

## WOMEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE

There are many women in New York State who have made a difference in our lives. Their accomplishments need to be documented and preserved for future generations, which NYS AAUW plans to do. To make this a success, we need the cooperation of all branches. The goals and mission of AAUW make our organization uniquely qualified to undertake this project, which will be an ongoing one. A list of biographies we have received is on page 3.

1. Identify prominent women in your own community or area who have made a difference. Include women from the past or present, AAUW members or non AAUW members. List as many as possible.
2. Choose several, at least five or more of the women from your list.
3. Find biographical information.  
Suggested sources:
  - City, county, college/university libraries – reference books, books, special collections, newspaper articles, oral histories, etc.
  - Online information
  - Archives of organizations, historical societies, museums. AAUW, or any organization in which the person has been active
  - Government records – city, county, state, national
  - Employment information
  - Interviews – with the person or with people who know or knew her
  - Any other relevant sources
4. Guidelines for the biography:
  - Each woman's accomplishments are different, but following are some suggestions for writing the biography
  - Dates – birth and death ( if not living)
  - Information covering her life span (as much as possible)
  - Where born and raised and where lived during the rest of her life
  - Family
  - Education
  - Profession (if relevant)
  - Area or field of interest of profession
  - Community service (if relevant)
  - Contributions
  - Unique accomplishments and reputation (local, state, national, international)
  - Any relevant personal information

Not all of the above items may be relevant, but you may find other types of pertinent information.

5. Write a 1-3 page biography which includes her accomplishments and contributions. Document all sources with a bibliography, and footnotes or endnotes, with page numbers (when possible). Be sure to include the names of the author and researcher for each biography. They may be the same person, but don't have to be. Also include the name of your branch.  
See the attached biography taken from the Pennsylvania AAUW project, which resulted in a book, entitled Pennsylvania Women in History: Our Hidden Heritage and one that has been submitted to us. These can be used as a possible guideline. A list of submitted biographies is also attached.
6. Send or email the biography or biographies to us as soon as you have completed them. The deadline has been extended through 2010.
7. Completion of the biographies should result in a book celebrating the accomplishments of many of the amazing women of New York State. We look forward to receiving articles from each branch, so that all areas of our state will be represented. All biographies will be placed in the AAUW NYS archives.

Feel free to contact either of us at any time for questions or comments. Have fun learning about the women, the famous and not so famous, in your area!

NYS AAUW History Consultant Committee

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Please look at the list of biographies already received and example biographies on the next several pages.

### Biographies received by January 2010

Allen, Doris	Harris, Catherine Dickes	Sansone, Maribel
Babcock, Caroline Louise	Hayes, Helen	Saulitis, Eva
Barber, Dr. Annetta	Hille, Bessie M.	Savell, Isabelle Keating
Barker, Helen E.	Holley, Marietta	Snedden, Mollie
Barnes, Mary Sheldon	Hubbard, Jean Merritt	Spaulding, Nancy E.
Barton, Clara Harlowe	Hutchinson, Anne Marbury	Stanton, Elizabeth Cady
Bass, Captain Marian	Johnson, Catherine Common	Staub, Wendy Corsi
Bentley, Grace Van Tuyl	Johnson, Lorrin	Stewart, Ida Crawford
Bethune, Louise Blanchard	Jones, Calista Selena	Stitt, Dr. Pauline George
Blodgett, Katherine Helen	Kenyon, Helen	Stoneman, Bertha
Bolin, Jane Maltida	Kessler, Judy DiMarin	Stoneman, Katherine
Brett, Catharyna	King, Dr. Nancy L.	Sullivan, Sister Kathleen, O.P.
Brill, Joan	Kleszezewski, Julie Harrison	Talman, Rose Hiller
Bronz, Lois T.	Lang, Ruth	Tarver, Marie N.
Brooks-Bertram, Dr. Peggy	Locke, Margaret	Taylor, Emma Flower
Buchholz, Anna Oder	Lukens, Kathleen	Tears, Lola J. Woodmansee
Buckley, Helen	MacGuffie, Dr. Martha	Tetor, Linda
Burchard, Dr. Mary Agnes	Maltby, Dr. Lucy M.	Tolstoy, Alexandra
Chapin, Mary Q.	Marrs, Stella	Tonetti, Mary Lawrence
Chestnut, Dr. Erma Ruth	Marten, Antoinette	Torrence-Tompson, Juanita
Clark, Rhea Doyle Eckel	Maynard, Virginia M.	Towner, Margaret E,
Clinkscale, Dr. Arlene W.	McCarthy, Carolyn	Treger, Dolores
Colden, Jane	McCormack-Raso, Tess	Truth, Sojourner
Collins, Eileen	McNeil, Ester Lord	Tsein, Patricia
Colvin, Ruth J.	Mead, Anne F.	Tubman, Harriet
Common, Minna Anthony	Melville, Dorothy Bigelow	Van Liew, Barbara
Comstock, Clara	Mills, Franca Maria Ida Lippi	Van Renesselaer, Martha
Connelly, Elizabeth A.	Mion, Nancy	Verdier, Georgia
Connor, Barbara	Morrison, Toni	Volkmar, Christine
Cornell, Harriet	Mowbray-Clarke, Mary	Wagner, Sally Roesch
Cox, Mary	Nakazawa, Maria	Walker, Dr. Mary Edwards
Currie, Evelyn Marie	Nesbitt, Rosemary	Webster, Jean
D'Ambrosio, Dr. Vinni Marie	Nevergold, Dr. Barbara Seals	Welch, Joan
Davenport, Sarah Lynn	O'Callaghan, Catherine	Whitman, Narcissa Prentiss
Davies, Dr. Virginia	Palmer, Georgianna	Wilkinson, Jemima
DeCrow, Karen	Parker, Charlotte Blair	Wilson, Rosemary CWS
De Marco, Mildred	Pattison, Lucille	Wilson-Agwu, Europa
Donovan, Carolyn Joslin	Peale, Ruth Stafford	Wing, Harriet Newall Walton
Dugan, Marcia B.	Pendergast, Mehitable Wing	Wing, Lucy
Dykstra-Donnellan, Mariellyn	Penfield, Lida Scovil	Wright, Lucile M.
Eastman, Crystal	Popp, Lilian	Wright, Rita
Ellis, Maria L.	Quirini, Helen	Yalof, Dr. Helen
Fish, Carolyn	Rey, Linda	
Gage, Matilda Josyln	Rice, Kathleen	
Gitchel, Wilma	Richmond, Grace S.	
Gordon, Dr. Susan G.	Rivette, Barbara S.	
Hall, Louise	Rogers, Dorothy	
Hallock, Faith W.	Roosevelt, Eleanor	
Hare, Dr. Ruby Elinor	Rudolph, Beulah Counts	
Harley, Ruth S.	Sanger, Margaret	

## Frieda Segelke Miller 1889-1973

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Frieda Segelke Miller was an internationally known expert in labor law administration.

Born April 16, 1889, in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, she was the older of two daughters of Erna and James Miller. With the deaths of both her parents when she was quite young, she was raised by her grandparents.

A 1911 graduate of Downer College in Milwaukee with a Bachelors of Arts in Liberal Arts, Frieda laid the groundwork for her chosen career by studying labor economics and political science at the University of Chicago from 1911 to 1915. Her work in labor relations began in 1916 when she accepted a position as a research assistant and teacher in the department of social economy at Bryn Mawr College near Philadelphia. From 1917 to 1923 she worked for the Philadelphia Women's Trade Union League. In this position, she participated in the organization of the Trade Union College in Philadelphia, helped found the Workers' Education Bureau of America and was a member of the administrative committee that set up the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry in 1920.

In 1924 Frieda worked as a factory inspector for the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. In 1929 she was appointed to head the New York State Labor Department's Division of Women in Industry. In 1936 she became a delegate to the League of Nations' International Labor Organization (ILO) and was the first woman elected to the ILO's executive board.

By this time, she was well-known internationally as well as in the United States. She was appointed to complete an unexpired term as the Industrial Commissioner of New York in 1938. In this position, she reorganized the state's Employment Service, increasing job placements by over fifty percent in one year. She also implemented a system of collecting unemployment insurance from employers, which was instrumental in getting benefits for three million workers in New York, both men and women.

In 1942 Frieda Miller became a special assistant on labor to the United States Ambassador to Great Britain. From 1944 to 1952 she served at the federal level as the Director of the Women's Bureau, dealing with the problems of reemployment of women after World War II. In this position, she was the highest ranking woman in the United States Department of Labor and worked diligently there to achieve equality for working women until 1952 when she returned to her work with the ILO. Among her many projects were a study of the conditions in which women worked worldwide and a survey of the status of child welfare for the United Nations' International Union for Child Welfare.

Although she traveled extensively in her work, Frieda kept a residence south of Easton on Coffeetown Road. She was an active member of the Easton Branch of the American Association of University Women from 1955 to 1967. She returned to New York City in retirement and died there in 1973. Her work in the field of labor was significant and left a lasting impact on the lives of working women.

### Easton Branch

Researcher: Margaret D. Druse

Writer: Susan Berkowitz



Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

Cite the sources you used at the end of your article.

The source of the above article which may be used as a model is:

McElroy, Janice, (ed.), Stangil, Mary Ann and Druse, Margaret D. (asst. eds.). Our Hidden Heritage: Pennsylvania Women in History. Washington, D.C.. American Association of University Women: A Project of the Pennsylvania Division, 1984



Penfield

1873-1956

In 1907, one hundred years ago, only 14% of Americans graduated from high school. Thinking about that gives one an idea of what a remarkable woman Lida Scovil Penfield was. She was born in 1873 in Oswego. Her father, Joel B. Penfield, was a prominent wealthy business man (dry goods, milling, etc.), active in civic and government organizations. He died in 1873, when she was just a few months old.

Lida graduated from Boston University and also earned her Ph. D. from that school. She joined the faculty of Oswego College in 1917 and became head of the English Department in 1932. She may have been temporarily in charge of the college library during this period.

In addition to her work in the English Department, she became an authority on local history, writing a book for young people called Stories of Old Oswego. She also directed a pageant about 200 years of the white man's activities in the area. This was presented at Fort Ontario. She wrote articles for the Oswego County Historical Society about the Coopers in Oswego, since James Fenimore Cooper lived in Oswego for a time during the War of 1812.

Among other things at the College, she composed and initiated the Torchlight Ceremony, which was inaugurated in 1936 and is still one of the school's most important annual traditions. Dorothy Rogers in her book, Oswego: fountainhead of Teacher Education, describes this very well.

Rogers' book describes Lida Penfield as "a dainty, beautiful, cultured lady. Her real distinction was her personal influence." Her successor, Charles Wells, said, "She set a tone of culture that no one else can ever beat."

When the new college library was built in 1961, it was appropriately named for her, as was the more recent library, which was constructed in 1967. Penfield Library is one of the central buildings of the State University of New York at Oswego.

Lida Penfield represented Oswego at a meeting in Ithaca when the College Clubs made the transition into branches of the American Association of University Women, and she became the first president of the Oswego Branch.

#### Bibliography

Churchill, John. Landmarks of Oswego County, Syracuse, New York: Mason & Co., 1895  
Rogers, Dorothy, Oswego: fountainhead of Teacher Education, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1961

Researcher and Writer: Ann Marie French, Oswego Branch