

AAUW-NYS GOTV Counterpart Newsletter Get Out The Vote!



Vol. 1
Issue No. 13

October 11, 2012

Donna Seymour, AAUW-NYS Public Policy Director 2012-13
315-265-6985 seymour6985@verizon.net

Tonight is the only Vice Presidential Debate!

Let's hope there will be at least some mention of women's issues in this debate; there was none at all in the first Obama-Romney debate. The moderator is Martha Raddatz of ABC News and the debate starts at 9 pm, ET on many stations. This debate will cover domestic and international topics.

Expectations run high for Biden-Ryan debate

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

AAUW e-Student Members in NYS

I have the updated AAUW e-student affiliate list for NYS colleges. If you are working with your campus on GOTV or to foster a student group on campus, send me a note asking for the list for the college(s) in your area, identified by name.

Voter, Issue & Legislative Policy Guides:

Many organizations (some partisan) put out their own Voter Guides. Depending on your priorities, you may find something of interest in these guides and policy looks:

AAUW.org:

President: Obama vs. Romney

<http://www.aauwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/President.pdf>

New York Senate Race: Gillibrand vs. Long

<http://www.aauwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/New-York-Senate.pdf>

OnTheIssues.org: <http://www.ontheissues.org/default.htm>

The Washington Post: Where You Stand on the Issues

The Issue Engine is a place to learn where the presidential candidates stand on the important issues of the election and choose which candidate better represents your views.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/issueengine/issueengine.html>

League of Women Voters:

Vote 411 is now live for all races that we covered for the November general election (we only covered state and federal races). The easiest way to access Vote 411 is through the state League website as it allows you to go directly to the NYS pages, but for ease, you can provide the website of www.Vote411.org publicly.

National Organization for Women's NOW/PAC: <http://www.nowpacs.org/2012/>

Planned Parenthood Action Fund:

Planned Parenthood Action Fund's new Mobile Voter Guide is ready to educate voters about where candidates stand on women and women's health care. They can even take their mobile device right into the voting booth.

<http://ppactionvoterguide.org/>

Everything You Need to Know About Where the Candidates Stand on Energy Policy

<http://tinyurl.com/9vq9fn4>

Planned Parenthood Advocates of NY announces endorsements in New York State Senate and Assembly races

<http://ppadvocatesofny.tumblr.com/>

New York State's Environmental Scorecard

EPL/Environmental Advocates tracks every environmental bill and every vote our state legislators make. Beginning this year, you can access the environmental score of every state legislator, going back to 2007, by searching our new database. You can also access past editions of the Voters' Guide for the complete environmental voting record of every member of the New York State Assembly and Senate. www.eplvotersguide.org

AAUW-NYS Branch GOTV Action!

The **Oswego Branch's** October program was presented by **Dr. John Smith**, from the College of Communications at SUNY Oswego, an expert in the field **of rhetoric in politics**.

Conversations with Candidates is a joint production of the **St. Lawrence County Branch, AAUW** and the **League of Women Voters of St. Lawrence County** with the **Media and Communications students of Clarkson University** under the direction of Dan

Dullea. The Conversations are broadcast weekly on WCKN, the local Public Access TV station, and on YouTube. The first interview was with Amy Tresidder, Oswego County Legislator, Democratic candidate for the NY State Senate 48th District. There will be a total of six interviews with state and federal candidates in the region.
<http://www.youtube.com/user/danieledullea>

The Voters:

Who's the undecided voter? It may be the "Walmart mom"

Sometimes seen as the great prize of U.S. electoral politics, this elusive citizen is more likely to be female, white, lacking a college education and earning less than \$25,000, according to Reuters/Ipsos polling data accumulated over the course of 2012. The "undecideds" make up roughly 6 percent of the electorate, with a slightly higher concentration in an Upper Midwest region including Ohio and Wisconsin, swing states that could determine the outcome of a close election. Romney pollster Neil Newhouse refers to the demographic tendencies found in the Reuters/Ipsos poll as "Walmart moms." Fifty-four percent of undecided voters are women. "Overwhelmingly they are concerned with their family budgets, not the national budget," Newhouse said. "They are concerned about putting food on the table or gas in the tank. They haven't tuned into the campaign yet because they are struggling with their daily lives. They are living one paycheck away from going off the financial cliff." More of them believe the country is on the wrong track - 75 percent, compared to 60 percent - and they are much more likely to respond "neither" when asked whether Obama or Romney is the more eloquent, presidential, or likeable candidate. The Reuters/Ipsos database now available to the public can be searched to get a detailed look at the undecideds and other demographic groups. <http://tinyurl.com/reuterspoll>
<http://news.yahoo.com/whos-undecided-voter-may-walmart-mom-123637490.html>

Facebook Boosts Voter Turnout: 61-Million-Person Experiment Demonstrates Voting Can Be Influenced by Social Networks

About one third of a million more people showed up at the ballot box in the United States in 2010 because of a single Facebook message on Election Day, estimates a new study led by the University of California, San Diego. Published in Nature, the massive-scale experiment confirms that peer pressure helps get out the vote – and demonstrates that online social networks can affect important real-world behavior. "Voter turnout is incredibly important to the democratic process. Without voters, there's no democracy," said lead author James Fowler, UC San Diego professor of political science in the Division of Social Sciences and of medical genetics in the School of Medicine. "Our study suggests that social influence may be the best way to increase voter turnout. Just as importantly, we show that what happens online matters a lot for the 'real world.'"

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, voter participation was about 53 percent of the voting-age population for the presidential election in 2008. For the Congressional

election in 2010, which this study focused on, the turnout was 37 percent. The numbers are clear: Many more people in the United States could vote than do. The researchers estimate that the direct effect of the Facebook social message on users who saw it generated an additional 60,000 votes in 2010. But the effects of the social network – of social contagion among friends – they say, yielded another 280,000 more, for a total of 340,000. In other words, Fowler said, the social network yielded an additional four voters for every one voter that was directly mobilized.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/09/120912152831.htm>

2012: Pledge to vote:

Use your social media network to increase voter turnout. Research shows it is an effective tool. MomsRising makes it easy. Take the pledge today!

<http://action.momsrising.org/signup/vote-pledge-2012/>

Congressional Races to Watch

NY a busy battleground of competitive House races

The Buffalo area seat won by Democrats **Kathy Hochul** in a special election upset last year is challenged by Republican **Chris Collins**. Hochul made national headlines by pioneering the strategy of casting the race as a referendum on the GOP plan to transform Medicare, authored by Rep. Paul Ryan, now the party's vice presidential candidate

New York — like California and Illinois — is critical to the battle for control of the House. New York lost two of its 29 seats in the House to redistricting for the 2010 Census population changes. Despite the GOP election gains in 2010, Democrats still overwhelmingly dominate — 21-8 — the state's House delegation.

Near Syracuse, Democrats hope **Dan Maffei** can win back the seat he lost to Republican **Ann Marie Buerkle** by just 648 votes in 2010. Buerkle, the only New York representative to score a perfect 100 on last year's American Conservative Union legislator rankings, is running in a newly drawn district with nearly even numbers of Republicans and Democrats.

In eastern New York, freshman **Rep. Chris Gibson**, who is being challenged by Democrat **Julian Schreibman**.

In northern New York, Democratic **Rep. Bill Owens** is defending his seat again against Republican businessman **Matt Doheny**, who narrowly lost in 2010 when a third Conservative Party candidate took thousands of votes.

On eastern Long Island, Republican businessman **Randy Altschuler** is trying unseat five-term incumbent Democratic **Rep. Timothy Bishop**. Altschuler came within 593 votes of defeating Bishop two years ago and this time, he has the third-party

Independence Party line, which was worth 7,370 votes for Bishop when he had the line in 2010.

In **Staten Island**, Republican freshman and former FBI agent **Michael Grimm** is facing a challenge from Democrat **Mark Murphy**.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/AP1d8d2b91be8448cca16ff7d9e1ba8277.html>

NY-24: Buerkle (R), Malffi (D) & Rozom (G) on Syracuse.com:

- ✦ U.S. Rep. **Ann Marie Buerkle**, Republican, 24th Congressional District
<http://preview.tinyurl.com/97t6any>
 - ✦ **Daniel Maffei**, Democratic, 24th Congressional District
<http://preview.tinyurl.com/8wkdsa6>
 - ✦ **Ursula Rozum**, Green Party, 24th Congressional District
<http://preview.tinyurl.com/8mnyl37>
-

Spotlight on NYS Races:

94th Assembly: Katz and Falk spar over women's issues, fracking

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

Watch the videos: <https://vimeo.com/50773271> & <http://vimeo.com/50773273>

Educating Voters:

Taking the Election to School: Making Education a Focus of the 2012 Election

Teachers College, Columbia University, will host "Taking the Election to School: Making Education a Focus of the 2012 Election," a debate between **Jon Schnur, education adviser to President Barack Obama**, and **Phil Handy, education adviser to Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney**, on Monday, October 15, at 7:00 pm Eastern.

Teachers College President Susan H. Fuhrman will moderate the debate, which will take place at Teachers College's Cowin Conference Center. The event will be webcast live by Education Week on edweek.org. A panel discussion featuring education journalists and other experts will immediately follow the debate. **Register free to view the live webcast** on edweek.org.

http://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/election2012/debate_on_education.html

New Paltz professor edits book on NY government

A SUNY New Paltz professor offered his expertise and helped create one of the most comprehensive books about New York state government to date. **Gerald Benjamin**, director of the Center for Research, Regional Engagement and Outreach, and professor of political science at the State University of New York at New Paltz, has edited the newly published book: "**The Oxford Handbook of New York State Government**." The

publisher described the book in a recent press release as an "unusually comprehensive, detailed and systematic study of this unique and influential state." The 1,056-page book examines five different topics pertaining to New York state government including; the state Constitution, state political processes, state governmental institutions, intergovernmental relations and management and policy areas. The book also covers health care policy, public safety, economic development, transportation policy energy policy and more.

<http://tinyurl.com/8qn7pk8>

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

Issue: Campaign Spending

Fair Elections Reform in New York

The Fair Elections campaign in New York is sponsoring a second training on Sat., Oct. 13 in Albany. Learn from seasoned professionals from national organizations about our big money problem, the best solution to put voters back in charge, and what you can do to help. Along with leaders in New York, Public Campaign President Nick Nyhart, and his 20 years of experience working on money in politics issues, will be there to lead the training.

Here's what the Albany training has in store:

- ♦ Learn the best ways to communicate about Fair Elections-style reform with the media, online, and with your friends and other potential supporters, as well as how to turn a good communications strategy into a great organizing event.
- ♦ Participate in a workshop to hone your organizing skills to help build the kind of grassroots support we need to pass Fair Elections.
- ♦ Become a super activist, and carve out a role in the campaign to pass Fair Elections in New York during the next legislative session.

Here are the details for Albany training:

WHEN: Saturday, October 13, 2012, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM EDT

WHERE: Citizen Action of New York (CANY) Building, 94 Central Avenue, Albany, NY

We have a chance to pass major Fair Elections reform in New York in the next legislative session, and we need a strong team of activists to put us over the top.

RSVP here: <https://my.citizenactionny.org/civcrm/event/register?reset=1&id=74>

Advertising on Television Rockets, as Super PACs Pour in the Dough: Total Spending \$5 Billion

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

Congress members back legislation that could benefit themselves, relatives

According to the WP study, 73 members of Congress who have sponsored or co-sponsored legislation in recent years that could benefit businesses or industries in which

either they or their family members are involved or invested. The findings emerge from an examination by The Pos of financial disclosure forms and public records for all 535 members of the House and Senate. The practice is both legal and permitted under the ethics rules that Congress has written for itself, which allow lawmakers to take actions that benefit themselves or their families except when they are the lone beneficiaries. The financial disclosure system Congress has implemented also does not require the legislators to identify potential conflicts at the time that they take official actions that intersect or overlap with their investments
<http://tinyurl.com/8mwj6q4>

Here's a disturbing story from NYS. Withholding campaign advertising dollars is being used as a weapon to shape news media coverage:

GOP Congressman Threatens Local News Station for Covering Debate

US Congressman Richard Hanna (R-NY) was seemingly displeased when he learned that a local television station in his district (the NY 22nd) was planning to air a debate he had refused to attend by allowing his challenger, Democrat Dan Lamb, to debate an empty chair. So what did Hanna do to rectify the situation? He called up Steve Merren, the vice president and general manager of Nextstar Broadcasting and parent the local affiliate WUTR, and threatened to pull all his campaign's ad dollars from the station. "He indicated to me that we would not be considered for his ad dollars and our level of cooperation in the future could be affected," wrote Merren an email to other station staff. Inadvertently, however, Merren also sent the email to members of Dan Lamb's campaign.
<http://tinyurl.com/9ejq3ex>

Issue: Unemployment

Budget 101: Unemployment Insurance

The basic premise of the social safety net is that help is available when people are most in need. One of the first actions Congress took when the economic crisis began was to create a temporary expansion of the unemployment insurance program that would provide additional weeks of benefits. In a normal economy, unemployment insurance — in the form of weekly checks — would be available for up to 26 weeks to people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Now, more than four years since that first extension, we are still dealing with a chronically high unemployment rate. Moreover, 40 percent of those who are unemployed have been without jobs for 27 weeks or longer, which means that they still need unemployment insurance beyond the initial 26 weeks. And at the same time, our country is facing a series of tax and budget changes that are slated to take effect at the beginning of January 2013 and are likely to impact the day-to-day lives of most Americans. One of the changes is the expiration of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program. The question, though, is whether lawmakers will once again extend the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program or let it expire. Unemployment insurance helps not only the recipient but also our economy as a whole. According to an analysis by the financial research organization Moody's Analytics,

for every dollar spent on unemployment insurance, \$1.61 goes back into the U.S. economy, which makes unemployment insurance the most successful form of government stimulus.

<http://blog-aauw.org/2012/10/03/budget-101-unemployment-insurance/>

Issue: Health Care & Contraception

Health Reform Provision Raises Privacy Concerns for Dependents Using Parents' Insurance

A provision of the Affordable Care Act that allows children to stay on their parents' health plans until age 26 could result in privacy breaches when dependents obtain reproductive health care and other services that should be confidential, according to an analysis of state laws by the Guttmacher Institute. More than three million young adults have gained insurance coverage through their parents' policies since the law took effect, according to HHS. The issue also could become more widespread as more young women gain access to no-cost preventive services, such as contraception and testing for STIs, under the ACA, experts say.

<http://www.guttmacher.org/index.html>

Obama, Romney debate sheds little light on healthcare issues

President Barack Obama and his Republican challenger Mitt Romney agree that the \$2.8 trillion U.S. healthcare system is broken, but neither candidate on Wednesday presented voters with a clear idea of how to fix it. Healthcare is a top issue in the November 6 election. The U.S. healthcare system is the world's most expensive, with spiraling cost growth that has been blamed for keeping U.S. wages down, eroding retirement security of future seniors and ballooning the contribution of public health spending to the federal debt and deficits. Government actuaries say healthcare spending is increasing at historically low rates of around 4 percent a year, but analysts attribute that mainly to the weak economy.

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

Increased Contraceptive Coverage Under Affordable Care Act Saves Public Funds, Study Finds

The economic and public health consequences of unintended pregnancies in the U.S. are well documented. Unintended pregnancies create an estimated \$5 billion annually in direct medical costs alone in the U.S., and health and other long-term outcomes for children of unintended pregnancies are worse than those of planned pregnancies. The Affordable Care Act provides an opportunity to prevent unintended pregnancies and produce cost-savings by significantly expanding health insurance coverage, including contraceptive coverage, to low-income U.S. residents. The expanded coverage "would prevent unintended pregnancies, while saving public insurers' money and improving quality of life," the researchers wrote. Specifically, over the course of five years, the expanded coverage would prevent 3,890 unplanned pregnancies among the study

population, saving state insurers \$489 per woman. The savings would total \$26 million over five years, with an increase of 2,288 QALYs for the study population. The coverage expansion would be cost-effective regardless of the contraceptive methods women used and the percentage of uninsured women who obtained coverage, the researchers noted. The results would persist unless 100% of uninsured women opted to self-pay for contraception. "With the economic pressures facing our nation and particularly the health sector of the economy, such potential savings should not be ignored," the researchers wrote.

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

Abortion Rates Plummet With Free Birth Control

Providing birth control to women at no cost substantially reduced unplanned pregnancies and cut abortion rates by 62 percent to 78 percent over the national rate, a new study shows. Among a range of birth control methods offered in the study, most women chose long-acting methods like intrauterine devices (IUDs) or implants, which have lower failure rates than commonly used birth control pills. In the United States, IUDs and implants have high up-front costs that sometimes aren't covered by health insurance, making these methods unaffordable for many women. Unintended pregnancies are a major problem in the United States. Each year, about 50 percent of all U.S. pregnancies are unplanned, far higher than in other developed countries. About half of these pregnancies result from women not using contraception and half from incorrect or irregular use. Among girls ages 15-19 who had access to free birth control provided in the study, the annual birth rate was 6.3 per 1,000, far below the U.S. rate of 34.3 per 1,000 for girls the same age. While birth control pills are the most commonly used contraceptive in the United States, their effectiveness hinges on women remembering to take a pill every day and having easy access to refills. Unintended pregnancy remains a major health problem in the United States, with higher proportions among teenagers and women with less education and lower economic status.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/10/121004200908.htm>

U.S. Health Law Promises Better Contraceptive Fit

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

Issue: Medicare

Your Medicare contributions don't begin to pay the tab

Medicare looms large in this presidential campaign, and chances are you see money deducted from every paycheck to fund Medicare. But while the bite may seem big, payroll taxes cover less than 40 percent of program costs. They've never paid for more than 68 percent of Medicare costs – that was in 1980 – and their share of Medicare revenue has been declining steadily for 30 years. In 2011 worker contributions brought in 38.1 percent of Medicare funding. The rest came from contributions from general federal revenues and premium payments. <http://tinyurl.com/8ejl25g>

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

AAUW will be releasing a new report, “**Graduating to a Pay Gap**,” on **Nov. 15**. But highlights from the report, “**Graduating to a Pay Gap: The Essential Guide**,” will be coming out **on October 18**, before Election Day. You may still have opportunities to ask question of candidates on this critical economic topic using the new report.

AAUW’s Lisa Goodnight: **Gap and Gown: Advancing the Gender Pay Gap Conversation**

<http://tinyurl.com/8tr66ub>

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month:

Marilyn Fitterman: **Rethink Domestic Violence**

Marilyn Fitterman is a former president of the National Organization for Women in New York State and current president of the organization’s East End chapter.

<http://tinyurl.com/8km7sgg>

AAUW Public Policy Intern Dani Nispel: **My Vote Is for Domestic Violence Victims**

<http://blog-aauw.org/2012/10/08/my-vote-is-for-domestic-violence-victims/>

AAUW’s LAF Director Holly Kearn: **Love Is Not Abuse**

<http://blog-aauw.org/2012/10/05/love-is-not-abuse>

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!