

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



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## **AAUW's Updated Branch Public Policy Chair Manual Now Available**

The Branch Public Policy Chair online manual is now updated to our 2012 edition! **Our manual includes strategies for community outreach, congressional outreach, media visibility, voter education efforts, and get-out-the-vote mobilization strategies.** Read the manual if you are currently serving as a public policy chair, if you are interested in becoming a chair, or if you want more information about local branches' public policy strategies!

[http://www.aauw.org/member\\_center/tools/upload/BPPC1.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/member_center/tools/upload/BPPC1.pdf)

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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!

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## **AAUW Action Fund Releases It's My Vote Campaign Update**

The AAUW Action Fund's **It's My Vote Campaign Update** will bring you the latest news, resources, and ideas from the It's My Vote: I Will Be Heard voter education and turnout campaign. The campaign represents an unprecedented investment in making women's voices heard in the 2012 election. Share the news of your good works for inclusion in the biweekly Campaign Update, or read for ideas on how to engage millennial women and to create lifelong voting habits.

<http://www.aauwaction.org/my-vote/update/>

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## **AAUW-NYS Summer Leadership Conference Report**

At AAUW New York's Summer Leadership Conference in Cazenovia, **AAUW's State Grassroots Advocacy Manager, Kimberly Fountain**, held a training session about our

It's My Vote campaign. This well-attended event was the first non-impact grant state "get out the vote" training. Public Policy Directors throughout the state of NY agreed to make the It's My Vote campaign a priority, and have already participated in various voter registration drives.

Here is a copy of the **It's My Vote PowerPoint** presentation she made for us for a quick overview of the campaign! <http://tinyurl.com/c8vxzln>

She passed out copies of the **It's My Vote: I Will Be Heard Postcards!** AAUW produced It's My Vote postcards to encourage and remind our members to vote! Each postcard contains a voting pledge and issue interest section. Members should fill out their postcards as soon as possible, and in a couple months when the elections are right around the corner, branches will send each member their previously completed postcard, reminding them to vote! **If your branch is interested in receiving postcards to distribute to members, please email [Votered@aauw.org](mailto:Votered@aauw.org).**

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Donna Seymour, AAUW-NYS Public Policy Director, created a PowerPoint presentation for the Summer Conference at Cazenovia with much valuable information on **"Get Out the Vote."** Take a look to get up to speed on the campaign and please feel free to use this for branch or district GOTV action. <http://tinyurl.com/c9fpsh7>

If you missed previous issues of the **GOTV Newsletters**, you will find them archived on this page: [http://www.aauw-nys.org/pp\\_gotv.htm](http://www.aauw-nys.org/pp_gotv.htm).

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## Campaign War Chests Overflow In Albany

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo already has a massive campaign fund two years before he runs again, while Senate and Assembly majorities also have strong fundraising advantages. Cuomo reports \$19.3 million in his account, after raising \$5.7 million in the last six months from his usual sources of real estate developers and big corporations. In 2010, he spent just over \$20 million to win the office, and now he has the power of incumbency to disperse state money and grab media exposure.

In the races for 213 legislative seats this fall, money for staffing and reaching voters is critical for challengers. In the fight for control of the Senate, now held by Republicans, GOP campaigns have a total of \$20.3 million compared to the Democrats' \$3.8 million. <http://tinyurl.com/cbkflx2>

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## Preparing for Candidate Forums

If you are working on hosting candidate forums for Congressional races, here are a couple of good partner organization resources to look for questions from:

**From AARP:**

Before you cast your vote on Nov. 6, make sure you know where candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate and presidency stand on these three issues:

1. How would you protect Social Security for today’s seniors and strengthen it for future generations?
2. How would you put Medicare on stronger financial ground and protect today’s seniors and future retirees from the burden of rising health costs?
3. How would you help Americans build a financial nest egg for their retirement?

<http://tinyurl.com/bs6mnf8>

**YWCA’s 15 Issue that Matter**

This year, with so many critical issues at stake, it's more important than ever that voters participate. Women voters especially need to be fully engaged to ensure that women’s voices and women’s priorities are heard. Visit our issue guide to become familiar with important issues including Social Security and health care that will be discussed during the election and key questions you can ask candidates running for office.

- |                                     |                                |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Affirmative Action               | 8. Judicial Nominations        |
| 2. Budgetary Policy                 | 9. Minimum Wage                |
| 3. Childcare and Early Education    | 10. Poverty and Welfare Reform |
| 4. Equal Pay                        | 11. Social Security            |
| 5. Hate Crimes                      | 12. Tax Policy                 |
| 6. Health Care                      | 13. Victims of Crime Act Fund  |
| 7. Immigration and Immigrant Rights | 14. Violence Against Women     |
|                                     | 15. Voter Protection           |

<http://tinyurl.com/crwykba>

**New York City Redistricting**

Drawing the New York City Council district lines has begun. Historically, New York City's redistricting process is more open and responsive to the community than New York State's famously closed redistricting procedure. New York City Council districts will be redrawn by a fifteen member Districting Commission established under provisions of the City Charter. On July 17th, the Commission held their first public meeting to handle some administrative details, including announcing the dates for citywide public hearing.

For more details and to register to testify, click here:

<http://tinyurl.com/czf7l8w>.

- ◆ Aug 13 – Brooklyn
- ◆ Aug 16 – Manhattan
- ◆ Aug 20 - Staten Island
- ◆ Aug 21 – Queens
- ◆ Aug 23 - Bronx



Common Cause/NY is coordinating a program of public education and engagement regarding New York City redistricting. The program seeks to provide diverse communities throughout the five boroughs with the tools and knowledge necessary to participate in local redistricting for New York City. The education program is coordinated to coincide with the start of public hearings.

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Counting Votes 2012: A State by State Look at Election Preparedness  
NYS is one of 6 states ranked as Good in this new report from Common Cause!  
<http://www.countingvotes.org/>

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

Issue: Education

Why **college access and affordability** are critical to American competitiveness.

### Global Education Shifts

China and India are expanding their influence in the higher education arena -- according to a new report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, about 40 percent of young postsecondary degree-holders in leading countries will come from China and India by 2020. The United States and European Union countries will produce about 25 percent. The report, which is part of the organization's series Education Indicators in Focus, looked at higher education graduates between the ages of 25 and 34 in OECD and Group of Twenty member countries -- 42 countries total. The gap between China and the United States -- the two leading producers of graduates in 2010, with 18 and 14 percent, respectively -- will grow even larger by 2020. China is expected to produce 29 percent of all higher education graduates studied in the report, and the United States is expected to produce 11 percent of all those graduates. India, which produced 11 percent of graduates in 2010, is expected to overtake the United States and produce 12 percent of the share of graduates by the end of this decade.

<http://tinyurl.com/cwmxluc>

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Issue: Contraception

Why contraception coverage in the **Affordable Health Care Act** is so important!

### More Than a Third of Births 'Unintended': CDC

More than a third of births in the United States stem from unintended pregnancies, a number that's remained steady in the United States from 1982 to 2010, a new government report indicates. The make-up of women having these births, however, has shifted over time from white to Hispanic and to those in their teens and 20s, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "We have made no progress since 1982 in reducing the percentage of births that are unintended," said report author

William Mosher, a statistician at CDC's National Center for Health Statistics. "It was 37 percent in 1982, and it's still 37 percent."

In 2008, of the roughly 4.2 million births, 1.6 million were unintended, 600,000 were unwanted, another 600,000 were mistimed by more than two years and 400,000 were mistimed by less than two years, according to Mosher. "There was only one group where we made some progress and that is among white married women," Mosher said. "But, they account for a smaller and smaller proportion of the births." In 1982, white women accounted for 66 percent of all births. In 2006-2010 they accounted for 43 percent, Mosher noted. "More unmarried women and more particularly more Hispanic women account for more of the births these days than 30 years ago," he said. In 2002, 86 percent of intended births were to women with college educations, compared with 58 percent to women with less than a high school education, according to the report.

Moreover, women who have unintended births tend to be poorer, Mosher said. According to the report, 35 percent of intended births were paid for by Medicaid, compared with 65 percent of unintended births. And Medicaid paid for 75 percent of births for women who had births more than two years before they intended. "That's an indicator that she wasn't ready," Mosher said. "She wanted to finish high school, college, job training or get married before she had a baby." Unintended births are costly. Mosher noted that medical care for unintended pregnancy costs \$11 billion a year, much of which are Medicaid dollars. Major differences also exist in intended and unintended births by age, Mosher said. "For teenage mothers, 23 percent of their births are intended -- that means that 77 percent are not," he said. "If teens had only the births they intend we would have one of the lowest teen birth rates in the world -- we don't," he said.

For women aged 20 to 24, only half of their births are intended, Mosher added. "It's not until 25 and older that three-fourths of births are intended," he said. There are also striking differences in intended and unintended births based on marriage, Mosher said. For example, 77 percent of births to married women are intended, 49 percent of births to unmarried women living with a partner are intended, but only 33 percent of births to single women without partners are intended, he said. Unintended births are both a public health and social problem, he said. "If all births in the U.S. were intended there would be very few teen births, there would be much fewer births to unmarried women, there would be much fewer births to 20- to 24-year-olds," Mosher said. "Parenthood would be concentrated to married and cohabiting women 25 to about 39."

<http://consumer.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=666976>

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## Issue: Health Care Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA)

This is why we must be so vigilant to inform voters about the new Health Care Law which will be a major target during the fall campaigns.

### **Health reform: Women may be winners**

U.S. women may be the big winners when it comes to healthcare reform, not only those who are uninsured, but those with insurance, researchers say. The report by the Commonwealth Fund, a U.S. non-profit group that conducts independent research on health policy, estimated **once fully implemented, the Affordable Care Act would cover nearly all women, reducing the uninsured rate among women from 20 percent to 8 percent.**

- ♦ Twenty percent of U.S. women -- 18.7 million -- ages 19-64 were uninsured in 2010, up from 15 percent -- 12.8 million -- in 2000, the report found.
- ♦ Twenty-six percent of U.S. women with health insurance ages 19-64 had medical bill problems from 2009 to 2010, 39 percent spent \$1,000 or more on out-of-pocket medical costs and 43 percent said they went without recommended care, skipped seeing a doctor when they were sick, or failed to fill prescriptions because of cost, the report found.
- ♦ Fifty-two of U.S. women with insurance said they were confident they would be able to afford the healthcare they need if they became seriously ill.
- ♦ Fifty-one percent of uninsured U.S. women had a problem paying medical bills and 77 percent went without needed healthcare due to cost, the report said.

In 2011, an estimated 20.4 million women benefited from provisions already implemented by the Affordable Care Act requiring all private insurance plans to provide preventive services such as screening for cervical, breast, and colon cancer; cholesterol checks; and osteoporosis and chlamydia screening without a co-pay or deductible charge. Beginning in August, private insurance plans will cover an additional set of preventive services tailored specifically for women, including family planning services without cost to them.

<http://tinyurl.com/chn4v2o>

### **Study: Expanded Medicaid saves lives**

**States with Medicaid expansions were associated with a 6.1 percent decline in deaths, or about 2,840 per year for every 500,000 U.S. adults,** researchers say. Mortality rates in New York, Maine and Arizona were compared five years before and after the Medicaid expansions, and also compared with those of four neighboring states -- Pennsylvania, Nevada, New Mexico and New Hampshire -- that had no Medicaid expansion. States are currently deciding whether to expand Medicaid in a similar fashion by 2014 under the Affordable Care Act.

<http://tinyurl.com/bp5olv5>

### **New York far ahead creating health insurance exchange**

Politics aside, work on creating a health insurance exchange in New York is moving forward. **The state department of health has already gotten \$88 million from the federal government to provide a model of how states can create these new health insurance markets. Much of that money is being used to improve New York's information technology,** to make it simple and convenient for people to choose and enroll in health plans.

Danielle Holahan is the project director of New York's health exchange planning. She says that New York is doing great. and said, "We describe [the health insurance exchange] as an organized marketplace where consumers and small businesses will go on their own or either with a trusted advisor where they can easily compare their health plan options on issues like comparing benefits or the services and the price and the quality of the plans offered there. They can easily enroll in qualified health plans and, importantly, gain access to the federal tax credits that are available only through these exchanges starting in 2014."

According to Holahan, the federal tax credits are going to help people well above the poverty line. A single adult making \$45,000 a year and a family of four making \$92,000 a year will both qualify for federal assistance when purchasing health insurance through the exchange. According to Holahan, the department of health has been meeting with insurance companies, health care providers, consumers and others over the past year.

The state's goal is to enroll more than a million New Yorkers in the health exchange: about 600,000 individuals and 450,000 small businesses. Holahan says that it will also be easier than the current system, and that small employers in New York currently have 15,000 health insurance products to consider.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will review the state's progress this fall and enrollment is scheduled to begin in October 2013. The actual healthcare coverage will start in January 2014. Many states have expressed concerns about the deadline, but Holahan says that she is confident that New York will be ready on time. <http://tinyurl.com/d8t9gy5>

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## Issue: Diversity

It is only when legislatures reflect the makeup of American society that they will truly be representative.

### **Record Number of Openly Gay Candidates Running**

A record number of openly gay candidates are running for Congress. The contenders all say that their sexual orientation is pretty much a nonissue on the campaign trail, Roll Call's Joshua Miller reports.

"No one cares," said Kyrsten Sinema, who is openly bisexual and a top candidate in the Democratic primary in Arizona's 9th district. "It's about my history of work in the district. ... They don't care three straws about the other stuff."

Other openly gay challenger candidates with a real shot of coming to Congress include: Sean Patrick Maloney, taking on freshman Rep. Nan Hayworth (R) in New York's 18th district; Mark Pocan (D), running in Wisconsin's open 2nd district; Mark Takano (D),



running for California's new 41st district; and Richard Tisei (R), taking on Rep. John Tierney (D) in Massachusetts' 6th district.

There are at least four other openly gay Congressional candidates this year, according to a count from the pro-LGBT-equality Human Rights Campaign, but all are long shots in states such as Idaho.

<http://tinyurl.com/d74u623>

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## Spotlight on Legislation:

### **Understanding the True Cost of College Act, S. 3244**

According to NYS's junior Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, this legislation would establish a uniform set of terminology on financial aid forms, allowing consumers to easily compare the costs of higher education across all institutions, and gain a clear understanding of the long-term financial obligations before committing to a financial aid package for a college or university.

Specifically, the Understanding the True Cost of College Act would:

- ♦ Require institutions of higher education to use a uniform financial aid award letter.
- ♦ Call on the Department of Education to work with colleges, consumer groups, students, and school guidance counselors to develop standard definitions of various financial aid terms for use in the uniform financial aid award letters.
- ♦ Establish basic minimums of information that must be included on page one of the uniform financial aid award letters, including: cost of attendance; grant aid; the net amount a student is responsible for paying after subtracting grant aid; work study assistance; eligible amounts of federal student loans; expected federal loan monthly repayment amounts; and disclosures related to private loans
- ♦ Require the Department of Education to establish a process to consumer test the uniform financial aid award letter and use the results from the consumer testing in the final development of the uniform financial aid award letter.
- ♦ Require all institutions of higher education which receive federal financial assistance to use the proposed form to make any offers of financial aid to students.

By way of illustration about the stranglehold college debt has on students, here is an example from my home county:

**Class of 2009-2010 at Clarkson, St. Lawrence and SUNY Potsdam has \$250 million in student loan debt, report shows** <http://tinyurl.com/cqbc6xe>

A report from the Institute for College Access & Success (<http://www.ticas.org/>) says that **students enrolled in the 2009-2010 school year at three of Canton and**



Potsdam's four institutions of higher learning have nearly a quarter of a billion dollars in student loan debt. <http://www.projectonstudentdebt.org/>

The report shows more than one million students enrolled in higher education across New York State as of the 2009-2010 school year will amass an estimated average of more than \$26,000 per student in debt on student loans, according to the web site [www.college-insight.org](http://www.college-insight.org).

Use your calculator to figure out what the student load debt is for the colleges near you, and then hold a local program this fall to discuss this issue with young voters, who have a huge stake in what the next Congress will do about the crippling debt load.

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**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 Voices Project Update

The latest OpEd flurry for the Voices Project has focused on Title IX and the Olympics:

- ♦ Roberta Guise: "**Women continue to fight for equal access in sports**" in the Sacramento Bee - <http://bit.ly/LRwtip>
- ♦ Donna Seymour: "**Gold medal for gender equity**" in the Albany Times Union - <http://tinyurl.com/cb3buth>
- ♦ Laura Hoopes: "**Title IX is a bedrock for female Olympians**" in the Los Angeles Daily News - <http://tinyurl.com/c9dkbb5>