

# AAUW-NYS GOTV Counterpart Newsletter Get Out The Vote!



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## 2012 NYS Election Dates

<http://tinyurl.com/cl48a3k>

Thanks to St. Lawrence County Branch PP Chair Kathleen Stein for making this available to all of us! This includes the dates registration dates and voting information.

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**The OpEd Project** is social venture founded to increase the range of voices and quality of ideas we hear in the world. We have a nonprofit and a for-profit arm (the revenues from which support our nonprofit activities). We launched with support and seed funding from Echoing Green in 2008. Our starting goal is to increase the number of women thought leaders contributing to key commentary forums—which feed all other media, and drive thought leadership across all industries—to a tipping point. We envision a world in which the best ideas—regardless of where or whom they come from—will have a chance to be heard and shape society and the world.

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

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## Civic Disparities

### "Fault Lines in Our Democracy: Civic Knowledge, Voting, Behavior, and Civic Engagement in the United States"

A new study spotlights some troubling disparities in who is—and who is not—likely to cast a ballot in elections this November.

The new report published by the Educational Testing Service found that educational attainment alone was a significant factor in the likelihood of voting, and it was amplified when combined with income and age.

It finds, for instance, that young high school dropouts living in poverty are 23 times less likely to vote than older adults (55 to 64) with at least a master's degree and a family income of more than \$100,000 a year. The study describes this degree of stratification as "historically unprecedented."

## **Dismal Civics Knowledge Linked to Decline in Voting, Volunteering Among Young**

With the presidential election approaching, a new study from Educational Testing Service (ETS) shows that weak civics knowledge among young people is linked to less voting, less volunteering and greater distrust in government. The report calls for sustained efforts on the part of parents, the public, the educational system, and local and national leaders to address these fault lines in our democracy that threaten our nation's civic well-being.

Lower voter participation among growing segments of the population is rising just as the United States faces challenges of historic proportions — including a struggling economy, budget deficits, a growing national debt, health care issues, an aging infrastructure, global terrorism and a host of other problems. The report contends that our democracy is increasingly responding only to specific groups and populations. For instance:

- Older adults with the most education and the highest incomes were the most likely to vote.
- Nearly three-quarters of 55- to 74-year-olds voted in the most recent presidential election, compared to less than half of 18- to 24-year-olds.
- The voting rate for adults with advanced degrees is twice as high as the rate for high school dropouts (83 versus 39 percent).
- While 90 percent of those earning more than \$100,000 voted, only 51 percent of those earning less than \$20,000 did.
- Many nonvoters in recent national elections indicated they were not interested, didn't believe their vote mattered, or simply disliked the candidates.

Copies of Fault Lines in Our Democracy: Civic Knowledge, Voting Behavior, and Civic Engagement in the United States, can be downloaded from [www.ets.org/faultlines](http://www.ets.org/faultlines).  
[http://www.ets.org/newsroom/news\\_releases/decline\\_voting](http://www.ets.org/newsroom/news_releases/decline_voting)

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## **Spotlight on Registering Young Voters**

The League of Women Voters is working hard to help high school students register to vote. Are you interested in encouraging registration among young people in your community? Download their helpful **High School Voter Registration Training Manual** here:

<http://www.lwv.org/content/high-school-voter-registration-training-manual>

This comprehensive training manual provides a step-by-step guide to help you develop winning high school voter registration programs and encourage young people to register and vote. The guide comes complete with field-tested tips and a range of planning,

training, and outreach tools to help you succeed. You can partner with your local League, if you have one, or borrow their techniques and make it happen on your own.

Use the ideas here and adapt them for your local college campuses in the fall, as well.

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## **More GOTV Coalition Partners – Think Outside the Box!**

Many branches have local partners you have worked with for years on Voter Education drives. Here are some additional organizations you may not have thought about working with. If you know of others, please share their contact information!

### **Girls, Inc.** - <https://www.girlsinc-online.org/>

- Girls Incorporated is a nonprofit organization that inspires all girls to be strong, smart, and bold through a network of local organizations in the United States and Canada. With local roots dating to 1864 and national status in the U.S. since 1945, Girls Inc. responds to the changing needs of girls and their communities through research-based programs and advocacy that empower girls to reach their full potential and to understand, value, and assert their rights.
- Girls Inc informs policymakers about girls' needs locally and nationally. The organization educates the media about critical issues facing girls. In addition, the organization teaches girls how to advocate for themselves and their communities, using their voices to promote positive change.

There are 7 Girls, Inc. in NYS - [http://www.girlsinc.org/find/p7\\_newyork.html](http://www.girlsinc.org/find/p7_newyork.html)

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### **Girl Scouts of the USA** - <http://www.girlscouts.org/>

Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. Through GS advocacy efforts, we inform and educate key representatives of the government's legislative and executive branches about issues important to girls and Girl Scouting and lobby for increased program resources.

- Encourages girls' healthy living through combating Relational Aggression and promoting girl-positive media images;
- Ensures girls feel emotionally and physically safe;
- Promotes girls' involvement in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM);
- Develops financial literacy skills; and
- Gives a voice to girls in underserved communities.

There are seven GS Councils in NYS:

<http://www.girlscouts.org/councilfinder/results.asp?STATE=NY>

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### **The Junior League** - <http://www.ajli.org/>

Founded in 1901 by Mary Harriman, the Junior Leagues are charitable nonprofit organizations of women, developed as civic leaders, creating demonstrable community impact. The Association of Junior Leagues International, Inc. (AJLI) is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. Its purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. There are 21 Junior Leagues in New York State; you can search the homepage for links.

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### **Zonta International – New York State** - <http://www.zontadistrict2.org/Index.htm>

Founded in 1919, Zonta International is a global organization of executives and professionals working together to advance the status of women worldwide through service and advocacy. With more than 30,000 members belonging to more than 1,200 Zonta Clubs in 63 countries and geographic areas, Zontians all over the world volunteer their time, talents and support to local and international service projects, as well as scholarship programs aimed at fulfilling Zonta's mission and objectives.

- To improve the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women at the global and local level through service and advocacy.
- To work for the advancement of understanding, goodwill and peace through a world fellowship of executives in business and the professions.
- To promote justice and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- To be united internationally to foster high ethical standards, to implement service programs, and to provide mutual support and fellowship for members who serve their communities, their nations, and the world.

Zonta International, its districts and its clubs are nonsectarian and nonpartisan.

There are 21 clubs in District 2, comprising NYS and part of Canada:

<http://www.zontadistrict2.org/districticlublist2.htm>

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### **AAUW's Community Coalitions Manual (2000)**

A how-to guide to help local groups establish and sustain effective coalition-based programs. Look at Chapter 10 for the ORGANIZATION RESOURCE LIST

<http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/communityCoalitionsManual.pdf>

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### **Census QuickFacts for New York State**

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36000.html>

QuickFacts tables are summary profiles showing frequently requested data items from various Census Bureau programs. Profiles are available for the nation, states, counties, and places. Using QuickFacts is a great way to get a snap shot of where you live and may help formulate questions for candidates.

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## LEARN ABOUT HOW NYS GOVERNMENT WORKS!

Having been a professor for over 34 years, St. Lawrence University Munsil Professor of Government Emeritus Robert N. Wells Jr. says that people in New York State don't know enough about the state's governmental organization and functions. So Wells, about to finish up several terms as the mayor of Canton, has written a book on the subject and put it online, making it widely accessible.

Wells retired from teaching full-time in 1999, and says, "Having taught state and local government courses over the years, I have become quite aware that the public's understanding of our state government organization and functions is quite low." In response, he researched and wrote **New York State Government and Politics in a Nutshell: A Citizen's Primer**, which is available online at [www.stlawu.edu/wells](http://www.stlawu.edu/wells).

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### Open State Senate Seat

**State Senator Thomas K. Duane** from **Senate District 29** (from the Upper West Side to Greenwich Village, and across to the East Village) will not run for election to the seat he has held for nearly 14 years. **The NYS Primary is Sept. 13.**

Read more: **Champion of Gay Rights to Leave New York State Senate**  
<http://tinyurl.com/7mymatj>

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### Congressional Districts - 112th Congress

<http://nationalatlas.gov/printable/congress.html#ny>

The National Atlas offers simple maps of each District of the 112th Congress (January 2011-January 2013). These maps of the individual districts cover half of an 8.5- by 11-inch paper when printed. Designed for easy reference, they show the Congressional District overlaid on top of State and county boundaries along with interstate and US highways, selected streams and waterbodies, and major cities. The maps print well using your home or office printer.

These are the current maps being used in NYS. In January, the new maps will be available for the new districts. This is confusing, because although we will be voting in the Primary on June 26 for candidates who will appear on the ballot for the new Congressional Districts, we're still being represented under the current maps until the end of the year.

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

For further reading....

## Incumbent primary losses begin to mount, may approach record

<http://tinyurl.com/75pa9ou>

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Looking for an issue to connect with students on a campus near you? Student loan debt is a critical one and one with huge public policy and economic considerations for the next generation. A great way to start a dialog in the fall when college reconvenes. Plan an event now!

## The Human Face of Student Debt: A Conversation With the Filmmakers of 'Default'

<http://www.alternet.org/story/155640/>

- Unlike other types of debt (like gambling debts, for instance), student loan debt cannot be discharged in bankruptcy, leaving many former students chained for life to loans they have little hope of paying off. *Default* offers a rare inside look at these emotional stories, detailing how loans can balloon into multiples of what students originally borrow to go to college and the troubling impact of that debt over time.
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## Groups benefit from campaigns' focus on women's issues

Women's groups on both sides of the political spectrum are reaping the benefit of the campaign-season focus on women's issues, and say they have the opposing side to thank for the windfall.

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/story/2012-06-06/>

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## Birth control fight is still being fought

Thursday, June 7, marked the 47th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision to make birth control legal in the United States, but the case is still being argued. But, this right

to privacy was decisively established by the Supreme Court nearly a half-century ago, and despite the persistent echo reverberating on both sides of the argument, the *Griswold v. Connecticut* ruling holds. Today's nearly universal practice of birth control speaks for itself as a force for good, and justly serves as its own eloquent proof.

<http://tinyurl.com/75wdgpc>

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Women know what's at stake for women in 2012. This is an issue that will resonate on college campuses, for women and men alike!

**Poll: 42% Of Women Take Action In Response To Contraception Debates**

<http://tinyurl.com/6uvzsaj>

Who was polled for this one?

**Poll: Little interest in women's issues on the campaign trail**

<http://tinyurl.com/78s3e99>

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Finding successful ways to address teen pregnancy is a critical issue.

**Fighting US's worst teen pregnancy rate in Miss.**

<http://tinyurl.com/6qcukmq>

**Intimate Partner Violence Linked to Contraceptive Method Changes, Pregnancy Risk, Study Finds**

About 25% of U.S. women experience intimate partner violence at some point in the lives, which can affect their reproductive health in several ways. Heidi Collins Fantasia of the University of Massachusetts-Lowell and colleagues examined the medical records of 2,000 women of reproductive age, finding that women who had experienced partner violence reported more contraceptive method changes in the previous year and a greater risk for pregnancy, compared with women who had not experienced partner violence.

<http://tinyurl.com/7oytygw>

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Money and outside influence is pouring into elections all over the place!

**Outside Advocacy Groups Target Local School Board Elections**

<http://tinyurl.com/7glqrgt>

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**'Glass Escalators' Move Pink-Collar Guys Ahead**

<http://tinyurl.com/6v6l3jo>

As men move into what used to be female territory, they are doing very well; better than women in fact. In the [20 most common occupations](#) for women, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Women's Policy Research, men out-earn women in all but two. For example, the median weekly earnings for female social workers is \$798, while for men it is \$902.

Our labor market is so sex-segregated that almost 30 percent of full-time female employees work in only 10 occupations:

- Secretaries and administrative assistants
- Elementary and middle school teachers
- Nursing, psychiatric and home health aides
- Customer service representatives
- First-line supervisors/managers of retail sales workers
- Cashiers
- First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative workers
- Receptionists and information clerks
- Accountants and auditors
- Secretaries and administrative assistants.



In the past, women’s rights activists pushed for equal pay for equal work, but the reality of a stubbornly sex-segregated work force has turned the focus to “comparable work” so pay parities could be considered between different sorts of work, such as secretarial and janitorial.

Today we face the prospect of a larger influx of men crowding out female co-workers, enjoying favorable treatment and further widening the wage gap.

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### **New economy fallout – ‘wage theft’ from paychecks**

- Wage theft is the practice of underpaying or not paying workers for their labor. The problem reflects a changing economy in which low-wage work has increased, more companies try to cut labor costs to stay afloat in a sour business climate, and fewer workers belong to unions that might protect them. At the same time, budget-cutting state and federal governments do not enforce wage laws as aggressively as they once did.
- Millions of workers are losing pay, with the majority in low-income service industries such as fast food, domestic work, agriculture, retail, hotel and tourism and home health care. It’s also a big problem in the warehousing and construction industries, which employ large numbers of recent immigrants and undocumented workers, who are reluctant to complain, fearing scrutiny of their immigration status.

<http://tinyurl.com/cz8shyq>

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Looking for another issue to connect AAUW to students on your college campuses to help GOTV? This is a critical economic issue for many women in college, particularly the non-traditional student.

### **Single Student Parents Have Higher Debt Burden**

<http://tinyurl.com/863weey>





Recent [analysis](#) of federal government data by IWPR finds that postsecondary students who are single parents with dependent children (representing nearly 12 percent of college students) have less money to contribute to the cost of college, have much greater unmet need after receiving financial aid, and amass higher levels of student debt than other students. For more information on student parents, please visit the IWPR [Student Parent Success Initiative](#). <http://tinyurl.com/7rcd8bw>

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### **Study: Better-educated citizens improve government by complaining more**

It doesn't matter whether it's a dictatorship or a democracy: better-educated citizens tend to have a better government, according to a new paper (<http://www.nber.org/papers/w18119>) from the National Bureau of Economic Research. Corruption, the study finds, tends to fall in places with higher levels of education, regardless of whether the country has a free media or actively combats corruption. And researchers have pinpointed one reason why: Educated people are more likely to complain about official misconduct and report crimes, even in autocratic regimes: As education levels in a country rise, so do complaints when officials misbehave, raising the expected costs of misconduct and thus encouraging officials to follow the rules — to ask for fewer bribes, to avoid abusing people, to show up to work. Newly assembled individual-level survey data from the World Justice Project show that, within countries, better educated people are more likely to report official misconduct...Citizen complaints might thus be an operative mechanism that explains the link between education and the quality of government.

<http://tinyurl.com/6plrh77>

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### **Politics is the great divider in United States**

<http://tinyurl.com/7a3t3bf>

- Andrew Kohut, who directed the study, said two things are notable. One is that, “by and large, values haven’t changed. The other is that political identity has eclipsed these other factors” such as race and class as the biggest sources of division. “The only thing that’s changed is the extent to which Republicans and Democrats go to opposite sides of the room on most issues.”
- Citing data from the Gallup organization, the Pew study states that it is probably safe to say that there are more independents than at any time in the past 75 years.
- Polarization in Washington is not just politicians behaving badly. It reflects what is happening around the country. Partisanship has grown dramatically and shows no sign of abating in the near future.