

# AAUWNYSFOCUS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN ■ NEW YORK STATE ■ **FALL 2012** ■ VOLUME 62, ISSUE 1 ■ ISSN 1056 3199

## ALL THAT CAZ

By **MARY LOU DAVIS**  
AAUW-NYS President

**A**s I begin my term as AAUW-NYS president, I'm looking forward to exchanging ideas and working together to promote the AAUW mission of equity for women and girls by focusing on violence against women, pay equity, bullying and STEM. We

need to look for opportunities to exchange ideas and develop programs that serve our communities.



Eleanor Roosevelt said: "What matters

now, as always, is not what we can't do; it is what we can and must do." Please join me in doing what we can!

We got off to a great start as 75 AAUW members from across the state met on the beautiful campus at Cazenovia College from July 20 to 22 for the Summer Leadership Conference. They had the chance to meet members of other branches and to exchange ideas.



**WHAT HAPPENS IN CAZ STAYS IN CAZ:** A night out after a day of leadership training kicks off with a photo opportunity on the bucolic Cazenovia campus.

To start our conference on Friday, Dr. Susan Berger, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Cazenovia College, shared with us her thoughts about developing an authentic leadership style.

On Saturday, we were treated to an inspiring presentation by Geeta Desai, past president of the Poughkeepsie Branch. Geeta presented a leadership training curriculum that she designed on corporate social responsibility and

community problem solving. We laughed, learned and used what we learned throughout the weekend.

Kimberly Fountain, AAUW's state grassroots advocacy manager, presented an AAUW "It's My Vote Campaign." This was the first non-impact grant state GOTV (Get Out The Vote) training.

The goals of the campaign are to

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Strong programming  
grows healthy branches  
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# Cazenovia

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make the election about *our* issues, help women understand what's at stake for them at the ballot box, increase women's influence in Congress and increase our organization's influence on Congress. The focus will be on getting millennial women born between 1977 and 1998 to vote in November.

Members of the Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown Branch discussed how they made a connection to the Fulton-Montgomery Community College.

District 7 members showed a video on bullying prevention that was produced at Jefferson Community College and presented at the District 7 Conference in March.

Joan Monk talked about an idea from the conference to use the book "Have You Filled a Bucket Today?" based on the award-winning children's book by Carol McCloud. School-children are helped to promote positive behavior and discourage bullying.

Ruth Wahtera presented a computer workshop on branch communications and Melissa Guardaro and Joan Monk encouraged the branches to continue to include My Sister's Keeper as part of all of their branch programs in the future.

Karen Carr and Jean Havens were given many ideas to plan the 2013 AAUW-NYS Convention, which will be held at Lake Placid.

Did you know that AAUW has a new baby — the Empire State Virtual Branch? Go to [empire-ny.aauw.net](http://empire-ny.aauw.net) for more information about how to join the virtual branch. Virtual branches are a great way for college women and busy professionals to be active in AAUW if they have limited time for meetings.

In all, it was an exciting time. We're looking forward to a wonderful AAUW year!

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# Unlocking your potential

By GEETA DESAI

I have to admit, I didn't think it was going to be quite as much fun. I knew that it would be challenging — but fun?

I was to teach a workshop called "Unlock Your Potential: Personal and Professional Development Strategies for Success" at the Summer Leadership Conference in Cazenovia, N.Y. I assumed it would be like every other workshop that I had taught over a 20-year career as an organizational development consultant. Little did I know that I was going to enjoy every moment of the day, laugh harder than I had in recent memory and receive much more than I gave.

Mary Lou Davis, Betty Harrel and Margaret Nijhuis, my cherished mentors from the Poughkeepsie branch, informed me that 78 women would be attending. Over the course of the day, we discussed a number of concepts: the power of potential, the six cornerstones of personal and professional development (courage, knowledge, language responsibility, listening, emotional quotient and work ethic) and the self — management practices that lead to personal and professional growth. While the concepts are fairly esoteric, I found it really easy to explain them to my audience not because of my own communication skills, but because all of the women in that room were so incredibly open-minded, receptive and eager to participate in the discussion.

As someone who engages in group dynamics for a living, I can tell you that there is nothing as gratifying as knowing that your audience is willing to engage and work with you on mutually agreed upon learning objectives.

In a day full of exuberance and high spiritedness, two workshop activities stand out in my mind. We began with an ice breaker that required each woman to introduce herself and to identify an exalted adjective that best described her. My only instruction was to remember that words had power.



Most women were comfortable choosing an adjective; some grappled with modesty but coaxed by the others, chose suitably. While the role of the ice breaker was simply that, I believe I witnessed some of the best traits in women in general, and of AAUW members in particular. The ice breaker provided an insight into how a transformative environment can help women imagine their own power and describe themselves in exalted ways, and help other women who might be struggling with the concept.

The post-lunch activity was intended to ward off lethargy and to help participants understand the importance of practicing personal and professional development behaviors in the pursuit of success. Each table of six played a card game that had largely nonsensical rules which they had very little opportunity to study. Players were not allowed to speak and one person at each table was asked to take every hand after each round. Making up the rules as they went along, a version of every imaginable card game was played that afternoon to the accompaniment of a variety of behaviors.

In the end, each understood that the card game was a simulation of the real world and that when we are either unable to or unwilling to practice personal and professional development behaviors, we make our way in the world with a distinct disadvantage.

I was heartened to see that our AAUW members are some of the most amazing women I have ever met.

I'm so grateful to have met them all.

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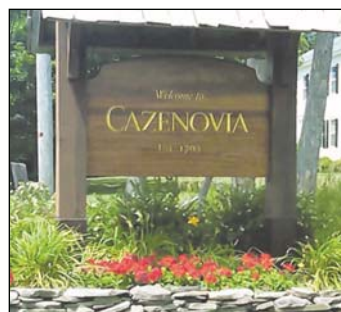
# CAMARADERIE ■ CONNECTIONS ■ COLLABORATION ■ CAZENOVIA



The quiet college town was bustling with lots of energy and enthusiasm when AAUW-NYS held its Leadership Conference July 20 to 22. Everyone had a chance to further develop personal and professional skills, learn techniques to Get Out the Vote, hear about effective anti-violence programs and seek ways to improve their local branches and communities. The board had a chance to discuss and make decisions affecting the future of AAUW in our state. One of the best parts was the opportunity to make connections. The 75 AAUW women from across the state had many opportunities to share ideas, exchange contact information, and talk about how an effective program in one part of the state could be transported to their branch. Members left with ideas, new knowledge and renewed vigor to tackle our upcoming program year.



— Margaret Nijhuis and Elizabeth Harrel,  
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PHOTOS BY CLAIRE REGAN

# Build resources for what AAUW does best: Support women

Hi Doris,

It was a pleasure speaking to you today.

I am an international student (from India) currently residing in NY and pursuing Masters in Public Administration- Healthcare.

I have my last semester with 12 credits remaining to graduate.

Due to a sudden increased in rupee- dollar exchange rates, I am having a severe financial crunch to pay my tuition for the last semester and thus, look forward for some kind of scholarship or monetary assistance to complete my education.

Kindly let me know the process I need to go through to be eligible for the available grants.

Regards,

P. P.

By **DORIS McLALLEN**  
AAUW-NYS EOF VP

I always ask the women who call or write how they learned about AAUW. Invariably, they say that they knew of someone who had received a fellowship/scholarship/grant, been advised by a counselor/professor or from their own on-line research.

Five years after the birth of this organization, AAUW members and branches began to build resources to help women of any age to realize their dream of higher education. That dedication and extreme generosity have never faltered nor waned.

To insure that donations are credited as intended, it is imperative that, while the checks themselves are written to "AAUW Funds," the number of the

intended fund be indicated on the memo line (bottom left of a check). A chart on both [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and the EOF link of [aauw-nys.org](http://aauw-nys.org) will help you.

Fund numbers must also be indicated on the Contribution Form that is sent to national with all donations and copied to me. (Doris McLallen, AAUW-NYS EOF VP, PO Box 556, Black River, NY 13612) Given that economies at home and abroad are not yet as strong as they aspire to be, our contributions to AAUW's Educational Opportunities Fund are more important than ever. Personal philanthropy and branch fundraising efforts are what make ours still the largest and most successful source of scholarships and fellowships for women in the world.

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## You're never too old to start (or read) a blog

By **RUTH WAHTERA**  
AAUW-NYS Communications Director

Let me introduce you to Helen and Margaret. They're feminists, in their eighties, and have been best friends for over sixty years. One lives in Texas, the other in Maine, and they've been writing a blog together since 2007. Their blog called "Helen and Margaret" is a hoot. They are funny, opinionated — especially about national politics — and often disagree. The titles of their posts provide a taste of their writing and world view:

"Two Wrongs Make a Right Wing Republican Ticket"

"You're Damn Right Obama Cares. Why Doesn't Romney?"

"Rush Saw His Shadow Today. Six More Weeks of Stupidity"

Like Helen and Margaret, AAUW members practice lifelong learning. Following Helen's and Margaret's example, learning about computers and the internet can bring you pleasure and is worth your investment.

Mastering technology becomes more, not less, important as we age. It keeps



us in touch with the world when we are temporarily or permanently homebound due to bad weather, illness, disability, or caregiving.

It enriches our lives as we follow our passions — hobbies, collectibles, music, books and movies, politics, or family. We can watch PBS programs, reruns of our old, favorite TV series at our convenience.

And, of course, email and other

### HOW TO GET STARTED?

- Ask someone to be your computer buddy — a friend who knows a little more than you do that you can call to ask a question.
- Learn to do a Google search. Once you master searching you can find answers to all your questions or find a tutorial, website, or blog about anything.
- Locate your computer in a convenient place.
- Subscribe to "Helen and Margaret": [margaretandhelen.com](http://margaretandhelen.com)

applications help us manage our AAUW branch, avoid telephone tag, and keep branch members in touch as we organize programs and events.

If Helen and Margaret can publish a blog followed by thousands with just a little technical help from Helen's grandson, AAUW members of all ages can learn how to use the internet to enrich our lives.

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# Virtual branch becomes a reality

By **MARIA ELLIS**  
AAUW-NYS Membership VP

It is with great excitement that I announce the creation of AAUW-NYS Empire State Virtual Branch! Our first founders' meeting was held at the Summer Leadership Conference in the beautiful town of Cazenovia in upstate New York.

We elected our officers, board of directors and welcomed all of our 25 founding members! Our first founders' meeting was very special because Mary Lou Davis, AAUW-NYS president, and Eileen Hartmann, Nancy Mion, Diane Haney AAUW-NYS past presidents as well as AAUW-NYS board members and branch presidents participated in our first founders' meeting.

There was representation from our many branches throughout seven districts including the North Shore Branch, Islip Area Branch, Westchester Branch, Staten Island Branch, Rockland County Branch, Kingston Branch, Poughkeepsie Branch, Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown Branch, Oswego Branch, Jefferson County Branch, St. Lawrence Branch, Fairport Area Branch, Greater Rochester Branch and Buffalo Branch.

There are many AAUW friends that I would like to especially thank for their support in the creation of the AAUW-NYS Empire State Virtual Branch including Ruth Wathera, Donna Seymour, Phoebe Forbes, Joan Monk, Ruth King, Melissa Guardaro, Roli Wendorf, Jean Havens, Doris McLallen, Dayra Bernal-Lederer, Dr. C.S. Rani, Lorrin Johnson and countless others.

Special thanks to the president of the Greater Rochester Branch, my friend Marilyn Tedeschi, who reminded us that "July 19th is a Special Day for AAUW Empire State Virtual Branch and a Special Day for Women's Rights." The first Women's Rights Convention was held on July 19 and 20, 1848.

This Convention issued the first Declaration of Independence for women, declaring that "all men and women are created equal."

While this may not seem radical now, in 1848 the new "women's right movement" was very radical and the women who started it met with much resistance.

The Convention, which was organized in just a few weeks and took place in the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, New York, is indeed proof that "a small group of dedicated people have the power to change the world" and indeed they did. We, the women of AAUW now walk in these brave women's shoes.

The 17 women who founded AAUW in 1881 were college graduates with great potential in a world that seemed reluctant to let them succeed. They were determined to make their own pathways and refused to wait for someone to do it for them. Thus, they founded the Association of Collegiate Alumnae in Boston. Forty years later, the organization merged with the Southern Association of College Women to become the American Association of University Women.

Currently, AAUW is composed of more than 100,000 members and donors, 1,000 branches, and 600 college/university institutional partners.

From the beginning, our mission has always been to provide education and opportunities for women and AAUW's fellowship and grant recipients exceed 11,000 women.

As your AAUW-NYS Membership VP and AAUW-NYS Empire State Virtual Branch representative, I welcome you to the AAUW-NYS Empire State Virtual Branch and invite you to embrace our AAUW mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Our vision is to continue to grow and to be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

As an active member of AAUW-NYS Empire State Virtual Branch, you belong to a community that breaks educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

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# Scrapbooking preserves branch history

By **HELEN ENGEL**  
AAUW-NYS Historian

Scrapbookers, take action!

Several scrapbook pages per year can highlight your branch activities as they are happening. These pages can act as a shorter version of your branch history and could include copies of things that might not be used otherwise (as newspaper articles, programs, and additional pictures).

For more suggestions, go to the history tab (on the sidebar) on the state website or contact me at [rengel@oswego.edu](mailto:rengel@oswego.edu) or 315-343-9678.

Congratulations to these branches celebrating a five-year branch milestone in 2012:

Schenectady — 110 years (1902)

Ithaca — 95 years (1917)

Elmira/Corning — 95 years (1917)

Nassau County — 90 years (1922)

St. Lawrence County — 85 years (1927)

Yates County — 80 years (1932)

Massapequa Area — 55 years (1957)

Rockland County — 50 years (1962)

Staten Island — 50 years (1962)

Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown — 45 years (1967)

Farmingdale — 40 years (1972)

Jefferson County — 35 years (1977)

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# LAF fundraisers come in all shapes and sizes

By **ROLI G. WENDORF**  
AAUW-NYS LAF VP

As we start another year, it's time to look ahead and make plans for our Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) events. The fall is especially important for fundraising. More than two-thirds of our LAF donations for the year come in the fall.

The contribution deadline for 2012 is Dec. 31. All branch and individual checks are to be mailed directly to national, with a copy of the contribution report sent to me.

The LAF web pages on the NYS website have been updated with links to the contribution form, funds diagram and fund numbers for NYS, and the required mailing addresses.

It's also time to make plans for LAF fundraising at the 2013 Convention at Lake Placid. The idea is to make fundraising more flexible for the branches, where each branch can submit a combination of purses, baskets or other items. For each item submitted, a branch can choose whether it is to be raffled or auctioned. It is your fundraiser — and you can have it any way you like!

A maximum of three entries will be allowed for each branch.

Finally, we have the ongoing work of raising awareness among our members about the support LAF provides to women who face discrimination, harassment and even assault in the workplace. A good way to do this is to arrange a screening of the documentary "The Invisible War" in your branch. This award-winning film about sexual assault in the U.S. Army features several LAF-supported plaintiffs from the lawsuits *Cioca v. Rumsfeld* and *Klay v. Panetta*.

For AAUW branches, the cost to arrange a screening is \$150.

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*The goal is to prevent violence from happening in the first place. Continued discussion and a pledge to increase awareness and take action are key.*

# UN group works to eradicate violence against women, girls

By **ELISE RUSSO**  
AAUW-NYS International  
Affairs/Cultural/Diversity Director

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will meet with Member States in March 2013 to discuss areas of concern for women and girls. The priority theme for 2013 is elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls.

In preparation for the two weeks of meetings in March, CSW held an online discussion of key stakeholders in this important area.

By gathering information from civil societies, policy makers, and experts and researchers in the field of gender-based violence, the Commission on the Status of Women believes it will be better able to address gender inequality and influence the creation of strong laws and policies to prevent violence and provide comprehensive services for survivors.

The online discussion included 12 questions on primary prevention and services from varied sectors of the government and the community. Many of these questions were aimed at policy makers on the national level and would be difficult for AAUW members to adequately address.

However, several of the questions can help us reflect on the issues in our own state and community. Finding the answers will serve to focus our collective attention on prevention measures and services, or the lack of them, and prompt action locally and globally. Reflect on these questions about primary prevention:

1. What measures have been employed specifically to *prevent* violence against women and girls in your area — particularly to address the *structural causes* of violence, and

change social norms and behaviors?

For example:

Policy and legal reform to promote gender equality and empower women?

Awareness-raising or communication for social change?

Working with public and private sectors (e.g. workplaces, sporting clubs, faith-based organizations)?

2. Which sectors or individuals in your area/region have been engaged to help prevent violence against women and girls (for example: the media, men, traditional/religious leaders, young people, and parents)?

3. What training or organizational development activity has improved the ability of key groups to prevent violence against women and girls? (For example: health, education, community services, crisis response)

Reflect on these questions about support services:

1. In your area, what services can be accessed by victims/survivors of gender-based violence (for example: police response and protection, shelters/alternative housing options, medical assistance, legal assistance, counseling, access to courts)?

2. What protocols, systems or networks ensure that such services are well integrated and coordinated on the ground (such as referral systems, risk assessment, cross-agency information sharing protocols)?

3. What research, monitoring and evaluations have reported the impact of service provision to women and girl victim/survivors of violence?

The ultimate goal is to prevent violence from happening in the first place. Continued discussion and a pledge to increase awareness and take action are key.

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# Strong programs grow big branches

By JEAN HAVENS  
AAUW-NYS Program VP

Every new AAUW program year brings with it exciting possibilities for new ways to get branch members involved and thinking — monthly branch meetings, special interest groups, forums conducted in conjunction with community partners, outreach programs for college students, workshops, panel discussions, fundraising events — the possibilities are endless.

The key is to develop and implement activities that support AAUW's mission of breaking through barriers for women and girls. Examples of mission-based programs include:

■ Programs that focus on AAUW Public Policy issues, including civil rights; affirmative action; hate crimes prevention; reproductive rights; economic security; work-life balance; pay equity; retirement security; health care; education; career and technical education; charter schools; higher education; No Child Left Behind; school vouchers; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education; Title IX; equity in school athletics; and sexual harassment.

■ Programs that highlight and emphasize the results of AAUW research reports such as *Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology,*

*Engineering, and Mathematics* (2010); *Where the Girls Are: The Facts about Gender Equity in Education* (2008); *Behind the Pay Gap* (2007); and *Drawing the Line: Sexual Harassment on Campus* (2006).

■ Efforts that utilize the resources to be found in any of AAUW's "Program[s] in a Box," for example: Financially Fit for Life; Title IX Compliance: Know the Score; Campus Sexual Assault; start smart, and, especially this year, Woman-to-Woman Voter Turnout.

■ Programs that feature AAUW fellows and grantees and projects that have international connections.

Whew! Are you exhausted yet? Remember, you don't have to re-invent the wheel. Visit the national AAUW website to access a range of resources designed to help make branch programming easier, valuable, and, best of all, thought-provoking.

Looking through your newsletters from around the state, I'm impressed by the number of branches that have decided on year-long themes to tie their programming together. Skaneateles, for example, is focusing on "Empowering Women Financially," with meeting topics such as estate planning and long-term care options.

Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown is highlighting "Philanthropy, Fun and the Future" during 2012-13 while

Poughkeepsie's members have a three-pronged mission to "Broaden Our Borders" by (1) broadening their personal focus and improving their lives; (2) broadening their appreciation of the diversity to be found within their branch and the surrounding communities; and (3) broadening branch member participation.

Program topics throughout AAUW NYS this fall range from hydrofracking and aging at home to bullying and "My Sister's Keeper." The STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math have inspired efforts such as the Adirondack Branch's STEM interest table at SUNY Adirondack's College Transfer Day, the Rockland Branch's upcoming STEM Conference for seventh and eighth grade girls, and the Schenectady Branch's September program on STEM education for women with disabilities.

Uppermost in the minds of many are this year's national, regional and local elections. A number of branches have joined forces with the League of Women Voters to present candidates' forums.

Others have looked at how women can be encouraged to run for office while also acknowledging the suffragists who paved the way. Remember, and act on, this year's mantra: *It's My Vote: I Will Be Heard.*

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## In memory of Miriam (Mimi) Korb

Former AAUW New York State recording secretary and Rockland County branch president Mimi Korb of Suffern, N.Y., passed away on Sept. 27 after a courageous battle against cancer. She was 69.

Born Miriam Meyers on Dec. 5, 1942 in Ligonier, Pa., she retired from the United Parcel Service in Mahway, N.J., as a systems analyst. She was a volunteer support group leader for the American Cancer Society.

"Mimi was a very dedicated AAUW member and we will all miss seeing her at our AAUW functions," said AAUW-NYS President Mary Lou Davis.

Rockland branch members recalled her helpfulness, pleasant disposition and dedication to AAUW issues.

Survivors include two children and five grandchildren. The funeral took place on Oct. 1 at Sacred Heart Church in Suffern.



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#### Mission Statement

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

#### AAUW Value Promise

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

#### Vision Statement

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

#### Diversity Statement

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.

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## You can help engage the electorate

By **DONNA SEYMOUR**  
AAUW-NYS Public Policy Director

When political parties cannot persuade voters on the rightness of their policy and platform, they turn to suppressing voter turnout. One way is with state voter ID laws.

According to recent reports, more than 2.7 million living people who voted in 2008 have been purged from the voter rolls nationally. They are disproportionately minorities, seniors, the unmarried and young people

Upwards of \$100 billion — much of it “dark money” that will never be accounted for by origin — will spent in this election to convince fewer than 5 million swing voters (in a handful of states) to vote for one presidential candidate or the other. Because of our Electoral College system, the rest of the votes — and most of the states — are effectively out of play.

What will make the difference — and not just in swing states — is a massive voter registration and education campaign that is coupled to making sure the proper voter IDs are in the hands of those new voters come Election Day.

It will make a difference in cities, towns and



counties, in state houses and governor's mansions, and certainly in Congress and the White House. And not just in

2012, but for a generation to come.

This nation desperately needs an engaged electorate; one that reflects the full diverse spectrum of the people of this country by age, gender, race, economic, educational and cultural background.

We need an army of citizens willing to go door to door and street by street to register their neighbors — and make sure those new voters can get to the polls in November with a ride and a proper ID.

AAUW members and branches can be part of this citizen army that changes the political landscape of this nation for this election and for years to come.

*It is my vote; I will be heard, and I will make a difference!*

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