concise message in a minute or less, in our case, describing the most important points about the American Association of University Women. Every member should have one. We practiced them at Delta Lake this summer, modeling them for each other. At the time, we didn't remember where the idea came from. Now we can give credit where it's due.

*Due dates:*  
For the state awards, March 15, 2005  
For the Association awards, April 20, 2005,  
if submitted separately from the state



**Diane Haney,**  
AAUW-NYS Program VP  
516/248-0476  
haneydhd@yahoo.com  
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Roslyn, NY 11576



## Honoring Diversity

**Erna Cunningham,** AAUW-NYS Diversity Director  
631/585-0868 rcunning@suffolk.lib.ny.us

Are you ready to jump out of the box? Will you spread your wings to include a variety of women as branch members? It is the responsibility of every branch member to encourage women of all races, religions, physical abilities, and ages to join the American Association of University Women. Do you know that the present white adult population is the last that will hold a majority? In order for AAUW to endure as a viable force it must "mirror the community."

Be sure that your branch diversity chair includes a column in each branch newsletter and that diverse guests are featured in programming. Let us jump out of our cocoons. As your new diversity director, I hope to inspire each branch to seek a diverse membership and to include diversity as a part of your branch programming.



# Now is the time!



**Evelyn M. Currie,**  
2004-05 AAUW-NYS Nominating Team Chair  
518/399-3711 emcurrie@earthlink.net

Do you want to help decide the future direction of American Association of University Women of New York State? Do you want to feel that you have made a difference in today's world? If you said yes to either question, this opportunity is especially for you! Any member, with AAUW leadership experience within the last 5 years, can become a candidate for a state position.

AAUW NYS is looking for some "committed to AAUW" members to fill the following elected positions: membership vice president, Legal Advocacy Fund vice president, secretary/bylaws, and treasurer. All of the positions require computer expertise. If you qualify or know of a branch member who does, please contact me. I will send job descriptions and a form to be filled out by the candidate for review by the nominating team. We are looking for candidates from various parts of the state so the state board will be leaders that truly represent all of the districts.

***Now is the time to come to the aid of AAUW NYS! WE NEED YOU!***



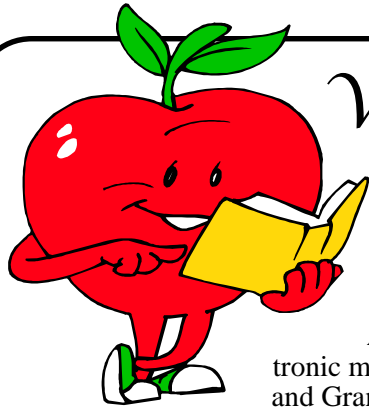
## **NYS Task Force for Tobacco-Free Women and Girls**

*NYS Smoker's Quitline:*

**1-866-NY-Quits  
(1-866-679-8487)**

or visit

**[www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com)**



## *Visibility and Vitality for the Educational Foundation*

**Phyllis Anderson, Educational Foundation Vice President**  
631/234-2451 EFVPforNYSAAUW@aol.com

As we become an "online" society, it is important to realize that the change to electronic methods is beneficial! Visit the AAUW website to find information about Fellowships and Grants, and applications that can be downloaded. Nearly every grant winner found the source online, or was directed there by a friend. Since most applicants are in the 20 – 40 age group, they are discovering AAUW through electronic media.

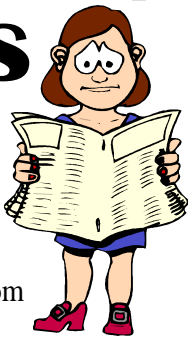
This November the new Fellows and Grant Recipients will be published online only. We will no longer print a bound booklet for reference. In previous years, a brief description of each project, the name, address, and photo of the recipient were available. Due to privacy regulations, the last booklet contained only names, pictures, and project summaries. To contact a Fellow to be a speaker at your branch, check the [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) web site for the latest information.

The Foundation Board voted at its May meeting to implement several other changes. The Named Units program has been discontinued. Developed many years ago as a holding place for funds until a grant or fellowship could be completed at the \$35,000 or \$100,000 level, many Named Units were started and never completed, languishing for years. This happened to a NYS Unit honoring Dr. Persia Campbell, an economist at Syracuse University. We found by researching through [google.com](http://google.com) that she was the author of several books, including "Consumer Representation in the New Deal." A Consumer Counsel to Governor Averell Harriman, she is remembered as a forerunner for consumer advocacy and a role model for activists in her field. This year the Named Unit honoring her will be well used to support a Community Action Grant in New York.

As you work in your branch to raise funds for EF, remember to publicize all the possibilities and good results of our donations. Our goal is \$25 per capita for every branch. Write your check now! We are improving women's lives, one female at a time, and that gives us our vitality. We are living the mission and sharing the vision!


# Membership News

**Diane Silvestro,**  
AAUW-NYS  
Membership VP  
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belvoir6@hotmail.com

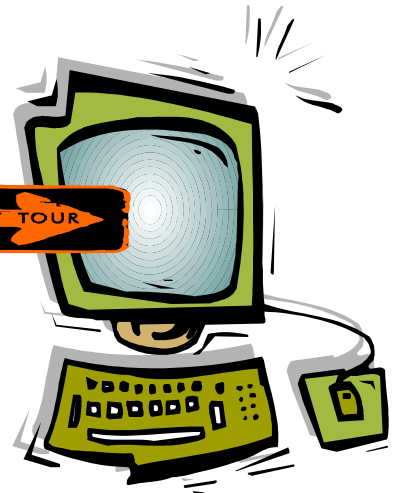


My compliments to every member of American Association of University Women of New York State, especially branch membership vice presidents! The final numbers for last year show we lost 0.8% or 27 members state-wide. We've managed to stabilize our numbers, but the challenge is still there for next year. AAUW contributes greatly to the community, so we must continue to recruit and integrate new people into the organization to take up the baton in the continuing struggle for equality. I'm asking all members still working to publicize programs and events in the workplace. Make it a habit to post notices and invite colleagues. Welcome younger women to join, even if you have to rethink programming to accommodate their work schedule and yours. Remember, membership is everyone's business; the health of AAUW depends on that. Talk up AAUW by speaking from the heart about what AAUW means to you. Finally, don't wait to be asked to do something. Time is a precious commodity so even if you have 30 minutes a month to spare, offer to pick up the newsletter, join the phone or e-mail tree, help with a mailing, or whatever. We've seen how easy it is to erode hard won gains for women. Contribute what you can.

**Sharing  
the Vision**

*Did You Know???*  
*NYS has a new website!*  
*Check it out -*  *www.aauw-nys.*

**Betty Preble, AAUW-NYS**  
*Communications Director*  
Communications@aauw-nys.org  
716/662-0608 betty6935@adelphia.net



*“Opportunities multiply as they are seized.”— Sun Tzu*

Due to a policy change of our old website host (who had generously donated the space for several years), we chose to move this year to a new (paid) location. Although nobody likes spending money for something which had cost nothing in the past, there were several silver linings in what could have been a dark cloud for the organization.

- The new location provides much more space, allowing the inclusion of much more information, including application/registration forms, etc.
- The new address is easier to remember.
- We were given the opportunity to stand back and take a look at the information we have provided in the past. Donna Seymour had done an outstanding job of providing a wealth of material. Now with the additional space, we had the chance to spread it out a bit into (hopefully) easier-to-follow pages.

Jann Mirchandani, our NYS voter education director, has graciously seized this opportunity and generously donated her time and skills to create this new webpage. Kudos to her!

**Things to remember:**

1. Be sure to correct the address in your “favorites” list on your computer.
2. Let me know if any changes need to be made to any part of the state webpage, including the pages for the branches that we host.
3. Do update the link to the state webpage to reflect the new address if your branch has a website of its own.

*Please give me your impressions. This website is for YOU, and we want it to be as useful and as user-friendly as possible.*

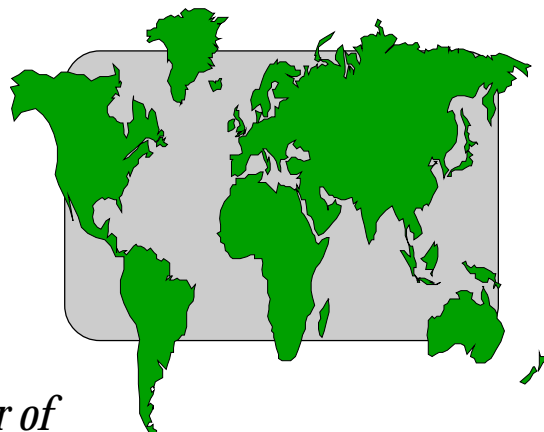
## Branch Action Notes

**Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown Branch** plans to “Share The Vision” by working with a member of the New York State League of Women Voters to register eligible voters in Fulton and Montgomery Counties. The Honorable Polly Hoye, Fulton County Supreme Court judge and surrogate, will present “A Woman’s Vision of Today’s Opportunities in the Legal Field” at the branch’s membership meeting in September.

*Branch Action Notes Continued on page 6*

# International Affairs Update

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



## International Day of Peace



Please take note of two very special days coming up this fall. The first is "The International Day of Peace" on September 21, 2004.

This special day provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date. It was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 and was first celebrated in 1982. Why? To mark our individual and collective progress toward building Cultures of Peace. It serves as a reminder of our permanent commitment to peace, above all interests and differences of any kind. For more information contact: [www.InternationalDayofPeace.org](http://www.InternationalDayofPeace.org).

## International Federation of University Women Crisis Update

Based on financial pressures, the sudden decision by our Association board to withhold 2005 dues payment from IFUW seriously threatens its future. Supporters organized a fundraising campaign among AAUW members to help offset the 40% operating loss and to keep IFUW offices operating in Geneva next year. Until a solution can be found to sustain IFUW's proud 86-year history of linking graduate women around the world, the campaign has set an ambitious goal to raise \$100,000 by the start of the new year. Reach out to help those who believe that our international connections are a 21<sup>st</sup> century imperative. If you would like to support IFUW directly and receive later updates, you can send a check or VISA charge to: The Interim Committee, 1336 Dasher Lane, Reston, Virginia 20190. Contact Myrna Brown, [mrsmlbrown@cs.com](mailto:mrsmlbrown@cs.com), for more information.



## The Power of One Campaign

Our fundraising efforts for the Bina Roy Partners in Development Fund have been the most successful ever! Hopefully, by the end of the year, we will have reached our goal of \$1/member. To date we have collected \$2838 in honor of Carol Stull, former AAUW NYS president, Ithaca branch president, international affairs director and peace advocate. There is still time to contribute and help us achieve this goal.



## United Nations Day

I am pleased to announce the annual United Nations Day in coalition with the League of Women Voters at UN Headquarters in NYC on Tuesday, October 5, 2004. "Briefings on the Status of the Environment Around the World" will be the focus of the day. The briefings last from 9am-2pm and the individual registration fee is \$50. There is also an optional buffet lunch for \$30 and tour of the UN for \$8.50. Our last two UN events on the status of human rights for women and human rights for children were both very well attended and well received. If you would like to attend, please contact Rob Marchiony at 518/465-4162 or [rob@lwnvny.org](mailto:rob@lwnvny.org).

Celebrate  
The Earth



## Branch Action Notes Con't

**Massapequa Branch** is extremely proud of Jolene Scura who swam for the Bina Roy Event and took second place. They're pleased to get credited with their "misplaced" donation for Educational Foundation. Their

Chordalairs sang "A Tribute to NY" at the Amityville Yacht Club, conducted by Jo Karpen, with Fran Soontag assisting with arrangements. They will fund raise for EF when they perform for the Massapequa Women's Club in October. The Crafty Ladies continue to meet and work on lap robes for the vets and babies of teen parents. Gourmet Group is combining theater and dinner. We look forward to a full and exciting year.

*Branch Action Notes Continued on page 8*

### FOCUS (USPS-390-570),

a quarterly newsletter, is published for the New York State Division of the American Association of University Women by Printing, Inc., Cheektowaga, NY 14225-0701. The subscription rate of \$4 is included in the NYS dues. Periodicals postage is paid at Buffalo, NY, 14240.

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

Questions and articles should be addressed to the Communications Director, Betty Preble, 6935 East Quaker Street, Orchard Park, NY, 14127, 716/662-0608, e-mail [betty6935@adelphia.net](mailto:betty6935@adelphia.net).

Winter Issue Deadline: October 31, 2004  
Spring Issue Deadline: January 15, 2005

## Do you know in what District your Branch is located?

**Linda Suchocki**, AAUW-NYS District Director  
716/823-4154 [suchocki207@cs.com](mailto:suchocki207@cs.com)

In New York State, the 43 American Association of University Women branches are combined into 7 districts. The districts were established to encourage networking among the branches and to improve communications. Each year, we have had district meetings to meet other branches and AAUW-NYS board members, and to share program ideas and membership tools.

This year, in lieu of district meetings, we are encouraging branches to work together in support of AAUW's "Get Out the Vote" campaign. We are asking branches to pool resources and talents to present voter education, registration, and candidate/issue forums in coalition with other branches and community partners. By co-sponsoring programs, branch members draw upon new leaders and creative energy, resulting in better programs and greater outreach and visibility. I invite you to get to know the new district coordinators and the branches in your district. To find your district coordinator and branch, visit the AAUW-NYS website at [www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org).

## Do you know a student on a local campus?

**Eileen Hartmann**,  
AAUW -NYS College/ University Director  
585/924-4876 [telcali@aol.com](mailto:telcali@aol.com)

Start recruiting a local college or university for membership in the AAUW by first visiting the [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) website. Review the benefits of College and University membership under the section "College & University Partnerships", or e-mail me to obtain Association print materials to assist you in this quest. I can advise branch officers on appropriate procedures and respond to questions.

While you are in the AAUW website Member Center, be sure to check out the section about the Student Advisory Council and read the articles in "Students Speak Out."

I encourage all branch members to enrich your AAUW lives by beginning networking opportunities with your local colleges for methods of adding a student to your membership base. Share your information about a student!

A student affiliate or two may be of considerable benefit to your branch and a tremendous connection to a college campus. I stand ready to serve and support you in beginning or building on your existing C/U and AAUW adventures and partnerships. Prepare to launch yourself and your branch in new directions!

## Do you have an Education Equity Committee Chair?

**Pat Thompson**, AAUW-NYS Initiative for  
Education Equity Director  
585/671-2589, 585/288-3130W [PSHU1@aol.com](mailto:PSHU1@aol.com)

The goal of education equity programs should be to educate women of all ages on the options that are and will be open to them in our ever-changing world. We in AAUW have made this our past priority and should continue to do so through the programs we sponsor in our branches.

I urge you to select a chair for your branch's education equity committee and make plans for the year. She should contact me to be listed to receive materials and to exchange ideas for programs.

These are exciting times with program ideas all around us. Planning events with other branches and Community Partners on such topics as the status of Title IX, employment trends, pay equity, education and training, and girls and technology, is always important, but even more so as we move closer to election day.

Plan a transition conference for the upcoming year. As traditional ideas related to work and careers change, there is great need to inform women preparing to re-enter the workforce, change careers, or return to campus. As baby boomers continue to retire there is room for programs that target information to meet retirees' needs related to finances, volunteerism, and enrichment opportunities.

As you plan and hold events throughout the year, keep the AAUW-NYS board and me informed. We can support and share ideas in your experiences and generate excitement to involve other branches around the state in the work of education equity. I look forward to a year filled with activities and events!

**Sharing**  
  
**the Vision**



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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 16<sup>th</sup> St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036



## Branch Action Notes Con't

The **Mohawk Valley Branch** will accept the American Association of University Women -New York State 2004 Voter Education & Public Policy Challenge in September when they invite

the public to a local library to view and discuss the video "Iron Jawed Angels". They will set up a month-long AAUW-MVB display in another local library and team with the League of Women Voters to increase voter registration in the area and to scout for prospective members. In October, Mary Chapin will speak on the book, *Women At Ground Zero*, with local women police, firefighter and EMT participation. Again, the public will be invited to membership and to "Share the Vision". Diversity will be a strong focus as this year's newly appointed Chair Janet Garza will help us connect to the Liberian population through the local refugee center.

The fall is a busy season for **North Shore Branch** which began with "One Woman's View", a report from their President and International Delegate, Catherine Moore, on the 2004 International Federation of University Women's Conference in Perth. With a calendar theme of "Purpose, Power, Progress", they will sponsor a health conference, voter registration drive, public policy forum breakfast, celebrate art and literacy achievements of women, and raise funds for EF with basket raffles at an "Autumn Leaves" luncheon. They welcomed two new members and encouraged

them to participate in some of their 10 active interest groups.

Leading to Reading is a community project sponsored by the **Poughkeepsie Branch**. Members have partnered with the Community Family Development Day Care Center that serves 275 children from low and moderate-income families. The branch organized book collections, received several grants for books and beanbag chairs, enlisted a church men's group to build classroom bookcases, and coordinated community resources. The project gave a tremendous boost to the day care center's early literacy program.

The Equity in Education action group of AAUW's **Westchester Branch** held its first meeting of the year at the Border's Café in Mt. Kisco. Interested new members were invited to sign up to join the group at their first general meeting earlier in September to be part of the coming year's exciting projects. They will continue with Hispanic Outreach at the College of Westchester (formerly The Westchester Business Institute) and seek new college liaisons through a letter outreach to all other Westchester colleges, public and private. Other projects include tutoring the students at CW in English and math during the school day, tutoring students at the Ann M. Dormer Middle School in Ossining after school hours, and continuing their annual Women's History Month Essay Contest for all Westchester high school students, grades 9-12.