



FOCUS

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

NEW YORK STATE



AAUW 21st-Century Platinum Award
2003 - 2004

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Sharing the Vision

President's Message

Nancy Mion, AAUW-NYS President
631/472-9377 myown220@aol.com



Summer sun shines on us all. Thoughts of AAUW flash through our minds, as sunshine off the water, bright highlights of special events past, present and anticipated, AAUW a part of our lives.

The AAUW website has this slogan "Women: Are You Worth 24% Less?" Click and there are many references to AAUW actions in the area of pay equity including research studies: "Perception of the Pay Gap" and "Gains in Learning Gaps in Earnings". In NYS we have supported Legal Advocacy Fund cases involving pay inequities. Pay equity has been the subject of e-mails sent by NYS Public Policy Director Betsy Forkas. Members belong to pay equity groups. With this background, it is no surprise that at the NYS Convention a resolution was passed that "AAUW-NYS undertake an Initiative for Equity for women which would fully support and promote economic equity...under the auspices of the Equity Chair". AAUW-NYS now has an Equity Director, Patricia Thompson.

At Convention it was "also resolved that AAUW-NYS and its branches shall work at all levels to insure the passage of legislation that provides equitable and adequate school aid to all the children of New York". Education has been an AAUW-NYS issue since its founding in 1920. We are following an 85-year tradition of involvement as we implement this resolution. NYS will join The Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) in this effort.

Every NYS branch engages in activities that promote "Sharing the Vision". AAUW-NYS branches exist because you believe in our mission. We are a volunteer organization, from branch member to local, state and national boards. Throughout the year AAUW-NYS supports you in various ways: the *FOCUS*, the NYS Convention, the July 15-17 Summer Leadership Conference which provides present and future leaders with training and information, meaningful communications from the NYS board, and more. Your branch needs you. Your involvement is essential to ensure the success of your branch's programs. You are AAUW and **You** make a difference.



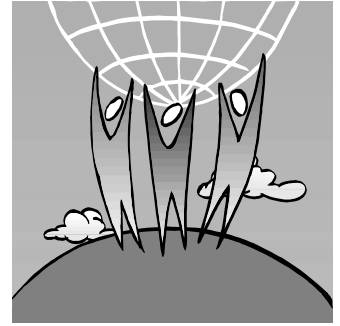
NYS SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AAUW 101 (and Fun)

Delta Lake Conference Center, Rome, NY
July 15-17, 2005
Two present/potential leaders from each branch are urged to attend.

Contact Nancy Mion: myown220@aol.com or 631/472-9377 for Reservations

Membership Matters

Diane Silvestro, AAUW-NYS Membership Vice President
716/631-3349 belvoir6@hotmail.com



Membership Count: As of March 15, membership for NYS is down 8% or 263 members. The treasurer, Mary King, provided some historical information. Since 1999, just 6 years ago, our membership has declined 23%; we lost 14 branches. This is consistent with the 4% decline per year nationally. We're bringing in new members but need to do more to retain them, especially younger members who are our future. These women have needs that AAUW can address, but may require changes in programming and scheduling to accommodate their busy lives and their children's busy schedules.

Branch Awards: Fourteen branches were rewarded for their efforts.

Positive Percentage Growth - **Fairport Area, Rockland County, Adirondack, Elmira-Corning, Poughkeepsie**
Most New Members - **New York City, Buffalo, North Shore, Poughkeepsie, Westchester, Greater Rochester**
Innovative Interest Group for Younger Members - **New York City, Westchester**
Stable Membership - **Southern New York**

Reach Out: Members have been encouraged to take notices of programs/events to work. Two branches have established interest groups for younger women and another is hosting an event for working women. In speaking to younger women, they cite networking and stress reduction as their greatest needs. We can offer programs, networking, and interest groups to keep them as members so AAUW can survive. We can respect tradition while facing forward and planning for the future. Our educated members are flexible and innovative enough to meet this challenge!

Mobilize The Vote Initiative Awards

Jann Mirchandani, AAUW-NYS Voter Education Director
914/245-8568 jannmirch@optonline.net



It seems there was some confusion over the Voter Ed/Public Policy award applications and lack of sufficient distinction between the \$20 incentive award and the programming awards. As a result, all applications, regardless of whether for the incentive or program award, were considered for the program award. All applications were also submitted for the \$20 incentive award.

Having straightened that out, you may be wondering what put our winners over the top. So here are the highlights:

- * **Garden City's** Public Service Announcement for voter registration – a cross-generational conversation between a member and her granddaughter on the importance of registering to vote and voting.
- * **NYC's** cooperative voter education effort with a local coalition group holding a press conference on the issues surrounding educational funding.
- * **St. Lawrence County's** GOTV and public policy drives, before and after the elections, through multiple published news releases regarding various AAUW public policy issues.

Congratulations to all the branches that participated in this effort!

Congratulations, Emerging Leaders!

Mary Lou Davis, AAUW-NYS District Director
845/223-5544 davehdavis@aol.com

The 2005 AAUW-NYS Emerging Leader Award recognizes one new member from each branch who demonstrates leadership potential through her enthusiasm, creative ideas, and commitment to the AAUW mission. The following women were selected as Emerging Leaders:

Faye Ballantine, Bath, is the Treasurer. She prepared and printed a bylaws booklet for the members. She participated in the voter registration drive and visited a woman veteran to thank her for her service.

Diane Bishop, Buffalo, is the Budget/Finance Chair. She spearheaded major changes in the way financial records are kept and initiated an internal audit process. She also implemented changes initiated by the fall Leadership Training Workshop.

Kathi Clark, Jamestown, was co-chair of a major fundraiser, What's New Fair, which raised \$8000 for scholarships. She is also spearheading a mini-fundraiser with a small theater company.

Maria Dempsey, Staten Island, offered to be a co-president as a very new member when there was no candidate for the position. She chaired the Executive Board and general meetings and arranged for branch publicity and speakers. She is currently working on a new membership brochure.

Karen Frieri, Westchester, is the Publicity Chairperson and a program committee member. She also chaired the December Holiday Party. She got publicity for AAUW by getting members to participate in the Blythdale Children's Hospital walkathon.

Susan Furfaro, Islip Area, is the Publicity Chairperson. She did a display about AAUW for the library bulletin board. Sue also volunteered for the get out the voter drive.

Dr. Ellen Greer, New York City, was a member of the board as Director at Large and International Liaison Committee Chair. Ellen organized an International Forum on the human rights issue concerning human trafficking of young women and girls. She also initiated a Trafficking Study Group for the branch.

Jennifer Lindley, Greater Rochester Area, is Recording Secretary. She initiated a scrapbooking group and is on the membership committee. She recruits younger members for her branch.

Shannon Mulcahy, Poughkeepsie, is Treasurer and Woman of the Year chairperson. She raised almost \$9000 for the Dave Thomas Foundation when she ran the New York City Marathon.

Janice Robinson, St. Lawrence County, was the C/U representative for SUNY Canton, and later she was appointed LAF Chair. Jan organized a Four College Forum to discuss issues of common interest to women of the four local colleges. She raised money for the Evelyn Currie LAF Giving Circle with a raffle of an original acrylic painting created by an area 9th grader.

Kaye V. Schrader, Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown, is Community Service Committee Chairperson. She organized the collection of gifts and holiday cards to send to servicemen in Iraq, collected donations of food for the Gloversville National Guard, purchased items for needy young women, and collected used career clothing for women entering the workforce.

Eileen Vitale, Skaneateles, is Membership Vice-President. She took over some of the hospitality responsibilities for the meetings. Due to her efforts, there are several new first time members of her branch.

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



SAVE THE DATES!

AAUW 2005 Fall District Conferences

- **Districts 1,2,6, and 7:** TBA
- **District 3:** September 24-Onondaga Valley Church, Syracuse
- **District 4:** October 1-Eleanor Roosevelt's Cottage, Val Kill
- **District 5:** October 8-New York City Branch House

Kudos to 2005 21st Century Award Winners

Diane Haney, AAUW-NYS Program Vice President
516/248-0476 haneydhd@yahoo.com



I thought it would never get here, and now it's gone. Already the 2005 Convention seems just a happy blur. Much was accomplished and much was celebrated. The best news first: the following branches were honored for their fine over-all achievement with 2005 21st Century Awards:

Platinum Branch Awards: **Buffalo** and **New York City**, small branch: **Fairport**

Gold Awards: **Amsterdam Gloversville Johnstown, Ithaca, Poughkeepsie, Saint Lawrence** and **Westchester**

Silver Awards: **Bath, Islip, Massapequa, Mid Island, Southern New York**, small branch silver: **Yates** and **Skaneateles**

Bronze Awards: **Elmira-Corning, Schenectady, Syracuse**

Congratulations to all the hard-working members of all these outstanding branches.

Those who missed Sunday morning also missed some really outstanding ideas on program from your fellow members Barbara Aldi, Ann DiNicola, Mildred DeWitt, Janet Fowler, Wilma Gitchell, Lorrin Johnson, Peggy Kelland, Julie Kleszczewski, Jann Mirchandani, Donna Seymour, and Liliana Trevizan. They gave terrific ideas for publicity, newsletters, membership, and woman of the year awards among others. Too many good ideas to detail here. You really had to be there!

Making Waves for Bina Roy

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

The NYS Convention ended on a high note at the Bina Roy Luncheon. There was stiff competition for the Mermaid of the Convention but **Julie Kleszczewski**, NYC, reigns again this year! I am delighted to retain The Golden Purse for the third year as the individual who raised the most money. "I get by with a little help from my friends" is this year's fundraising theme and as you can see it really works. My heartfelt thanks to **Jane Smith**, Bath, **Leona Barback**, Buffalo, **Joline Scura**, Massapequa, and **Peggy Keeland**, Poughkeepsie, for "getting in the swim" and raising money in their branches for the Bina Roy Fund.



To date, we have raised \$2300 and we are well on our way to our goal of \$1/member. Members attending the luncheon generously gave as NYS board members did the "can-can routine." With "a little help" from more branches, we can reach our goal by December 15, 2005. So branches, please commit to supporting Bina Roy with a fundraising initiative or international affairs project. This year, we will use the UN Millennium Goals in selecting the Bina Roy Projects. The projects will be announced at Delta Lake this summer. Remember, we are all global citizens and international advocates, so think globally and act locally.

From the Communications Director

Betty Preble, 716/662-0608,
communications@aauw-nys.org

I am delighted to announce the branches that won certificates for 2004-2005 work with technology and newsletters of excellence.

The criteria used this year was as objective as I could make it. For Technology, a branch had to do only three things:

- There had to be a branch internet website. It did not have to be an independent site. It could be housed in the AAUW-NYS space, but there had to be one.
- The website had to be kept up-to-date. For those housed by the state, I nagged and cajoled, but was not always successful. A website with outdated information tells the person viewing it that it's not important – but it is!!!
- Newsletters had to be available via e-mail. I'm eager to help any branch that needs assistance with this.

The branches that fulfilled all these criteria were:

Adirondack, Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown, Bath, Buffalo, East Hampton, Greater Rochester, Ithaca, Jamestown, Kingston, Mohawk Valley, North Shore, Ontario County, Poughkeepsie, Saint Lawrence County, Smithtown Area, Southern NY, Staten Island, and Westchester

The newsletter criteria were, unfortunately, somewhat subjective. I used ten tests:

- Membership – was there regular information about joining, or about new members?

- LAF– were there regular updates and/or information about LAF?
- EF – was there information about EF activities?
- AAUW – were there articles about NYS or the Association? (something more than branch news)
- Diversity/activism – were suggestions offered for these areas?
- Officers – was a list of officers included, with contact information?
- Calendar – were upcoming events always listed clearly?
- Overall appearance – was the document professional and attractive?
- Mission statements – were the AAUW mission statements always included?
- Slogan – was “sharing the vision” highlighted?

The branches that passed MOST of these tests were:

Adirondack, Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown, Bath, Greater Rochester, Islip Area, Jefferson County, Kingston, Massapequa Area, Mohawk Valley, Nassau County, New York City, North Shore, Oswego, Poughkeepsie, Schenectady, Smithtown Area, Southern NY, and Westchester. Adirondack and Smithtown Area were commended for fulfilling ALL the criteria.

Congratulations to all these branches!

I'm also delighted to announce the addition of a new section to our website: an area where branches can share their successes and ideas. Please check it out and send in your own ideas. Go to aauw-nys.org and then look in the “Communications” section!

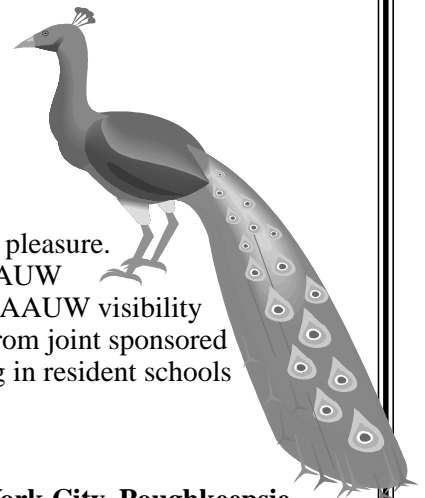
Peacock Award Winners Strut Their Stuff

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

Sharing the successes of the past year at the New York State Convention was a particular pleasure. Peacock Award winning branches “strut their stuff” as they are “sharing the vision” of AAUW across the state. Reaching out to a diverse population with large and small projects gives AAUW visibility to become an important link in the community. Typical Peacock Award projects ranged from joint sponsored college based conferences and interaction with high school girls with special needs living in resident schools to essay contests for elementary students.

Congratulations to the following branches:

Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown, Buffalo, Islip Area, Ithaca, Mid-Island, New York City, Poughkeepsie, St. Lawrence County, Southern New York, Syracuse and Westchester!



Convention Old and New

Betty Harrel and Margaret Nijhuis,
Co-Directors AAUW-NYS Convention
845/462-2141 bharrel28@msn.com and
845/635-8612 rnijhuis@hvc.rr.com

Thank you to everyone who helped make the convention at Turning Stone a success. We are deeply indebted to the AAUW members on the Convention Arrangements committee. When the tasks are divided everything becomes easier. It would not be a convention without the members who attended; we thank you and appreciate the evaluation forms that so many of you took the time to complete. These are important to our future planning. A special thank you to Nancy Mion and the entire AAUW-NYS Board who worked tirelessly to make the weekend meaningful as well as entertaining.

If you did not fill out an evaluation form or have other ideas to make our AAUW-NYS Convention better and better, you can contact us by email through the website <http://www.aauw-nys.org/convention.htm>.

We are looking forward to April 28-30, 2006! Please mark your calendar and plan on spending a wonderful weekend in the elegant and newly decorated Gideon Putnam Resort and Spa at Saratoga Springs, NY. Also check the NYS website regularly to keep up-to-date on the plans for the weekend. Registration forms should be available by January 1, 2006. Hope to see you there!

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

Summer Issue Deadline: August 1, 2005
AAUW-NYS is looking for a new editor for FOCUS. If interested, please contact Betty Preble or Nancy Mion to find out more about the job.

BRANCH ACTION HIGHLIGHTED

With the collaboration of the League of Women Voters, **Massapequa Area Branch** had a full house at their first meeting set up by Jolene Scura and her assistants: a local election forum of nine candidates. Other meetings included Nassau County Legislator David Mejias, who spoke on nonpartisan issues and reminded all to vote. Dorothy Zuckerman from the Alliance for Retired Americans explained current Medicare and health insurance bills, and a Nigerian speaker gave a history of his country. Our ongoing Human Resource Committee aids the area communities by collecting food, clothing, eyeglasses and hearing aids from AAUW members. Donna Dulfon, delivers the items to local Outreach sites. Its Domestic Violence Program led by Jolene Scura and Rhoda Osterfeld teaches "Hands Are Not For Hitting" to several primary grades in local schools in Nassau County. Another extension, Women on the Job, keeps us current with updates and advice on how to help women with job related problems. We've enlisted three new members thanks to the efforts of our hardworking groups and the untiring leadership of President Marie Morris.

Mohawk Valley Branch collaborated with the League of Women Voters and local news media to accept the NYS 2004 Voter Education & Public Policy Challenge. Our new Communications Tree nurtured by Pat Jones, Doris Miga, and Janet Pickard, got time sensitive information about area political news and Candidates Forums to our members by phone and e-mail. With her Evening Book e-group list, Pat also keeps that interest group informed about meeting specifics, so members stay in touch even when all can't make meetings. Our efforts to "Remember the Ladies" highlighted the end of 2004: an "Abigail Adams" presentation by Rev. Sisley, extra volunteer hours, thanks to Ann Schulz, for the Salvation Army and Mary Chapin's coordination of "Women of 9/11" during a continental breakfast at a local library. This brought us two new members! Health was a focus of 2005, with speakers on "Childhood Obesity" in February and "Multiple Sclerosis in March for a joint meeting with Alpha Delta Kappa. In April we were busy with Convention Registration preparations and creating LAF baskets. For our May installation of officers luncheon meeting, AAUW-NYS President Nancy Mion addressed two groups as we joined the **Syracuse Branch**, thanks to the arrangements made by dual member, Barbara Brown.

— continued on page 8

2005-06 Nominating Team

Erna Cunningham, AAUW-NYS Nominating Chair
631-585-0868 rcunning@suffolk.lib.ny.us

The new nominating committee will have their first meeting at AAUW 101 (and fun!) at the Delta Lake weekend of July 15-17. After that initial meeting, it will work by e-mail and phone calls. At the post convention AAUW-NYS Board meeting, Erna Cunningham was elected to chair the Team and Betty Harrel and Joan Monk are board representatives. The offices open for election in 2006 are: President, Program Vice President and Educational Foundation Vice President. The qualifications for each office are listed on the state website. It is strongly recommended that the candidates have AAUW leadership experience within the last five years. Share the vision by suggesting yourself or a person you know would make an effective state leader!



Celebrating As We Continue Our Commitment

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

North Shore Branch's Annual Fellowship Luncheon on March 17, 2005. L to R Susan Murray, NYU Asst. Prof., working on a textbook for Oxford University Press, Phyllis Anderson, AAUW-NYS VP EF, Jenny Yun, Fordham Law School, founded an organization to work with troubled youth, and Catherine Moore, **North Shore Branch** President.

Our total for NYS contributions to the Educational Foundation in 2004 is \$99,004.09. That is a \$20,000 increase over the previous year, a reason for celebration. The Educational Foundation awarded more than three million dollars last year to deserving Fellows. A primary criterion for selection is academic excellence, and the competition is intense. At our NYS Convention in April, we had the privilege of listening to two Fellows who shared their research findings with us. Both studied at Cornell University in 2003-2004 and continued their writing this year. Rebecca Jo Safran is an American Fellow with a PhD in evolutionary biology, who presented her findings on the mating choices of barn swallows and the impact that will have on future generations of birds. Sonia Hernandez-Cordero is an International Fellow from Mexico with a PhD in nutrition. Her research focused on weight gain in the pregnancy of Honduran mothers and the implications for obesity in later life. Both young women had prepared charts and photos for their PowerPoint presentations. Hearing a Fellow speak is the best reinforcement for all our hard work in raising the funds for fellowships!

At the convention, we held a workshop for sharing ideas about successful fund raisers. There were some excellent

suggestions from large and small branches, with details for implementation. Thanks go to Leona Barback for the Buffalo Book Sale, to Doris Fernandez and Ellen Wright for Cortland's Geranium Sale, to Eileen Hartmann and Eileen Argenziano for Fairport's Music Mingle, to Joan Smalto for Islip's Military Bridge and Mah Jongg, and to Jill Johnson for Jefferson County's Upscale Garage Sale and Garden Tour. If your branch is looking for a new event, contact one of these members!

The Eleanor Roosevelt Fund Walk on Sunday morning was very pleasant. Ten branches took part: **Adirondack, Bath, Buffalo, Islip, Jamestown, NYC, North Shore, Ontario County, Poughkeepsie** and **Queens**. We raised \$1222, with awards given to walkers who collected the most dollars from their sponsors: First place to **Laurie Ginnitti** of Jamestown with \$255, Second place to **Carolyn Lippmann** of North Shore with \$250, and Third place to **Peggy Kelland** of Poughkeepsie with \$115. We walked on the golf course cart path and it was nice to know that security personnel were checking on us. Nobody got lost.

Twenty branches have submitted some funds for 2005 with half of our branches on target. Please use the Contribution Report Form which can be printed from the Association website. Send this form with original checks to me or to the Foundation with copies to me. The deadline for contributions is December 1, 2005. Our goal is \$25 per member, so be ambitious!



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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, DC 20036

Did You Know?

Helen Engel and Marilynn Smiley,
AAUW-NYS Historians

315/343-9678 rengel@oswego.edu
 315/343-4803 smiley@oswego.edu

1935

State President: Mrs Emerson D. Fite, Poughkeepsie (1934-36)

The Executive board voted to sponsor "County Libraries" as a State Project, to continue the speakers bureau, and at least \$100 toward the expenses to approve

of the State President in attending the National Convention in Los Angeles. Study Groups were instituted and each branch was urged to have at least one study group, preferably concerning International Relations.

The board voted to bring out two issues in non-convention years but only one in convention years of THE MERCURY, the State division newsletter first published in 1931.

The amendment to increase dues was passed by the branches.

Question for You: "Does your branch maintain a branch scrapbook?"

BRANCH ACTION HIGHLIGHTED

– continued from page 6

In the fall, AAUW **New York City Branch** held an International Forum, "Trafficking: A Global Human Rights Violation". Moderated by Carolyn Donovan, AAUW's UN representative, the panel featured Carol Smolenski on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, Parvati (Rini) Mazmudar on "The Underlying Causes of Trafficking in Families with Young Women and Girls", and Susan Safti Rutag on "The Abduction of Afghan Girls." In May we honored the distinguished C. Virginia Fields and Marie C. Wilson at our biannual Women of Achievement Luncheon. Ms. Fields, past City Council woman and candidate for Mayor of NYC, is completing eight years as Manhattan Borough President. Ms. Wilson is best known for co-creating "Take Our Daughters to Work Day" when she was President of the Ms. Foundation. She now heads the White House Project/Women's Leadership Forum and is author of *Closing the Leadership Gap: Why Women Can and Must Help Run the World*.