

AAUW-NYS GOTV Counterpart Newsletter Get Out The Vote!



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

The Congressional Voting Record Now Available

The **AAUW Action Fund's Congressional Voting Record** (CVR) is available to be ordered. Email VoterEd@aauw.org for free copies of this guide to senators' and representatives' positions on AAUW Action Fund priority issues. Please include details of your event or why you need CVRs in the email. They are great handouts at community forums, branch meetings, and whenever you are doing voter education activities.

You can download the latest edition CVR from the <http://www.aauwaction.org> website to create a localized Action Guide, as well. Go to:
<http://www.aauwaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/CVR112.pdf>

Or, use the **2-page sheet** we modified for NYS member of Congress. See the records for our **NYS legislators in the 112th Congress**: <http://tinyurl.com/cncqf8h>

In addition, **Cortland Branch Public Policy Chair Ellen Wright** has created a very useful **2-page summary of the legislation** along with the details about how each legislator voted in each congressional district. It is very easy personalize to use this summary for your own district. Page one has the votes taken by our senators; page two the votes or positions taken by specific house member. Email me (seymour6985@verizon.net) for a copy and instructions on how to modify it for your use as a voter education handout. **Here is a sample for NYS-23**: <http://tinyurl.com/d8bbhvm> **Thanks, Ellen!**

Take one along with you as you make your **Town Hall** visits this summer. AAUW has a terrific article on how and why to make a visit. Be sure to sign up for **AAUW Dialog** – it is a once daily blog posting with excellent information and opinions on current issues and the **It's My Vote Campaign**.

<http://blog-aauw.org/2012/08/06/why-you-should-attend-a-town-hall/>

Be sure to ask your candidates what they will do to make college more affordable!

New Report Finds Students Unaware of Loan Details, and More Women Borrowers

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) recently published a report exposing data about private student loans. The report found that many students receiving private loans may not fully understand the terms of the private loans, nor do they know about cheaper federal student loan programs. An analysis of the gender dynamics of loan usage revealed that a higher proportion of women receive both private and federal loans, although the difference is small (11 percent of women vs. 10 percent of men). There is no reported difference between the proportion of men and women using only private student loans. The report concluded, unsurprisingly, that many borrowers are struggling to repay private student loans.

http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201207_cfpb_Reports_Private-Student-Loans.pdf

The Legislative Gazette is your political newspaper in Albany, New York. The Gazette brings you in-depth coverage each week of the New York State Legislature, Executive Branch and State Agencies. Here you will find the NYS legislative calendar session and NYS legislative member directory, updated daily. Sign up for weekly issues on-line.

<http://www.legislativegazette.com/>

One story you can read in the LG is:

Overwhelming opposition to legislators' pay raise

July 26, 2012 - New Yorkers feel strongly against a pay raise for state legislators, a Quinnipiac University

released Thursday poll says. Released on July 26, the poll found that voters across the state oppose a pay raise 80 to 16 percent, or by a 5-to-1 margin. Opposition is over 70 percent in every individual region of the state, except in households with an income over \$250,000, where opposition is 53 to 45 percent.

<http://tinyurl.com/cglt3r5>



Fact Sheets: Why Women Should Vote

Writing a letter to the editor or an OpEd? You will find these guides a handy place to get facts to back up your articles and your opinions are your educate voters.

When Women Vote, Leaders Listen - Our government makes decisions every day that affect the lives of women and their families. By voting, women can make sure that our leaders in Washington focus on women's priorities and take the needs of women and their families into account.

- ♦ To Protect Social Security
- ♦ To Get Single Mothers the Support They Need
- ♦ To Make Sure Women Can Make Their Own Reproductive Health Care Decisions
- ♦ To Make Sure That Courts Protect Women’s Legal Rights
- ♦ To Promote Access to Health Care and Health Insurance
- ♦ Why Women Should Vote: To Obtain Equal Pay And Job Opportunities
- ♦ To Ensure Everyone Gets A Good Education
- ♦ To Make the Economy Work for Women and Families

Available from the **National Women’s Law Center** on-line:

<http://www.nwlc.org/our-issues/a-women's-agenda/voter-education>

Get Your Facts Right – 6 Fact Checking Websites That Help You Know The Truth

The Internet has been called “The Information Super Highway” and rightly so. It is now the epicenter of breaking news and the free flowing information has brought the world and the people closer and made us aware of other cultures and traditions. But all this comes with a flipside.

The amount of misinformation that is spread is staggering. It is spread mainly via Websites, Social Networks and Email. The Hot Topics for such Misinformation are generally Politics, Government Policies, Religion and various Scams and Hoaxes. Some websites have taken up the task of spreading awareness against rumors by presenting evidence and hard facts. Let’s look at some of the best websites that help us distinguish between the truth and rumors.

<http://tinyurl.com/38dj5rn>

More GOTV Coalition Partners:

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

National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. - The Advocate for the Health, Education, and Economic Empowerment of Black Women
 NCBW consists of thousands of progressive women of African descent who represent 60 chapters in 25 states and the District of Columbia and whose commitment to gender equity and socioeconomic advancement drives meaningful change to benefit women of color. Its mission is to advocate on behalf of women of color through national and local actions and strategic alliances that promote the NCBW agenda on leadership development and gender equity in the areas of health, education and economic empowerment.

- ♦ **100 Black Women – Manhattan Chapter** - <http://www.ncbwmanhattan.org>
 - ♦ **100 Black Women – Suffolk County** - <http://www.ncbwsc.org>
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Coalition of Labor Union Women

The Coalition of Labor Union Women is America's only national organization for union women. Formed in 1974, CLUW is a nonpartisan organization within the union movement. The primary mission of CLUW is to unify all union women in a viable organization to determine our common problems and concerns and to develop action programs within the framework of our unions to deal effectively with our objectives.

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

In New York State, CLUW Chapters are located in:

Kate Mullany CLUW (Albany)

Holly Clark (AFT), President

Box 148

West Lebanon, NY 12195

K.M.CLUW@gmail.com

New York City Chapter

Carmen Charles (AFSCME), Chapter President

charlescarmen@ymail.com

Northwest NY (Buffalo) Chapter

Angela Blue (AFSCME), President

ablue@nysaflcio.org

NACW: National Association for Commissions of Women

NACW is the national advocate for government commissions for women which holds a unique and positive position for women's equity and justice and touches millions of women, playing a significant role in national policy and legislative development. In NYS, the only NACW is in Erie County:

Erie County Commission on the Status of Women

95 Franklin Street, Room 1254

Buffalo, NY 14202-3904

Eras Bechakas, Chair

Email: csw@erie.gov

Web: csw.erie.gov

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

Issue: Education

The NYS Governor's Education Reform Commission

School advocates gearing up for Lake Placid meeting

Members of the governor's new Education Reform Commission likely will get an earful when they travel to Lake Placid this month to hear from school officials, parents, students and other north country residents concerned about state funding for public schools and other issues. As part of a series of regional public meetings, the 20-member commission is scheduled to gather input from Northern New York from 1 to 4 pm Aug. 28 at the Lake Placid Convention Center, 2608 Main St. Tedra L. Cobb, leader of a Canton-based ad hoc group advocating for more equitable school funding, said she's been informed that only people who submit comments ahead of time will be allowed to speak that day. She's encouraging parents, students and others to submit their comments to the website: www.governor.ny.gov/webform/education. "My goal is to deluge them with comments," Ms. Cobb said. "We're concerned about the state aid formula, and we want that changed. They should be funding schools more equitably and they need to reinstate the funding that has been cut to schools. We're staying on that message." Thomas R. Burns, superintendent of St. Lawrence Board of Cooperative Educational Services, said he'll attend the session. Mr. Burns said the area's superintendents met Wednesday with state Education Commissioner John B. King Jr. Compared with other states, Mr. Burns said, New York has a poor record of equally distributing state funding for education and the situation is worsening. Making sure the state maintains its funding commitment to prekindergarten programs is another priority, Mr. Burns said. "The research is startling in terms of the benefits of prekindergarten," he said. It's important for students to participate because they're effective at explaining how budget cuts affect their education. Students may submit their comments at <http://stuvoice.org>. The commission has held a meeting in Binghamton and is scheduled to meet Aug. 14 at LeMoyne College, Syracuse. Established by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo in April, the Education Reform Commission is charged with examining the structure and operation of the state's education system.

<http://www.mpcourier.com/article/20120807/NEWS05/708079861/-1/dco01>

Want to Fix Education Policy? Ask the Students How

In suits and ties, they're spending the summer in making speeches before thousands of people, bolstering their online presence, and pushing for changes to state governance. But some of them aren't even old enough to vote. A handful of New York State high school students have banded together to create Student Voice, an organization devoted to empowering students. Their first project is to get representation on Gov. Andrew Cuomo's education reform commission, where they say students are imperative to conversations about teacher evaluations and technology policy. Two of the three students behind Student Voice come from Long Island high schools. The third, Matthew Resnick, is a senior at Manhattan's Eleanor Roosevelt High School. The organization started this spring when Malamed realized that through the internet, he could connect to

hundreds of other peers interested in education policy. That's how he met Resnick and Nikhil Goyal, a senior at Syosset High School, who helped him launch the group. In mid-May, Malamed organized a Twitter chat with the hashtag #StuVoice. He expected 10 or 15 students to participate, but the numbers were much larger, he said, and adults joined in as well. The experience made Malamed realize that **students needed a central outlet to share their ideas about education, and their stories from the ground, and [StuVoice.org](http://www.stuvoice.org) was born.** The site formally launched on Tuesday with short essays from high school and college students from across the country. In the meantime, he began to collaborate with Resnick and Goyal on Student Voice's big project — getting student representation on the New York Education Reform Commission. After the trio sent a letter to Cuomo making their case, the governor responded with a letter that said the commission had already capped out at 25 members but encouraged the students to show up at hearings. Malamed said he was happy just to get a response.
<http://www.alternet.org/want-fix-education-policy-ask-students-how>

School enrollment decrease threatens the quality of education

Receiving an education is one of the inalienable rights of every citizen of this country and that is the way it should be. It is too easy for politicians to overlook the educational system because the rewards of the system are not realized for years and the politicians in office now will most likely not still be in office when today's kindergartners graduate from high school.

Since students are not voters, their voices are often not heard. There is a great deal of lip service paid to education but very little done to safeguard it as a right. It is incumbent upon parents to take action now to safeguard not only their children's education but also the education of their grandchildren.

The politicians do not seem to have school financing on their minds and the students cannot sway an election so parents need to step forward and be the voice of those that are too young to vote but will be leading the country some day in the not too distant future.
<http://tinyurl.com/c5ntzh9>

Issue: Title IX

London 2012 is the first time that the majority of Team U.S.A. is female, and there is no doubt that thanks is owed to four decades of Title IX. In the 1972 Summer Games, the same year Title IX was born, 21% of the American competitors were women. Forty years later the American delegation is a whopping 51% female.

Check It Out: Is the Playing Field Level for Women and Girls at Your School? - An Athletics Equity Checklist for Student, Athletes, Coaches, Parents, Administrators, and Advocates
The National Women's Law Center (NWLC)'s **Check It Out: Is**



the Playing Field Level for Women and Girls at Your School guides readers through a series of easy-to-answer questions that can help answer the larger question of whether the athletic programs at their schools treat both male and female students fairly. Check It Out is designed for students, athletes, coaches, parents, administrators, and anyone who is concerned about whether or not their school's program provides all students with equal opportunities in sports. Download the Guide from: <http://tinyurl.com/czaqqnu>

Issue: Social Security

Did you see this AP story on how people are getting less from Social Security compared to contributions than in earlier generations?

Is Social Security still a good deal for workers?

<http://apnews.excite.com/article/20120805/DA0F7GKG0.html>

Social Security is old age, survivors, and disability insurance. Social Security is not just a retirement savings program. In New York State, on average, there are more than 3 million people receiving Social Security benefits. Nationally, on average, in any month, SS insurance benefits go to:

- ♦ 4.3 million children - Average benefit: \$564
- ♦ 8.7 million disabled workers. Average benefit: \$1,111.
- ♦ 4.4 million widows and widowers. Average survivor's benefit: \$1,152.

Without Social Security, single women who work in low-wage positions would have to save 25% of their earnings starting from their first day of work in order to adequately provide for retirement. Over half of all elderly women would be poor without Social Security. **Estimates show that the poverty rate for individuals age 65 and older would increase from 10% to nearly 50% without Social Security benefits.** According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, in 2005, more than two-thirds of unmarried women would be living below the poverty line if they did not receive Social Security.

Social Security matters a great deal to the 46% of senior citizens in the United States who have less than \$10,000 in financial assets when they die. Most of these people rely almost totally on Social Security payments as their only formal means of support.

Study: Many Americans die with 'virtually no financial assets'

<http://phys.org/news/2012-08-americans-die-virtually-financial-assets.html>

Some other stories you may find useful:

Q&A: Eric Laursen on the Future of Social Security

Eric Laursen is an independent journalist who's been covering political and financial news for more than a quarter-century. He's been studying Social Security for the past 15

years, and just published a smart and exhaustive book called The People's Pension: The War Against Social Security from Reagan to Obama.
<http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/10698-qa-eric-laursen-on-the-future-of-social-security>

"People's Pension" Author: Social Security Cuts Would Hurt Ethnic Families Most

<http://tinyurl.com/buzznve>

Should You Delay Taking Social Security?

<http://tinyurl.com/cbv53kv>

Issue: America's Children

The State of America's Children 2012

- ♦ There are 16.4 million poor children in rich America, 7.4 million living in extreme poverty.
- ♦ A majority of public school students and more than three out of four Black and Hispanic children, who will be a majority of our child population by 2019, are unable to read or compute at grade level in the fourth or eighth grade and will be unprepared to succeed in our increasingly competitive global economy.
- ♦ Nearly eight million children are uninsured.
- ♦ More children were killed by guns in 2008-2009 than U.S. military personnel in both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars to date.

Millions of children are living hopeless, poverty- and violence-stricken lives in the war zones of our cities; in the educational deserts of our rural areas; in the moral deserts of our corrosive culture that saturates them with violent, materialistic, and individualistic messages; and in the leadership deserts of our political and economic life where greed and self interest trump the common good over and over.

Millions of our children are being left behind without the most basic human supports they need to survive and thrive when parents alone cannot provide for them at a time of deep economic downturn, joblessness, and low wage jobs that place a ceiling on economic mobility for millions as America's dream dims.

Unemployment, underemployment, and economic inequality are rife and will worsen if massive cascading federal, state, and local budget cuts aimed primarily at the poor and young succeed. Homeless shelters, child hunger, and child suffering have become normalized in the richest nation on earth. It's time to reset our moral compass and redefine how we measure success.

The Children's Defense Fund has just released The State of America's Children® 2012 Handbook. This report is a portrait of where our children are right now and a tool to spur us to set the vision of where we need to go to stop the downward mobility of our children and grandchildren and the diminution of America's future. It provides key national information in a range of areas to help inform and enable anyone who cares about children to effectively stand up for them.

<http://tinyurl.com/d4mdojz>

Issue: Income Inequality

The first thing to realize is that poor people are an industry in this country that makes the "takers" a ton of money, transferring public dollars to private hands.

Poverty in America: Why Can't We End It?

<http://tinyurl.com/d9tu7dc>

Jaw-Dropping Corruption: America's 47 Million Hungry Mouths Are Just Another Corporate Cash Cow

<http://tinyurl.com/d8rwmlm>

7 Ultra-Rich Companies Rake in Profits While Paying Workers Peanuts

<http://tinyurl.com/cf2fd3l>

Inequality Undermines Prosperity by Joseph Stiglitz

<http://tinyurl.com/czc2dox>

Top 5 Reasons Why Raising the Minimum Wage Is Good for You and Me

<http://tinyurl.com/bqdr8xs>

Issue: Paid Sick Leave

Workers with paid sick leave are healthier

U.S. workers with access to paid sick leave are 28 percent less likely than those without sick leave to suffer non-fatal work-related injuries, officials say. Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health analyzed data from 2005 to 2008 collected by the National Health Interview Survey. The study considered 38,000 private sector workers only because most full-time public sector workers have access to paid sick leave, the researchers said. The study found workers in high-risk occupations, and industry sectors such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture and healthcare and social assistance, appeared to benefit most from access to paid sick leave.

<http://tinyurl.com/c8awegl>

Issue: Health Care

How under-26 workers choose health insurance — their own, or their parents'

Young adults who need health insurance have more options than before under the health-care overhaul, which generally allows them to stay on their parents' plans until they reach age 26. But the provision gives employers new options, too: They can encourage their young employees to join Mom and Dad's plan rather than sign up for the company policy. Although experts say the practice is uncommon, some think more employers may consider this approach in the future.

<http://tinyurl.com/cw7f2fu>

Parents' insurance covers children up to age 26 — but not for pregnancy

The health-care overhaul provides a safety net for young adult children, who can now stay on their parents' health plans until they reach age 26. **But it doesn't guarantee that their parents' plan will cover a common medical condition that many young women face: pregnancy.** Group health plans with 15 or more workers are required to provide maternity benefits for employees and their spouses under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978. But other dependents of employees aren't covered by the law, so companies don't have to provide maternity coverage for them.

<http://tinyurl.com/bq7vlwh>

Affordable Care Act Facts

- ♦ Insurance companies no longer have unchecked power to cancel your policy, deny you coverage, or charge women more than men.
 - ♦ Americans will never again be denied care or charged more due to a pre-existing condition, like cancer or even asthma.
 - ♦ Preventive care will be covered free of charge by insurance companies--including mammograms for women and wellness visits for seniors.
 - ♦ Millions of Americans will receive a rebate because their insurance company spent too much of their premium on administrative costs or CEO bonuses.
 - ♦ Insurance companies will be required to provide health-benefit information to consumers in plain, understandable language – AKA no more loopholes and fine print.
-

Preventive Services Covered Under the Affordable Care Act

If you have a new health insurance plan or insurance policy beginning on or after September 23, 2010, the following preventive services must be covered without your having to pay a copayment or co-insurance or meet your deductible. This applies only when these services are delivered by a network provider. Read more at:

<http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/2010/07/preventive-services-list.html>

'The world's most important bake sale:' One patient's plan to pay for chemotherapy

<http://tinyurl.com/bt7kp2j>

Spotlight on Legislation:

Dense Breast Notification is Law in NYS

The fight against breast cancer in New York took a big step forward with **Breast Density Inform** legislation, sponsored by Senator John Flanagan and Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee. The vast majority of women are unaware of the impact dense tissue has on the likelihood they will get cancer and many are completely unaware of their own density and therefore unaware of their own elevated risk for breast cancer. The law takes effect in 180 days.

Mammograms miss 40% of breast cancers in women with dense breast tissue, and such women are four times more likely to develop breast cancer than others. A campaign dubbed "Are You Dense?" is gaining momentum. Read more at:

The Latest Mammogram Controversy: Density

<http://tinyurl.com/c627ywl>

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!
