

AAUW-NYS GOTV Counterpart Newsletter Get Out The Vote!



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TIPS for REGISTERING VOTERS in NYS

In charge of a Voter Registration event for your branch? See the [attached tip sheet](#) for some great How-To tips, especially if you are working with college students.

Remember, [students may vote where they are enrolled in college](#). They need to supply, both a physical address (the so-called 911 address) and a mailing address, if different, so that the Board of Elections can confirm their registration and inform them of their polling place.

[If students choose to vote in their home town](#), they need to be registered in their home county, and [they must apply for an absentee ballot from their local county board](#). Since absentee voting is a cumbersome process, students who register where they study are more likely to actually vote.

However, the Presidential election will be decided by relatively few states, not including New York, which is securely Democratic in national elections. [The key states will be Florida and Ohio, the largest of the current "toss-up states" \(29 and 18 electoral votes respectively\), followed by Michigan \(16 electoral votes\), North Carolina \(15\), Virginia \(13\), Wisconsin \(10\), Colorado \(9\), Iowa \(6\), Nevada \(6\), and New Hampshire \(4\).](#)

[Students from any of these states will have more influence on the outcome of the presidential election by voting at home via absentee ballot. These must, however, be applied for and filed on time and properly, since they will be closely scrutinized.](#)

Long Distance Voter will help you get your absentee ballot

LDV is easy to use and [has a clever feature to help college students decide whether to vote where they are going to school or in their home state depending on where their vote would make more difference.](#)

<http://www.longdistancevoter.org/>

Thank you to Kathy Stein, St. Lawrence County Branch PP Chair, for this useful site.

Redistricting Woes: Case in Point

The problem with political redistricting when done by politicians:

New Assembly District Confuses St. Lawrence Co. Voters

For the first time, voters in four **St. Lawrence County** towns will be voting in a Republican primary Thursday in a new Assembly district that will be represented by someone to the north in Clinton County. With the county **now divided into four separate Assembly districts**, some candidates are forced to travel long distances to meet with **county voters they'll be representing - if they choose to do so at all**. Voters worried the redistricting short-changes their communities. **Redistricting could also be costly. With St. Lawrence County now carved up into four state Assembly districts and three Senate districts, there could be more primaries. The costs are charged back to the towns.** It won't happen this November, but going forward, each one of the seven Senate and Assembly districts could have contests, in what is now a very divided county.

<http://tinyurl.com/9buam9u>

9/11 moves NY primaries to Thursday, Sept. 13

There are 18 Democratic or Republican primary races this year in the Senate and 40 major intraparty primaries in the Assembly, according to the state Board of Elections. **All 213 legislative seats are up for election this year.** The legislative primary contests are spread across the state and feature both incumbents and challengers. **Twelve current senators are facing a challenge within their own party this year.**

<http://tinyurl.com/9hkeavk>

The Youth Vote:

Video: Teen Guide to the 2012 Election

Youth Communication reporters investigate Mitt Romney and Barack Obama's platforms on the economy, health care, gay rights, reproductive rights, and education.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=_OcEe5J3UK8

AAUW-NYS Branch GOTV Action!

The **Cortland Branch** will have a **GOTV Tumblr** photo event on **September 18 on the SUNY Campus**. AAUW's Kimberly Fountain talked about this at the Summer

Conference. Cortland AAUW will provide pages that say "I am going to vote because...", and markers for Millennials to write their response to this phrase. Full how-to details are available at <http://ourvote.tumblr.com/submitavideo>. Other branches with a campus connection are encouraged to do this. Keep a tally of how many Tumblr photos are submitted and report back to us!

The **Mohawk Valley Branch** is working with the **LWV, the NCAAP, and the Resource Center for Independent Living** to cosponsor a host of voter registration drives in the Utica/Rome area. They have plans for candidate forums, as well.

The **Bath Branch** and the **LWV** will co-host a **Candidate Forum** on Oct 17.

The **District I Fall Conference** on Oct. 13 will examine the question, **ARE VOTERS LOSING THEIR VOICE IN OUR GOVERNMENT?** Partnered by the **AAUW Buffalo, Jamestown, Dunkirk-Fredonia, and Genesee Community College Branches** with the **League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara**. The morning session will focus on **our most pressing political issues**, especially the increasing efforts to limit voter participation, **including voter photo id, redistricting, limitations on voter registration and voting times, the influence of PACs,** and other issues.

Ann Sanders, the Public Policy Leader of the **Jefferson County Branch**, has been busy with **voter registrations** at the Watertown Farmer Market every Wednesday. Currently **over 100 updated and new voter registrations** have been turned in. They have partnered with **AARP and Move to Amend**. They will be registering student voters at **Jefferson Community College** on Sept. 17, Constitution Day.

The **Kingston Branch** held a Democratic **Candidate Forum for NYS Senate District 46** before the Primary Election on Sept. 13.

The **Jamestown Branch** will hold **voter registration drives** throughout September and October at the **Jamestown Farmers Market** with forms in English and Spanish on Sept. 14, 21, 28 and Oct. 5 and at **Jamestown Community College** on Sept. 17 - Constitution Day.

Congressional Races to Watch

NY-23: Democrat Nate Shinagawa vs Republican Tom Reed

Nate Shinagawa is running as both the Democratic and Working Families Party candidate in upstate New York's 23rd district against Republican Tom Reed. He is **one of the youngest candidates for Congress this year (just 28 years old) and a former student labor activist**. He's already spent six years in the Tompkins County legislature, and has been an outspoken critic of fracking -- a practice his opponent is all for—which New York Governor Cuomo would like to open up in his district.

In addition to welcoming fracking in his backyard, **Reed** was one of the GOP members of Congress on an infamous trip to Israel, where in addition to enjoying the hospitality of AIPAC's nonprofit offshoot the American Israel Education Foundation, at least one legislator copped to going skinny-dipping in the Sea of Galilee. He's **been cited as a possible future GOP "star" from New York, and he's a big fan of Paul Ryan and his budget.**

<http://www.alternet.org/10-under-radar-congressional-races-watch>

What's at Stake for Women (and their families) in 2012:

Issue: Youth Unemployment

Young adults drop out of the job market

The drop in the unemployment rate in August isn't particularly good news for the economy -- it's driven mostly by nearly 400,000 people dropping out of the labor force, rather than more people finding jobs. The drop is because so **many young adults, aged 16 to 24, are no longer looking for work.** There were 453,000 fewer young adults with jobs in August than in July. Most apparently stopped looking and left the labor force. And those numbers take into account seasonal factors such as younger workers returning to school. As a result, **the percentage of young people who are counted in the labor force fell to its lowest level since 1955. The unemployment rate for young adults rose to 16.8% from 16.4% in July.**

<http://money.cnn.com/2012/09/07/news/economy/young-adults-jobs/index.html>

How Many Jobs Are Needed to Keep Up with Population Growth?

How many jobs are needed each month just to keep up with population growth? The actual monthly amount can be calculated and the Atlanta Fed even did us a huge favor by publishing an **interactive monthly jobs calculator** so you can go check for yourself. This month shows we need 104,116 payroll jobs to maintain the same unemployment rate of 8.1% with all of the other same terrible conditions the state of employment is in. **That's the key, the current terrible conditions the state of employment is in today. One of the reasons the number of jobs to keep up with population growth is so low is due to so many having dropped out of the labor force. If we had more people being counted as needing a job, the number of jobs to keep up with population growth would be much higher. For August 2012, those not counted in the labor force but report they actually want and need a job increased by 403,000 in a month.**

<http://tinyurl.com/9fmau5u>

Issue: Education

Public school fiscal and education insolvency....

School districts look to mergers, regional high schools to address fiscal crisis

As fund balances dwindle and state aid continues to trail far behind increasing operating expenses, some of St. Lawrence County's schools are seriously considering regional high schools and district mergers as possible solutions. Lisbon already partners with other schools for some services, said Blake P. Gendebien, president of the Lisbon Board of Education, including sharing a building and grounds manager with Madrid-Waddington Central School and a technology teacher with Heuvelton Central School. At Morristown, however, discussions are progressing at a faster pace. "Fiscal insolvency is five years out," said Morristown Central School District Superintendent David J. Glover. "Educational insolvency is in one year." At Ogdensburg City School District, Superintendent Timothy M. Vernsey said he already has cut more than 50 positions in the past four years in order to close past budgets. And this year, in order to fully fund the school's \$33.7 million budget, Ogdensburg is scraping the bottom of its fund balance, using \$2.3 million to stave off further cuts. That's more than 50 percent of the total fund balance. "The 2013 school year is going to be very significant," said Mr. Vernsey. "If there's no fund balance and you have to balance the budget, you're talking about very significant reductions to student programs through staffing reductions." <http://www.watertowndailytimes.com/article/20120902/NEWS05/709029886/-1/news>

The Widening Academic Achievement Gap between the Rich and the Poor

As the income gap between high- and low-income families has widened, has the achievement gap between children in high- and low-income families also widened? The answer, in brief, is yes. <http://tinyurl.com/9ltq6bj>

Study Finds U.S. Trailing in Preschool Enrollment

The United States lags behind most of the world's leading economies when it comes to providing early-childhood education opportunities to young children despite improvements in recent years, according to a new study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. According to the Paris-based OECD's "Education at a Glance 2012," a report released today, the United States ranks 28th out of 38 countries for the share of 4-year-olds enrolled in pre-primary education programs, at 69 percent. The United States also invests significantly less public money in early-childhood programs than its counterparts in the Group of Twenty, or G-20, economies, which include 19 countries and the European Union. On average, across the countries that are compared in the OECD report, 84 percent of early-childhood students were enrolled in public programs or in private settings that receive major government resources in 2010. In this country, just 55 percent of early-childhood students were enrolled in publicly supported programs in 2010, while 45 percent attended independent private programs. The study found that the United States presents some of the longest odds for college attainment for children born to parents who did not finish high school, ranking near the bottom on this indicator for upward social mobility. Just 29 percent of U.S. students whose parents did not finish high school are likely to go onto college, compared with over 70 percent in Iceland, and more than 60 percent in Turkey,

Portugal, and Ireland. Among other key findings for the United States, the report also notes that:

- ♦ The United States ranks 14th in the world in the percentage of 25-to-34-year-olds who have earned a postsecondary degree;
- ♦ American students rely more heavily on private sources to pay for higher education than their peers in other OECD countries; and
- ♦ Teachers in the United States are paid less and spend more time teaching—between 1,050 and 1,100 hours per year—compared with their peers in most other OECD countries.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/09/11/04oecd.h32.html>

Issue: Student Loans & Debt

Some history on student loans...

Last Plea on School Loans: Proving a Hopeless Future

Before the mid-1970s, debtors were able to get rid of student loans in bankruptcy court just as they could credit card debt or auto loans. But after scattered reports of new doctors and lawyers filing for bankruptcy and wiping away their student debt, resentful members of Congress changed the law in 1976. In an effort to protect the taxpayer money that is on the line every time a student or parent signs for a new federal loan, Congress toughened the law again in 1990 and again in 1998. In 2005, for-profit companies that lend money to students persuaded Congress to extend the same rules to their private loans.

<http://tinyurl.com/cyrwzwy>

Issue: Health Care

PBS documentary explains healthcare costs

"Money & Medicine," is a film attempting to explain why U.S. healthcare costs \$2.2 trillion a year yet ranks poorly with developed nations, the producer says. Recent studies suggest one-third of all U.S. healthcare expenditures were unnecessary, partly because healthcare providers are rewarded for the quantity instead of the quality of the services they offer and many Americans still believe the notion that "more care is better care," "Money & Medicine" producer-director Roger Weisberg said. Experts assert in the documentary that in order to contain healthcare spending, more comparative effectiveness research needs to occur, and the results need to be widely disseminated so they alter the practice patterns of doctors and encourage more evidence-based medicine, Weisberg said. **Money & Medicine, is to premiere Sept. 25 at 8 p.m. on PBS-TV.**

<http://tinyurl.com/8rraldf>

Young people have a lot to lose if the ACA is repealed.

More Young Adults Gaining Health Insurance: Study

A new study finds that the percentage of young American adults without health insurance fell by one-sixth in 2011 compared to the prior year, the steepest annual drop since the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention started collecting data on the issue in 1997. Although the exact reason for the sudden uptake of health insurance for people aged 19 to 25 wasn't clear, study author Matthew Broaddus said that it's almost certainly due to the provision of the Affordable Care Act that allowed young adults under age 26 to be covered by their parents' health plans. The study led by Broaddus, a research analyst at the nonprofit Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, found that the number of young adults without health care coverage fell from 33.9 percent in 2010 to 27.9 percent in 2011 -- about 1.6 million fewer uninsured. However, for the next age group -- those aged 26 to 35 -- the share of people without insurance actually rose, another sign that the Affordable Care Act was driving the change for those under 26, Broaddus said. The percentage of all Americans who were uninsured fell to 15.1 percent in 2011 (about 46 million people) from 16 percent in 2010, the study noted.

<http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=668493>

Family Health Insurance Premiums Jump 4 Percent in 2012

U.S. families are paying 4 percent more in annual premiums for their employer-sponsored family health coverage this year. Family health premiums reached \$15,745 annually in 2012, with workers contributing on average \$4,316 towards their coverage, revealed a national survey of employers conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Health Research & Educational Trust. Worker-only health coverage rose 3 percent, to \$5,615 a year. These workers pay, on average, \$951 towards their coverage. Meanwhile, wages have grown just 1.7 percent, noted a Kaiser news release. Family premiums also have outpaced general inflation, which has increased 2.3 percent. Despite the rising cost of family coverage, premium growth is still at historic lows and remains an important benefit for workers, the survey sponsors said. The 14th annual survey involved more than 2,000 small and large employers. It found a big discrepancy in the benefits and contributions of companies with many lower-wage workers (earning no more than \$24,000 a year) compared to companies with many higher-paid employees (making at least \$55,000 a year). Employees at lower-wage firms on average contribute \$4,977 each year to insure their families. That's \$1,000 more than the contributions of higher-paid workers at other companies. However, firms with lower-wage workers still, on average, pay less in total premiums for family coverage than firms with higher-paid employees. Lower-wage workers are also more likely to have high deductibles, the survey noted. Forty-four percent of covered workers at low-wage firms pay an annual deductible of at least \$1,000, compared with 29 percent of employees at high-wage firms. Of the larger firms, 91 percent allow pre-tax deductions for premiums, compared with 41 percent of smaller companies. Moreover, 76 percent of large companies offer pre-tax flexible-spending accounts, compared with 17 percent of smaller employers, the results showed. The number of companies offering health benefits to their employees has not changed (about 61 percent). Co-pays for covered workers are on average \$23 for in-network primary care doctors and \$33 for visits with specialists. ER visits typically cost \$118.

Average co-pays for drug plans with three or more tiers are \$10 for generic drugs or \$29 for brand-name medications. Estimated costs for non-preferred brands are \$51 and for specialty drugs about \$79. This year, 31 percent of employers extended health benefits to same-sex domestic partners, a 10 percent rise over 2009. Also, 37 percent of firms offer these benefits to unmarried opposite-sex partners, up from 31 percent in 2009, the researchers found.

<http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=668588>

Issue: Medicare

Medicare is a top campaign issue...

One-quarter on Medicare spend \$101,000 out-of-pocket

U.S. seniors on Medicare in the 2000s spent an average of \$38,688 for out-of-pocket expenses in the last five years of life, researchers said. The study also found more than three-quarters of Medicare households spent at least \$10,000 in the last five years of life, while one-quarter made an average contribution of \$101,791 and one-quarter spent more than their total household assets on healthcare out-of-pocket expenses. The study also found out-of-pocket spending for individuals or their spouses dying with dementia was more than twice the average for dying from gastrointestinal disease or cancer.

<http://tinyurl.com/9lbeojn>

If rationing Medicare coverage with a lifetime cap goes into effect, families will bear the brunt of the last months of care, particularly if Medicaid is turned into a block grant program.

Costs peak at the end for chronically ill

Nine of 10 Medicare patients die of chronic disease, and caring for them in their final six months of life absorbs one-third of all Medicare dollars. During that time, more than a third of chronically ill Medicare patients are treated by 10 or more doctors.

<http://facethefactsusa.org/facts/during-final-difficult-days-medicare-spending-spikes>

More physicians, many seeing fewer patients

There are more Medicare doctors, but more of them are limiting their access to Medicare patients. The number of doctors billing Medicare rose 32 percent between 2000 and 2010, but three out of ten say they restrict the number of Medicare patients they see – because reimbursement rates are too low, the program is an unreliable payor, or both.

<http://tinyurl.com/95a8k32>

Issue: Medicaid

Faith Leaders Urge Governors To Implement Medicaid Expansion

A group of more than 100 religious leaders, including Catholic nuns, on Monday released a statement urging governors to implement the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion. The ACA calls for states, starting in January 2014, to set the income threshold for Medicaid eligibility at 133% of the federal poverty level for all citizens and for legal residents who have been in the country at least five years. At least 15 governors have indicated that they will opt out of the Medicaid expansion. Many of them contend that funding the expansion would hurt state budgets, even though the federal government would cover the bulk of the costs at least until 2016. The statement urges "governors who are considering refusing or have already refused to accept the [ACA]'s expansion of Medicaid to put the well-being of their constituents ahead of their political ideology and accept the Medicaid funding." It adds, "Depriving struggling families of healthcare is wholly incompatible with the teachings of our faiths and the ideals of our nation." <http://tinyurl.com/8gj63lg>

New York's Transition to Medicaid Managed Care:

The 2011 state budget laws adopted the recommendations of Governor Cuomo's Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT), which resulted in changes to New York's Medicaid program. MRT's goals were to cut costs and improve quality in the Medicaid program. One of the changes is that most (but not all) people who receive Medicaid must now join a Medicaid managed care plan. In managed care, the plan is paid a flat monthly fee to provide for nearly all of the recipient's health care needs, instead of a fee-for-service.

Some of the transitions to managed care have already occurred and some will take place over the next two years. For example, people who receive both Medicaid and Medicare and who need long-term care (personal care services, home health aides, adult day care, etc.) will need to enroll in a Managed Long-Term Care plan. The transition to Managed Long-Term Care for people receiving personal care services started in July 2012 in Manhattan. The transition to Managed Long-Term Care for people receiving home health services or in adult day care is scheduled to start in January of 2013. You will be notified by mail if you need to transition to a managed care program.

- From **Senator Liz Krueger's** Community Bulletin for September 2012

Issue: Child Care

Report Details Rising Costs of Child Care Across the Nation

Did you know that in most states in 2011, the average annual cost of center-based child care for infants was more than 10 percent of a given state's median income for a two-parent family? Or that in 35 states and Washington, D.C., the average annual cost for center-based child care for babies was higher than one year of in-state tuition and related fees at a four-year public college? Those are just a couple of the statistics from a new report examining the costs of child care in the United States. The report released by Child Care Aware of America, a membership organization formerly known as the

National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, details what families paid for full-time child care in 2011, including average fees for child-care centers and home-based care. Child Care Aware is "calling on Congress to review state child-care policies to ensure that federal dollars for child care are only spent in safe, quality settings." Among its other recommendations:

- ♦ Require federal officials to define minimally acceptable quality child care for families and to study the real costs of care so that financing recommendations to support families can be developed;
- ♦ re-authorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant, along with extra requirements to improve the quality of child care;
- ♦ and invest in local referral agencies so they have more resources to help local providers become licensed and meet care standards.

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/early_years/2012/08/did_you_know_that_in.html

Issue: Pay Equity (or the lack of it!)

New Data on the Wage Gap Shows the Need for Fair Pay Legislation

Yesterday, the U.S. Census Bureau released new data on the gender wage gap – and it's not pretty. Women still earn just 77 cents, on average, for every dollar earned by their male counterparts. That number hasn't budged in the last decade.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would deter wage discrimination by closing loopholes in the Equal Pay Act and barring retaliation against workers who disclose their own wages to coworkers. Without this bill, employers can penalize and even fire employees for talking about their salaries. This egregious practice leaves workers in the dark, preventing them from ever finding out about pay discrimination in the workplace. We can't make real progress in closing the wage gap until we strengthen enforcement of existing anti-discrimination laws and give women the tools they need to get the pay they deserve. **Take action!**

<http://capwiz.com/aauw/issues/alert/?alertid=61860756&PROCESS=Take+Action>

Spotlight on Legislation:

New Limits on Telemarketers:

In August, Governor Cuomo signed legislation that will prohibit telemarketing calls that deliver prerecorded messages unless the recipient has expressly consented to such calls and requiring telemarketers to provide call recipients with the option to put their phone number on the telemarketer's do-not-call list. The legislation would also give authority to the Department of State to ban telemarketing companies that violate New York's telemarketing laws from doing business in New York State. This legislation takes effect in mid-November.

In 2000, New York enacted the Do Not Call law to protect consumers from unwanted and abusive telemarketing calls. The law permits consumers to place their telephone numbers on a central registry to reduce the number of unsolicited telemarketing calls they receive. To place your number on the do not call registry, visit <https://www.donotcall.gov/> or call 888-382-1222 from the phone you wish to register.

- From **Senator Liz Krueger's** Community Bulletin for September 2012

These key advances for women's health and economic rights are under attack in this election year. Any of these would make a good Voter Education Forum topic or the focus of a candidate question:

1. Women's Right to Vote (1920)
 2. Social Security Act (1935)
 3. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
 4. Medicare (1965)
 5. Medicaid (1965)
 6. Title X, The National Family Planning Program (1970)
 7. Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972)
 8. *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision (1973)
 9. The Violence Against Women Act (1994)
 10. The Affordable Care Act (2010)
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AAUW NYS Facebook:

Remember to "like" our state Facebook page and stay up to date with all the breaking news. <http://www.facebook.com/AAUW.NYS> Share things from our page to yours and help us build our social network for change!

Share your successes!