

AAUW New York State Convention 2018:
Marching Forward by Stephanie Lemnios,
Program Vice President.

AAUW Research: *A Catalyst For Action* by Nancy
Mion, Development Vice President.

Photos from the Summer Leadership
Conference at Cazenovia.

FALL 2017 FOCUS



American Association of University Women • New York State

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AAUW BRANCH PROGRAMS

BY STEPHANIE LEMNIOS,
PROGRAM VICE PRESIDENT

There are many wonderful AAUW branch programs that are happening throughout New York State. When you have a program that you are excited about, please write up a brief summary and send it to both our *FOCUS* editor, Laurie Eikemeyer, and me. We want to share branch successes with other AAUW members.

In 2017-2018, I am planning three conference calls regarding different subjects related to AAUW branch programs. The first conference call is planned for Monday, September 18th at 7 pm. The focus will be AAUW resources for programs, followed by open discussion of issues with which branch PVPs may need assistance.

Please look for an email from me in early September with the details of call-in information and a short agenda. I look forward to working with all of you.

HARNESSING OUR ENERGY

BY ROLI WENDORF, PRESIDENT

As we start this new AAUW year, let us work together to move AAUW forward. With a new, dynamic CEO at its helm, AAUW is entering a period of change and renewal. In its long history, AAUW has always kept itself current and relevant by realigning itself in response to the changing world. Changing times require all of us to harness our energy at all levels: branches, state, and national. In New York State and our branches, we are groups of dynamic, capable women who are up to this task.



Kimberly Churches

Our new AAUW CEO, Kimberly Churches, previously served as Managing Director of Brookings Institution. She is young and dynamic, and impressed us all at the AAUW National Convention in June. At the State Presidents' Conference and in



her keynote, Kim Churches said that AAUW is at a crossroads. We can expect to see many changes as AAUW streamlines its activities to be best-in-class in a few select areas. Four areas of focus were pointed out: Pay Equity, including pay negotiation programs Start Smart and Work Smart; College/University partnerships and programs; Research reports; publicity and related programs; and STEM (promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields for women.)

We also heard about the need not only to recruit new members, but also to improve member retention. Statistics show that 23% of those who have been mem-

(Continued on page 2)

AAUW National Convention 2017 by Jane
Pendergast, College/University Director.

Let's Share What Works By Barbara
Sarver, Membership Vice President.

Did You Know? By Laurie Eikemeyer,
FOCUS Director.

AAUW NEW YORK STATE CONVENTION 2018: MARCHING FORWARD

BY STEPHANIE LEMNIOS, PROGRAM VICE PRESIDENT

The Women's March was planned for January 21, 2017, in Washington, DC. But on that day, 408 additional marches in large and small cities were reported in the US, and also 168 marches in 81 countries with an estimated five million participants! Multi-generations of women and men with children peacefully demonstrated to have their voices heard, that "women's rights are human rights." Many AAUW members participated and were inspired to advocate for legislation and policies regarding reproductive rights, immigration reform, health care reform, human rights, and other issues.

If this resonates with you, then we hope that you will attend the 2018 AAUW NYS Convention where we will focus on marching forward, taking action, and recharging our inspiration. The NYS Convention will be held on April 20 – 22 at the Radisson Hotel in Corning, NY.

The convention will offer an assortment of workshops that will address the changing landscape of the media, being an effective advocate at the local level, women's reproductive rights, and sustainability. We will share information about AAUW impactful branch programs in New York State.



If you have not attended a NYS convention yet, I encourage you to speak with other members of your branch who have previously attended. It is a great opportunity to network with some amazing AAUW women and get inspired to make a difference.

Mark your calendar for the convention and look for more details about the convention program later in the Fall.

SAVE THE DATE

AAUW New York State Convention **2018**

MOVING ONWARD: EMPOWERING WOMEN

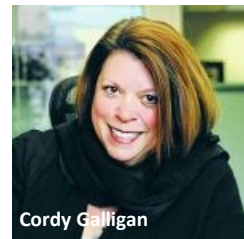
April 20 - 22, 2018

Radisson Hotel in Corning, NY

Energy *(continued from page 1)*

bers for 1-2 years are not renewing their membership. It is important for us to keep our new members involved and interested.

This theme was further expanded at our AAUW NYS Summer Leadership Conference at Cazenovia College in July by Cordy Galligan, AAUW Vice President for Mar-



keting and Communications. Women are looking to be involved, and to take action. There is a great deal of energy in advocacy and political action. Talks on topics of interest should be followed by some action that engages members. We should avoid a "one and done" approach, and create follow-up to events that generate interest and energy. Cordy also gave a lot of ideas for how we can use social media to reach out to our communities and build "mighty" branches. Cordy's presentations and other conference programs were very well received. Distributed materials are available on our NYS website.

Finally, this summer, I became a proud grandmother of our first grandchild, baby girl Lia James Koesterer. As we harness our energies to continue our fight for greater equity and fairness for women and girls, the fight feels even more urgent to me. We hope the generation of girls born now, like Lia, will find a more equitable world that we helped create.



AAUW RESEARCH: A CATALYST FOR ACTION

BY NANCY MION, DEVELOPMENT VICE PRESIDENT

AAUW has reached out in many ways for the past 136 years to make a difference in the lives of women and girls, constantly working to improve their legal, societal, and economic conditions. Did you know that only 30% of AAUW costs are paid for by membership dues? Your gifts to the AAUW Fund provide the means for AAUW to continue mission-based programs, advocacy initiatives, and create and expand our renowned research.

Research has ever been a mainstay of AAUW activity. We are well known for the excellence of our research reports on topics of vital concern to women. The first research project was commissioned in 1885. It proved that higher education does not affect a woman's health, especially her reproductive ability. AAUW has continued to present research that reflects AAUW's involvement in providing reliable, well-researched information on areas of concern. I've selected some of these areas and publications to share with you indicating that involvement.

FOCUS, a quarterly newsletter, is published by the American Association of University Women-New York State. The distribution cost of \$4 is included in state dues.

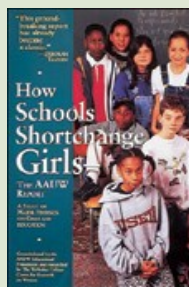
Questions and articles should be addressed to:
FOCUS Director Laurie Eikemeyer,
230 Wilmington Ave.
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Phone: 716.440.7596.
Email: focus@aauw-nys.org.

Submissions are accepted at the discretion of the editor. **FOCUS** is a publication of the AAUW-NYS Board.



EQUAL EDUCATION

Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America, published in 1991, sparked nationwide debate on gender bias in our schools. It found that girls were systematically, if unintentionally, discouraged from a wide range of academic pursuits, especially



math and science. This report, and the one released in 1992, *How Schools Shortchange Girls*, proving that girls receive an inferior education, really brought AAUW and the issue to

the country's attention, where it continues to make an impact. A follow-up 1998 study, *Gender Gaps: Where Schools Are Still Failing Our Children*, indicated that progress is being made but we're still failing girls. *Where the Girls Are*, issued in 2008, debunked the prevalent idea that boys were being deprived because girls were receiving more attention

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Hostile Hallways; AAUW Survey of Sexual Harassment in America's Schools, which came out in 1993, was the first

study of its kind. It showed that 88% of girls were sexually harassed. AAUW followed up this research later in 2004 with

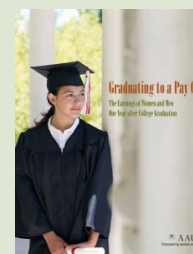


Harassment-Free Hallways; How to Stop Sexual Harassment in School and, in 2006, with *Drawing the Line: Sexual Harassment on Campus*. In 2011, *Crossing the Line;*

Sexual Harassment in the School indicated that things were not getting better and showed the negative impact on students' education.

EQUAL PAY

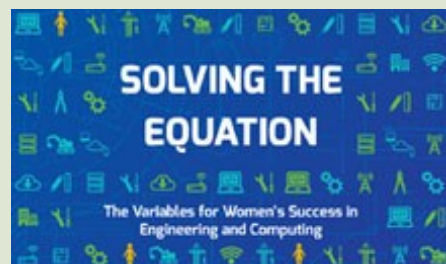
Behind the Pay Gap released in 2007, was a pivotal study that raised awareness of the fact that one year out of college women were receiving less pay than men and the gap widened after that. *Graduating to a Pay Gap: Earnings of Women and Men One year after College Graduation*, released in 2012, was a more in-depth study.



The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap is updated annually and provides key facts about the gender pay gap with explanations and resources to help you effectively advocate for equal pay.

STEM

AAUW Research Reports have often reflected an involvement in STEM. In 2004, *Women in Science* was written. The oft-quoted 2010 *Why So Few Women in STEM?* was nationally and internationally acclaimed. It investigated the "why" and concluded that bias and stereotyping needed to be addressed. The recent 2015 *Solving the Equation: Variables in Women's Success in Engineering and Computing* addressed the



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RESEARCH *(continued from page 3)*

problem facing women who are in the STEM fields who find that the workplace environment does not encourage them to continue to stay there. One solution is encouraging employers to take steps to alleviate the situation.

LEADERSHIP

Barriers and Bias: Status of Women in Leadership, re-

leased in 2016, examines the causes of the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles

and suggested various solutions including redefining attitudes and expectations.

The latest 2017 Research Report *Deeper in*

Debt: Women and Student Loans shows that more women are seeking higher education but they are not only taking on more student debt than men do, but they also pay back their loans more slowly be-

cause of unequal pay. We can help by encouraging more government aid and working

to lessen the gender pay gap.

The proud heritage of research reports has made a difference and served as a catalyst for action. Your generous donations to the AAUW Fund will ensure that subsequent research on areas that matter in the lives of women and girls will be created.



AAUW-NYS ELECTED OFFICERS

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Summer Leadership Conference 2017 Photos

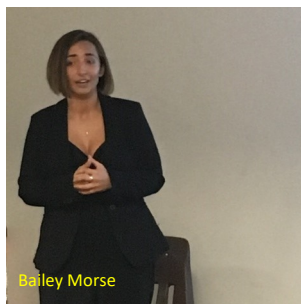
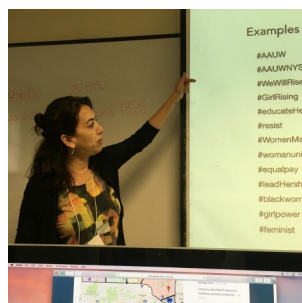


Roli Wendorf and Cordy Galligan



Dr. Karen Pastorella and Roli Wendorf

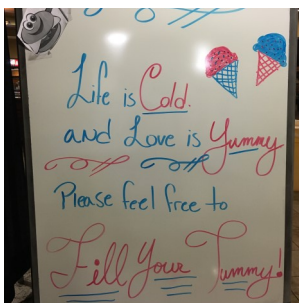
Workshops



Bailey Morse



Summer Fun



AAUW NATIONAL CONVENTION 2017

BY JANE PENDERGAST, COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY DIRECTOR

The 2017 AAUW National Convention, held June 14th to 17th at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, DC, gave lucky participants the opportunity to learn lobbying at the federal level, share ideas with AAUW advocates from all over the country, get to know our new executive, and be transported by a hero of our times – all within a very well-planned, well-documented, and pretty exhausting four days.

The work began on Wednesday afternoon with a detailed preparation for the two issues we were tasked to address with our legislators on Thursday's Lobby Day: federal education policy and student debt. With education, the focus was on Title IX, including the need to continue and increase funding for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, which



implements and enforces Title IX requirements, and also the Civil Rights Data Collection, which collects important school-specific gender equity points that are helpful to students, educators, and Title IX Coordinators nationwide. Title IX's work is not done, as AAUW research has shown that sexual harassment pervades the lives of students; girls have 1.2 million fewer chances to play sports in high school than boys, and less than two-thirds of African American and Hispanic girls play sports, compared with more than three-quarters of Caucasian girls; just 12 percent of engineers are women; and the number of women in computing has fall-



en from 35 percent in 1990 to just 26 percent today; pregnant and parenting students are often steered toward separate, less rigorous schools; and the rate of female enrollment in certain nontraditional career clusters remains at low levels.

Our second lobbying issue, student debt, affects women disproportionately. We were tasked in our lobbying to emphasize the need to safeguard and expand Pell grants for low-income students, as well as ensure nontraditional students the resources they need, such as on-campus child care, to successfully complete college degrees. Further, Congress can also work to end the student debt crisis particularly for women by supporting income-driven repayment approaches that reflect borrowers' realities and bolstering economic security by working to close the gender pay gap. AAUW's research shows that women hold almost two-thirds of student debt. Following graduation, women pay off their debt more slowly than men. Women with college degrees working full time make 26 percent less than their male peers. And women are more likely to experience financial difficulties: 34 percent of all women, 42 percent of

Hispanic women, and 57 percent of black women who were repaying student loans said they had been unable to meet essential expenses within the past year.

Reflecting the political reality in mid-June, our group from New York State felt we also needed to emphasize the need to defeat the efforts to replace the Affordable Care Act, and we added that to our list of topics.

Wednesday evening, we attended a dinner and program beginning with a talk by Mark Hopkins, AAUW's departing interim CEO, who reviewed the current programs and finances of AAUW, focusing on specific successful programs that can be replicated at the branch level and the recent search for a new chief executive. Then our new CEO, Kim Churches, most recently the managing director of the Brookings Institution and also with experience in strategic planning and fund raising in K-12 and higher education, talked about the steps in her leadership development and her strong interest in working to influence women's equality. She struck me as a down-to-earth, clear-thinking leader, and

(Continued on page 6)

NATIONAL CONVENTION *(continued from page 4)*

very comfortable working at all levels in our society. Finally, after I left around 9:30, Judy Woodruff of the PBS News Hour gave a spirited talk on the fun and trials of working in the media.

On Thursday, Lobby Day, over 800 of us, wearing white AAUW T-shirts, bused to Capitol Hill and then walked up the hill in 90° heat and Washington humidity to the offices of our Representatives and Senators. We met with key staff members for the most part, but we Westchester members did get a quick photo with our Repre-



sentative Nita Lowy. These generous staffers discussed student debt and possible Department of Education cuts knowledgeably and were especially concerned about rumored cuts to the DOE Office of Civil Rights. They were very concerned about the concrete effects of repealing the Affordable Care Act. We lobbyists took copious notes on the specific positions expressed by the staffers and any intelligence they offered about what they saw happening that should be helpful locally and for National in its public policy advocacy work. The staffers we talked with impressed me with their knowledge of policies and strategies and of their deep commitment to the work, despite their current very deep, discouraged, even despairing, state. (My group had legislators that were all committed to women's rights.) We had a chance to meet informally that Thursday evening, and a group

of us went to dinner to talk about our experiences lobbying and other more frivolous topics.

Friday was devoted to opportunities to meet and share with members from other areas, meet with those holding branch and state offices, and take workshops and other skills trainings. I learned a lot from a group of Pennsylvania members with active college and STEM programs. Throughout the convention, I met many members working with Start Smart and with varying STEM programs. The brief cocktail hour before the banquet also gave us a chance to talk with members from everywhere. Then we found seats, ate a delicious dinner followed by several award presentations, then Dr. Tererai Trent, a 2001-02 AAUW International Fellow, enthralled us with the tale of her journey from a child married at 11, with five small children at 18,

living in a poor African village, to studies in the U.S., including a Ph.D. with a thesis on HIV/AIDS prevention programs in sub-Saharan Africa, and with the help of Oprah Winfrey, founding schools in her native Zimbabwe. We were all expectantly awaiting Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, our second speaker, and we were pleased to see that the format of her speech would be a discussion with Kim Churches about women's rights in the U.S. with special reference to judicial decisions. A number of Secret Service members piqued our curiosity as they spread out in the audience with their large earphones and observing glances. Then Justice Sotomayor mentioned that she didn't really like to sit, and she and Kim Churches began to walk among us, continuing their colloquy. Their stroll went all around the room of proba-



bly 900 or more people sitting at dining tables, while they discussed the history of women's rights with detailed discussions of specific cases and laws. We in the audience remained hushed and spellbound, tears in our eyes. People touched the Justice and thanked her and even hugged her as she walked, never pausing in her careful, detailed law school lecture in response to Kim's questions. Coming after our experience on Capitol Hill on Thursday, the Justice's talk gave us the relief of an historical perspective but also emphasized the hard work ahead. As she wound her way back to the stage, she began to reach conclusions – that all of these judicial decisions were important but were always secondary to the hard work of advocates for women's rights throughout history, and that education is the key to greater equality in society.



Saturday morning offered additional workshops and a final session devoted to planning the next National Convention, which will be held in 2020, three years away, and the centenary of women's suffrage nationally.

DID YOU KNOW?

BY LAURIE EIKEMEYER,
FOCUS DIRECTOR

AAUW has great resources available to branches on their website at aauw.org.

For Leaders

Review the Board Member Transition Tools at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/board-member-transition-tools/>, to ensure success in the coming year, or How To Design Effective Planning Meetings at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/how-to-design-meetings/>.

[Social media](#) can have tremendous rewards for your branch if you're creative and persistent. It can help you raise your branch's visibility, recruit new members and donors, and influence important community stakeholders. Common platforms for advocacy include [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), but new tools ([Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Tumblr](#), for example) are unveiled every week. Talk to others about what they're doing, and see how your efforts can fit into or shape what's already happening. See <http://www.aauw.org/resource/how-to-use-social-media-for-advocacy/> for more information.

For Members

Sign up to be a Two-Minute Activist. Take action on issues impacting women and girls by joining AAUW's Action Network. All it takes is two minutes and an internet connection!

<http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/>



AAUW-NYS DISTRICT FALL CONFERENCES

BY JANET FORBES, DISTRICT DIRECTOR

The line-up of diverse and engaging AAUW-NYS District Fall Conferences shows our focus on programming across the state on these three key pillars: recruiting new members, retaining and engaging current members, and creating social impact. We encourage the conferences to be open to the community while collaborating with organizations that support our AAUW mission.

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|---------------------|---|
| District I | Saturday, November 4, 2017
10:00 am until afternoon
Michael's Catering & Banquets, Hamburg
"Immigration - The Effects on Women and Their Lives"
Contact: Melissa White - District 1 Coordinator |
| District II | Saturday, October 14, 2017
9 am - 3 pm
AAUW House, 494 East Ave., Rochester
"Women Helping Girls"
Contact: Gaynelle Wethers, GRAB President - gwether9@gmail.com |
| District III | No Fall Conference to be held |
| District IV | Saturday, October 21, 2017
8:45 am - 2:00 pm
Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory
"Moving Forward: Influencing the Future:
How Can AAUW Members Make Our Voices Heard?"
Presentations on health, education, and governance.
Contact: Peggy Kelland - District 4 Coordinator |
| District V | TBD
Contact: Suzanne Young Mercer, District V Coordinator |
| District VI | Saturday, October 21, 2017
10:30 am until afternoon
Farmington State College
"Human Trafficking on Long Island"
Contact: Geraldine Ossana, District 6 Coordinator and Chair at user106688@aol.com |
| District VII | TBD |

Janet Forbes, District Director
Email: jlforbes@hotmail.com | Home: 716-664-3499 | Cell: 716-490-2616

Reminder: The submission deadline for the
WINTER 2017 FOCUS is December 1, 2017.

Please send items to FOCUS Director, Laurie
Eikemeyer at laurie.eikemeyer@gmail.com.

**Women Making
a Difference**



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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LET'S SHARE WHAT WORKS

BY BARBARA SARVER, MEMBERSHIP VICE PRESIDENT

While learning about my responsibilities as the new Membership Vice President of AAUW New York State, I uncovered interesting facts which I would like to share with you. There are currently 30 AAUW branches in New York State, fourteen branches with less than 40 members, thirteen branches with 41-150 members, and three branches with more than 150 members. Whether a small, medium, or large branch you are all part of something bigger: **AAUW of New York State.**

Branches should be able to share their successes and failures as well as communicate and learn from each other. As a participant in past AAUW New York State conventions, I have especially enjoyed meeting and talking with women from other New York State branches.

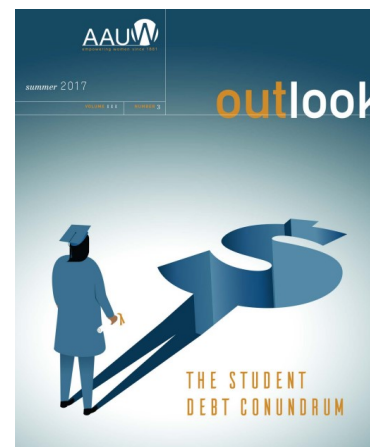
Of particular interest to me is increasing membership and retaining members in all New York State branches.

Many ideas have been put forward and I'd like to share a few of them:

- Hold some or all of your branch meetings at public locations such as a library and make them open to the public.
- Sponsor an Open House at a local facility.
- Connect new members with a specific current member to help the new member learn about and take part in branch activities.
- Shortly after new members join, hold a New Members Coffee with current and new members attending.

During my term, I hope to facilitate communication between branch Membership VP's. If this idea appeals to you, please email me at barbara.sarver@gmail.com and let me know of your interest.

Outlook Is Digital!



Starting with the summer 2017 issue, *AAUW Outlook (national publication)* is digital. You'll still get the same insight about the issues that affect women and girls the most, but with more content. [Make sure](#) we have your preferred email address on file, and look out for *Outlook* in your inbox!