

# AAUWNYSFOCUS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN ♦ NEW YORK STATE ♦ FALL 2015 ♦ VOLUME 64, ISSUE 4 ♦ ISSN 1056 3199

FROM THE PRESIDENT / EDWINA FRANCES MARTIN, ESQ.

## A pair of centennials worth celebrating

Women activists in New York are eyeing two pivotal dates quickly approaching – 2017, the centennial of the women’s right to vote in New York, and 2020, the centennial of passage of the 19th Amendment, giving all eligible women in the United States the right to vote.

Both the New York State Senate and the Assembly have approved legislation that would create a Women’s Suffrage 100th Anniversary Commemoration Commission to help raise awareness of the New York State and National centennials of



women’s suffrage; the legislation awaits consideration by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

AAUW-NYS, however, started preparing for these important anniversaries earlier this year with a special Voting Rights workshop at Convention 2015, which included a

survey of challenges to the right to vote across the country, and examples of projects branches could undertake or become involved in as they prepare to celebrate the New York and U.S. centennials of women’s suffrage.

Among information shared in the workshop were (i) the Newseum Suffragist Online Learning Module we-



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# Show her the money

By JANICE BROWN  
AAUW-NYS Development VP

Let's talk money for AAUW-NYS. We are headed in a great direction due to dedicated members and donors like you. The second quarter reporting for contributions for 2015 from NYS was up compared to second quarter of 2014.

I'm excited because I love for you to "Show me the money." AAUW is moving to One AAUW, One mission, One fund.

The AAUW Fund advances AAUW's mission by sustaining all our programs and activities. Your unrestricted gift to the AAUW Fund helps incubate and disseminate programs that above all:

- Advance equity for women and girls
- Strengthen AAUW's role in the global community
- Respond to and eradicate the persist-



Janice Brown gives a presentation at the summer meeting.

ent challenges facing women and girls

- Leverage new opportunities and attract new audiences to our mission

We will continue our giving to all the funds, but the One AAUW Fund will provide opportunities for us to be able to start any new program without any hesitations.

I had two goals when I took this position in 2014: To close the NYS specific funds and establish the Change4Change initiative.

Since 2014, we have closed one NYS specific fund, Carolyn Donovan Fund-4377.

We still have work to complete the other NYS specific funds: AAUW Buffalo Branch American Fellowship in honor of Hillary Rodham Clinton-4347, Greater Rochester Branch Fund-1481 and Lois Waldorf Fund-1881.

I'm asking each member to help me meet these goals. We can achieve them by donating an extra \$10 a month to one of these funds over a one-year period. Let's be the pioneers that we are and lead the way for giving to AAUW.

The Change4Change initiative will allow us to still contribute to the six "Big Funds" (EOF, LAF, Eleanor Roosevelt, Leadership Projects, Public Policy and AAUW Fund) that we are accustomed to donating to.

Each branch will collect change from their members during AAUW events. The funds person and treasurer will divide the total by six and donations will go to the six "Big Funds."

Contact me at [j2brown1012@aol.com](mailto:j2brown1012@aol.com) or 254-247-9549.

## Those were the days ... glad they're behind us!

By NANCY MION  
AAUW-NYS LAF Director

Watching the presidential campaign unfold calls to mind those who worked, struggled and suffered for women to win the right to vote.

I'd like to share three brief excerpts from a speech given by Ellen Schmidt at a women's rights convention in 1914 in Ithaca, N.Y. She was a suffragist ... and my grandmother.

These quotes offer a small glimpse at the resistance the suffragists faced.

"In 1848, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton met in Seneca Falls. They decided to call a convention to discuss the social, civil and religious conditions and rights of women. It lasted two days and the declaration was signed by



one hundred men and women.

"Many of them, however, withdrew their names when the ridicule of the press began. Some of the conditions then exist-

ing rendered it natural that the reformers should be subjected to sarcasm and criticism ..."

It is disturbing and truly an eye-opener to understand how women were treated then. I'm grateful we have moved beyond this.

"It was deemed the correct thing for a husband to beat his wife with a horse-whip occasionally, to keep her in subjection. No law interfered with the pious church class leader and chorister in On-

tario County, N.Y., when he flogged the poor woman who had given him six children, had to do all the housework, prepare all the clothes from the raw material, milk the cows, make the butter and cheese and render a thousand services to him."

This final quote reveals how women were pressured to diminish themselves.

"It was not regarded good form for a modern girl to study geography or physiology or to show that she knew anything, but she ought to be able to faint frequently and on the least provocation."

As the saying goes, "We've come a long way." But, as we know, we still have a way to go. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the leaders and the thousands of New Yorkers who won us the vote and all it means.

# SAVE THE DATE

Held every two years, the next national convention will be June 14-17, 2017 in Washington, D.C.



## MANDATORY BRANCH BYLAWS CHANGES

Officers, don't forget: AAUW mandatory bylaws changes.

- May 15, 2016 deadline.
- Check for bylaws permitting shared positions.
- Board one person one vote change.
- 501(c)(3) board bylaws changes

Questions or need help? Contact [loreen@fairpoint.net](mailto:loreen@fairpoint.net)

Loreen Ginnitti,  
AAUW-NYS Secretary/  
Bylaws Chair

## CALL FOR AAUW-NYS BYLAWS AMENDMENTS: DUE NOV. 30, 2015

Branch members/branches may submit amendments to the AAUW-NYS Bylaws for consideration by the NYS Board of Directors.

Questions or need help?  
Contact [loreen@fairpoint.net](mailto:loreen@fairpoint.net)



# What does your branch website say?

By CYD AVERILL  
AAUW-NYS Communications  
Director

An outdated branch website is the modern-day equivalent of putting up a "No Visitors" sign on the door.

Without current information, prospective members are shut out. On the other hand, branches with up-to-date information about programs, issues and interest groups are saying, "Come in. Learn more. Join us!"

Some NYS branch websites are independently created and hosted, others use Site Resources, and several have a subpage on the current NYS website.

Regardless of the format, if your website is not

welcoming visitors by reflecting the many positives of membership in your local group, it's time to take action.

Those branches with pages on the NYS site can update their page with the help of our talented and dedicated webmaster, Betty Preble.

Send updated information to Betty and she will post it for you. It doesn't get much simpler than that. Contact her through the AAUW-NYS website.

Thirteen NYS branches are using AAUW's Site Resources program, which creates and hosts free websites for branches and states. The design of these sites is standardized, with the content and organization determined by each branch.

The advantage of these sites is the ease of updating content and the contemporary, AAUW-branded look. There is no cost to switch your current website to Site Resources.

If your branch maintains the site content, there is no annual charge. Or, if desired, Site Resources can handle site maintenance for you for \$120 per year.

For more information on Site Resources go to [site-resources.aauw.org](http://site-resources.aauw.org).

An up-to-date web presence will help your branch continually reach out, educate and invite people to join this amazing, empowering organization.

Let's make sure we are all displaying a welcome sign.





Women in Engineering Day at SUNY Canton promoted STEM – science, technology, engineering and math.

# Community partners build strong programming

By DONNA SEYMOUR  
AAUW-NYS Public Policy VP

There is no secret to putting together solid AAUW mission-based programming when you look for community partners on a key policy issue. The branches of District 7 – Jefferson County and St. Lawrence County – routinely follow this formula in their mostly rural service area.

AAUW-NYS received an 2014-15 AAUW Public Policy Grant that asked the state to work on STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math – education as part of a focus on Title IX. As part of the grant, we offered \$50 mini-grant to help branches put on Hour of Code activities as a way to introduce coding.

All this was designed to promote

AAUW’s original research, Solving the Equation.

You can download the report: [aauw.org/files/2015/03/Solving-the-Equation-report-nsa.pdf](http://aauw.org/files/2015/03/Solving-the-Equation-report-nsa.pdf).

**HOURLY OF CODE:** Jefferson County AAUW used its mini-grant to partner with the SUNY ATTAIN Lab of Watertown to sponsor an Hour of Code event at the Flower Memorial Library on Dec 12, 2014. School-aged girls and boys spent an hour working on library computers completing the Code.org tutorials with individual help from AAUW members and SUNY ATTAIN Lab students and staff.

Jefferson County branch member Erika Shiota Montandon explained: “We preferred to use the tutorials/games from the code.org website because we did not know what age group we would have. We started

with Frozen for girls and Angry Birds puzzles for boys.”

As the students gained confidence, “I saw girls trying to make a card on SCRATCH <http://scratch.mit.edu/hoc2014/> and boys trying to create their own game ([www.code.org/flappy](http://www.code.org/flappy)).”

In February, AAUW St. Lawrence County used their grant to help Potsdam Public Librarian Sarah Sachs organize an Hour of Code for local students aged 9-11 with the help of Jeanna Matthews and a group of her computer science students from Clarkson University.

That event was so successful that Mrs. Sacks is working to organize a county-wide event with local community librarians putting on simultaneous hour of code events later in the year, involving as many libraries as possible.

With those successes under their collective belts, AAUW members in both branches took the next step. Because District 7 covers a wide geographic area, the two branches decided to support similar events in each area, rather than try to do a single, district-wide event.

**STEM DAYS:** On May 3, Jefferson County AAUW sponsored a “Girls Bloom STEM” day camp day with their C/U partner, Jefferson Community College, funded in part with a District grant from AAUW-NYS. Over 40 girls in 4th, 5th and 6th grades – and some of their mothers – participated in four STEM workshops and lunch at JCC.

Four groups of about 10 girls each rotated into the four hands-on workshops: “Light up Your Life with Electronics,” “Amazing Colors of Chemistry,” “Origami Engineering,” and “Girls Learning Code.”

The branch created a YouTube video ad to promote the event, and posted many photos to their website: [aauwjefcco.wordpress.com/2015/05/03/jefferson-county-aauw-sponsored-girls-grow-your-stem-knowledge-and-bloom-may-2-2015/](http://aauwjefcco.wordpress.com/2015/05/03/jefferson-county-aauw-sponsored-girls-grow-your-stem-knowledge-and-bloom-may-2-2015/)

On May 13, AAUW-St. Lawrence County collaborated with a C/U partner, SUNY Canton, to put on a Women in Engineering Day for 140 7-12 grade female students from nine St. Lawrence County Schools. The students chose 4 out of 9 possible classes for hands-on STEM learning experiences. The branch’s involvement in the project was supported with a Branch Programming Grant from AAUW-NYS.

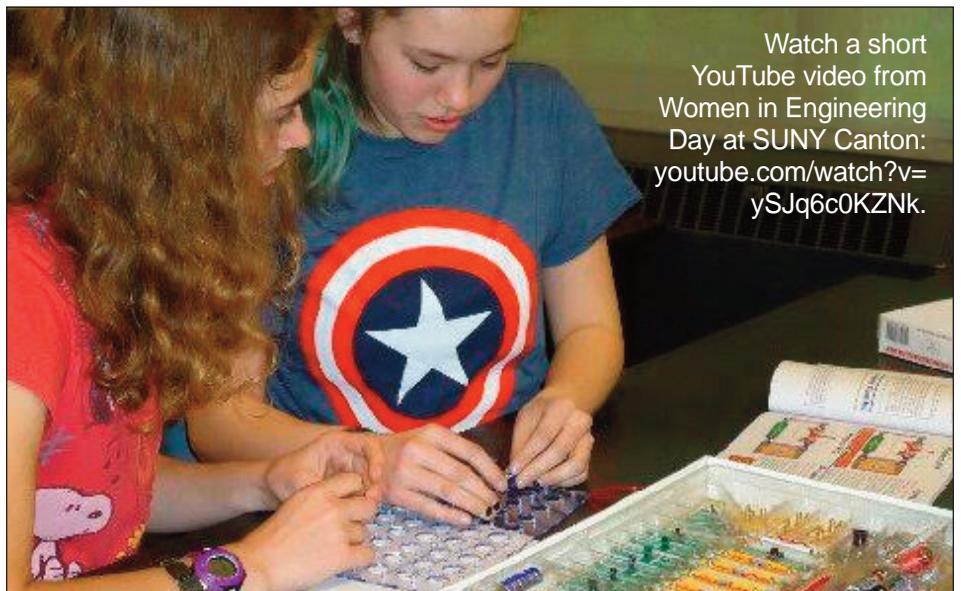
The keynote address was given by Clarkson University Computer Science major Hannah L. Jeror who shared her experience of being female in a male-dominated program. She outlined history of women in math and early computing which ranges back to the 19th century with Ada Lovelace (1815-52), the world’s first computer programmer!

The local newspaper and TV station covered it.

The good-paying jobs of the future are in the STEM fields. Girls who are exposed to STEM in grade school will be better positioned to take the science and math courses they need to qualify for those employment opportunities down the road. AAUW branches that open those doors for students today are helping to build gender balance in the workforce of the future.



Ada Lovelace, the first computer programmer.



Watch a short YouTube video from Women in Engineering Day at SUNY Canton: [youtube.com/watch?v=ySJq6c0KZNk](http://youtube.com/watch?v=ySJq6c0KZNk).



# Summer meeting album

JULY 24-26 IN CAZENOVIA, N.Y.



PHOTOS BY CLAIRE REGAN



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# Celebrating two centennials

CONTINUED FROM THE FIRST PAGE

binar and program in a box; (ii) the New York Cultural Heritage Tourism Network, which sponsored New York Women's Suffrage Centennial Conference – 1917-2017 in Seneca Falls on Oct. 1 to provide awareness of and stimulate interest in the celebration of New York's women's suffrage centennial in 2017; and (iii) WomensActivism.NYC, a five-year celebration of the passage of the 19th Amendment led by the NYC Department of Records, kicked off on Nov. 12 with Declaration of Sentiments: The Remix – A Celebration of the 200th Birthday of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Women's Suffrage Centennial, a celebratory event was held at the Cooper Union in New York City which featured, among other presenters, Nadia Shahram, who presented the Declaration of Equalities for Muslim Women at our convention workshop on Voting Rights.

AAUW-NYS branches are heavily involved in preparations around the state to recognize the upcoming NY and US suffrage centennials. Islip Branch has developed an Islip Area Long Island Suffragists Committee with a presentation on Amazing Women and How They Got the Vote; AAUW branches are working with SUNY New Paltz to create a multi-site, statewide plan for the suffrage anniversary which will include a conference in 2017; and Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnston has had events connected to women's suffrage, such as a recent conference on the work of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

The centennial anniversaries of the women's right to vote in New York and in the United States are certainly causes for celebration, but also for reflection.

When the U.S. Constitution was adopted in 1787, approximately 6 percent of the adult male population was entitled to vote. To complicate matters, the Constitution was silent regarding the right to vote, leaving that determination to the states.

It was an arduous battle for women to win the right to vote – along the way they were jailed, kicked, beaten, and even tortured to prevent their advocacy. But they



AAUW-NYS President Edwina Frances Martin and LAF director Nancy Mion team up at convention.

endured, and on August 26th, 1920, the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote became part of the Constitution.

But today, 95 years after passage of the 19th Amendment, only 104 women – 20% – make up our U.S. Congress. And, as AAUW members know far too well, the wages of college-educated women in America lag far behind their male counterparts – one year out of college, they are 20% behind; 10 years out of college, they are 31% behind.

These earnings differentials have real-world consequences. According to an analysis of the latest census data by the National Women's Law Center, in 2013 women were disproportionately impacted by poverty: the poverty rate for women was higher in 2013, at 14.5% (3.5% higher than men), than in 2000, when it was 11.5%, and the extreme poverty rate for women also increased during that same period from 4.4% to 6.3%.

And so, as we celebrate, we must re-affirm our vigilance to protect the right to vote, and to do all we can to get women to vote, because one thing we have learned through the last 95 years: when women's voices are heard, issues of importance to us get addressed.



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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, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

**VISION STATEMENT**

AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

**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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**BEAUTIFUL SARATOGA SPRINGS BECKONS**

Plan to attend the 2016 state convention April 15-17 at the Holiday Inn at Saratoga Springs. Stroll through Congress Park, above, and visit the Saratoga Raceway. Enjoy a weekend of inspiration, relaxation and camaraderie. See [www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org).