



**BEDFORD-LEXINGTON AREA BRANCH  
DECEMBER 2009**

**Breaking Through Barriers for Women and Girls**

**HOLIDAY POTLUCK  
AND  
CELEBRATION OF THE  
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 6:00 PM  
HANCOCK CHURCH (STONE CHURCH ON THE  
LEXINGTON GREEN)**

If you haven't signed up yet for the EF Dinner, please do it TODAY! (call Janet Khattab at 617-484-2385). We have an exciting evening planned for you.

Our guest speakers will be two of this year's fellowship recipients, young women taking on issues of the future. Judy Ogunyemi, an International Fellow from Kenya, is studying for a masters degree at Brandeis in Sustainable International Development. Patricia Ebner, at Harvard's Graduate School of Design, is focused on the environmental and social impact of dynamic special design.

To add to the excitement, we will have a raffle! The prizes are gift certificates to restaurants and movies, and some wine for special occasions.

So, come prepared with lots \$\$\$ for EF...and bring your friends.

P.S. If you absolutely cannot make this event, just mail a check to me (Janet) made out to "AAUW Fund" with "EF" or "Educational Foundation" on the memo line. Thank you for your general support.



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## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE:

### IS IT GOOD NEWS OR "SPECTACULARLY MISLEADING"?

Sue Giurleo and Dot Hart Rand

Recent news articles, followed by emails from AAUW, have proclaimed that women are thriving and it all started in the 1960s. First came the new book by Gail Collins: *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present*. Next came the Shriver Report: *A Woman's Nation Changes Everything*. This was followed by an OpEd piece in the *New York Times*, forwarded by member Pat Costello, in response to the Shriver Report. Joanne Lipman, former deputy editor of the *Wall Street Journal*, stated that this book "couldn't be more spectacularly misleading." Lipman states that women in the workforce haven't come nearly as far as we would have predicted 25 years ago. "In 1964 women earned only 64 cents for very dollar earned by a man. Women still earn only 77 cents." That's a 13 cent gain in 45 years! And we all know about The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, since she was the featured speaker at the National Convention this summer, and on the cover *Outlook Magazine*.

I also came across this quote in my newspaper.

"The task of revolutionizing Islam in Afghanistan should begin with attention to the plight of women. Presently, half the population is absent from the public domain, veiled from head to toe, branded as inferior to men and treated as sexual objects to be kept at home."

This is an October 9, 2009 quote from Abolhasan Bani-Sadr, first elected president of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the 1979 revolution. He lives in exile outside Paris.

Compared to women in the Middle East we never were in their situation. We are fortunate to be living in a democracy where women can vote. Just remember how hard our mothers and grandmothers struggled for that vote. Availability of "the pill" made a huge difference,

making it more possible for women to earn a living and gain some independence.

What is your response to these publications? Frankly, I wondered how I was unaware of all this good news, when I am constantly reminded of the discrimination suffered by women in the Middle East.

If it were as simple as winning the vote, we wouldn't continue to lobby for Women's Reproductive Rights. "Women's right to choose" is still a huge issue. We still need rape crisis lines and struggle with domestic violence. In spite of all the research, the violence continues.

There are young women growing up around us with little or no idea how hard women have worked to win the vote, obtain the use of contraceptives or make progress on pay equity. When you see your grand-daughters in the coming holidays, ask them if their colleges have Women's Centers? Do they have any contact with their activities to advance women's causes?

How much thought have they given to the world they faces after graduation? Do they know of AAUW's findings that even after their first year of work, they may well be earning less than their male colleagues? Maybe what is needed is a course in negotiating skills.

Tell your own stories about what it has been like for you in your career. Are you able to talk about the times you were intimidated and didn't take the risk of seeking a promotion? I tried this dialogue out with my grand-daughter, who is still in high school. Her American History class did cover the Suffragettes, but that is about all she knew.

I wish you interesting, enlightening conversations. —Dot Hart Rand

## PUBLIC POLICY NOTES

- AAUW and coalition partners managed to help pass the landmark hate crimes prevention legislation that has been more than a decade in the making. President Obama signed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act recently, and our AAUW Executive Director Linda Hallman attended a White House event to commemorate the law's enactment.
- Now that the House of Representatives has passed a health care bill, we are faced with a terrible choice. The Stupak amendment which would eliminate coverage for abortion services in the public option is an unacceptable loss for women, and it would even affect private insurance plans that offer abortion coverage. Now this health care bill would leave millions of women without appropriate coverage, and the upshot would be one more step toward jeopardizing reproductive choice altogether. We need to contact our senators and urge them to oppose any amendments that take away women's access to complete reproductive health care coverage.
- Thanks to all of us, AAUW Action Network members who made their voices heard this past week helped the House pass the National Women's History Museum Act. (Shades of our recent branch meeting!) While a permanent museum to celebrate women's role in history still does not exist in the Capital, we're getting closer. The passage of this legislation is a critical step towards the allowing of the National Women's History Museum to purchase land across from the National Mall for the purpose of building a museum. AAUW supports H.R.1700 and is a member of that coalition.
- Do you know about Washington Update? It's AAUW's free, members-only weekly e-bulletin which offers an insiders view on the legislative progress, the latest policy news, resources for all advocates, programming ideas, and updates from the Public Policy and Government Relations Department. Subscribe by e-mailing [VoterEd@AAUW.org](mailto:VoterEd@AAUW.org).

—Lois Pulliam, Public Policy Chair

### BOOK GROUP:

**December 16th, 1:00 PM**

Happy Holidays! The Book Group will celebrate at Laura London's home with our 2nd Annual Yankee Swap! Please bring a book to swap and join in the fund.

For directions please call Laura London at 781-862-6008 or Joan Zinderman at 978-371-5647.



## REPORT FROM THE LEXINGTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

AAUW in general, and our branch in particular, has a long history of supporting fair and affordable housing initiatives as part of our commitment to social justice issues. Our branch co-sponsored an Affordable Housing Conference at Middlesex Community College in 2001 and has a representative on the Lexington Housing Partnership. As your representative on the Partnership, I ask for your help whether or not you are a Lexington resident.

The Lexington Housing Partnership, through its foundation, is fortunate to be a part of Cambridge Savings Bank's (CSB) unique 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. To celebrate this milestone anniversary, CSB will make financial grants totaling \$175,000 to local housing non-profits in the area.

The Lexington Housing Partnership is one of the 10 pre-selected housing non-profits that will receive at least \$5,000; one lucky organization will 'win' \$20,000 – a sizable sum of money in today's difficult economic times -

and two others will receive grants of \$10,000. The larger grants will be paid to the non-profits receiving the most votes from community supporters. Of course the Lexington Housing Partnership would very much like to be one of the larger grant recipients - but to be successful the Partnership needs your help, **whether or not you live in Lexington.**

### Here's how you can help:

**1) Vote.** Please cast your vote on the bank's website ([www.cambridgesavings.com](http://www.cambridgesavings.com)) before December 31, 2009. Remember, you do not have to live in Lexington to vote.

**2) Spread the word.** Ask family and friends to vote and encourage others to do the same. (As of last week, several institutions had received two and even three times as many votes as we did so your vote is important).

Thank you. I hope to have good news in January.

Florence Baturin

## MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ANNUAL BREAKFAST

Monday, January 18, 2010, 8:00 a.m. at the Boston Exhibition and Convention Center

As announced in the Fall *Baystater*, it is necessary for reservations to be made **by December 10** for the Monday, January 18 MLK, Jr. Boston Breakfast. Reservations are made by a check for \$35 written to "Nancy Moore" and sent to:

**Nancy Moore, Unit 321, 303 Brooksby Village Drive, Peabody MA 01960**

Of course, you can make your own later arrangements after Dec. 10, 2009 by calling St. Cyprians Episcopal Church, Roxbury MA at (617) 427-6175 for ticket information.

You may contact Nancy at 978-535-5426 for more information about the deadline or the Breakfast.

## FROM WASHINGTON: Five Women, Including One AAUW Member, Win Nobel Prizes

Various Nobel Prizes were awarded to five women this year, including one [AAUW member](#). This is the first time in history that so many women have been honored as Nobel laureates within one year, according to [The Globe and Mail](#). Elinor Ostrom won the prize for economics, Herta Mueller was the winner for literature, and Ada Yonath was awarded the prize for her work in chemistry. Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn and Dr. Carol Greider, an AAUW member, were honored for their work in the field of medicine, an honor they shared with colleague Jack W. Szostak. The three doctors were recognized for

their work with chromosomes, which plays a vital role in the development of new therapies for cancer treatments. As women continue to be disproportionately [represented in STEM fields](#), these honors reflect the significant advancements and achievements of women.



Education Development Center, Inc. is pleased to announce



## More than Title IX: How Equity in Education has Shaped the Nation

**Join us** for a panel discussion:

*Gender Equity at the Crossroads: Where do we go from here?*

### Co-Authors



**Katherine Hanson**  
Former EDC  
Managing  
Director



**Vivian Guilfooy**  
EDC Senior  
Vice President



**Sarita Pillai**  
EDC Senior  
Project Director

### Guests



**Victoria Budson**,  
Exec. Director  
Women and Public  
Policy Program,  
Harvard Kennedy  
School of  
Government



**Sumru Erkut**,  
Assoc. Director  
and Senior  
Research Scientist,  
Wellesley Centers for  
Women

**Wednesday, December 2, 2009**

**EDC Conference Center | 3–5pm**

Reception immediately following

Education Development Center, Inc.  
55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02458  
[www.edc.org](http://www.edc.org)

Space is Limited

RSVP by November 20 to:  
[tholmes\\_events@edc.org](mailto:tholmes_events@edc.org)

**AAUW's Value Promise**

By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

We are on the web:  
[www.aauw-ma.org](http://www.aauw-ma.org),  
then look under  
Branches

**JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: DECEMBER 18**



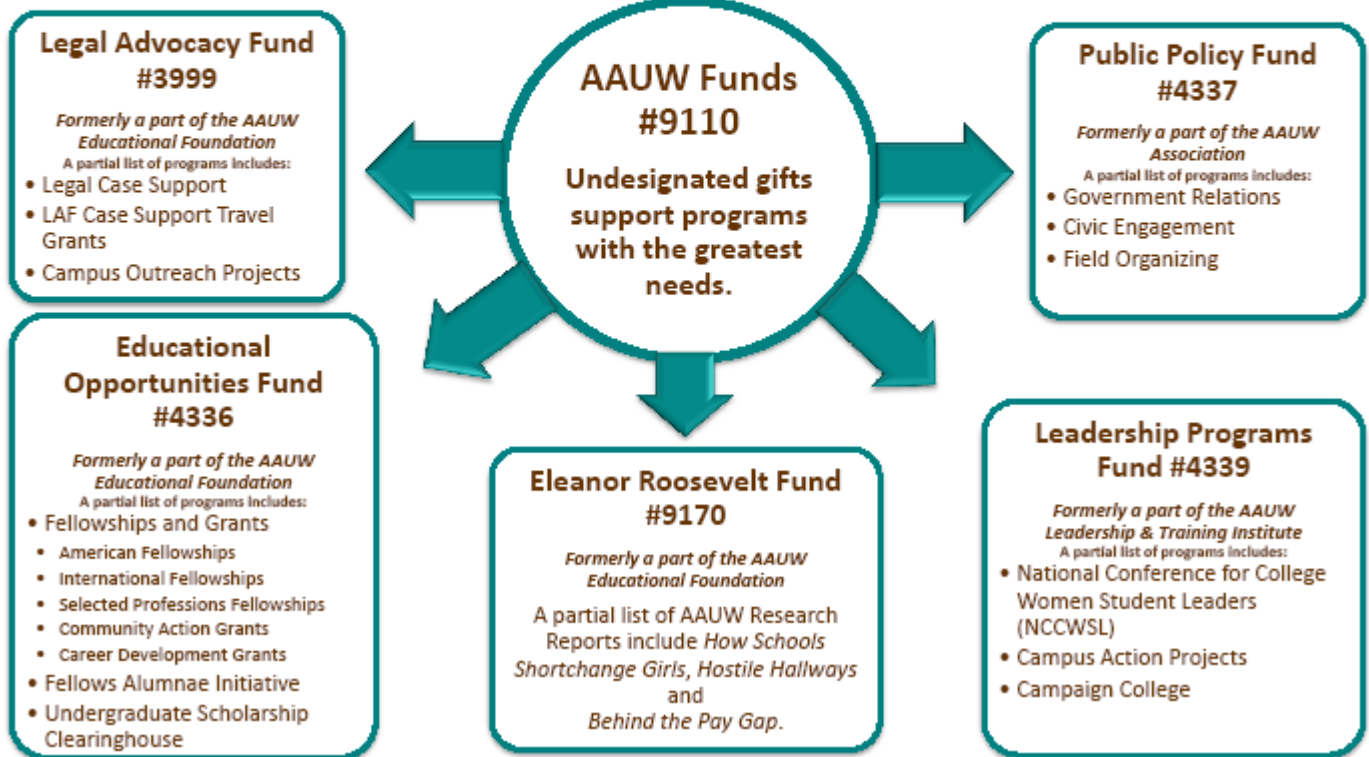
**HOW TO SUPPORT AAUW PROGRAMS**

Effective July 1, 2009

Thank you for promoting equity for women and girls by supporting AAUW's crucial work!

Contributions to AAUW Funds are fully tax deductible and can be designated to any specific fund or program by writing the fund or program name or number on your check or accompanying document. Or, you can visit [www.aauw.org/contribute](http://www.aauw.org/contribute).

Some of the most commonly designated funds and programs appear here.



**LECTURE AT BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY**

**The (almost) Invisible Older Woman** By Elizabeth Markson  
Tuesday, December 1st at 12:30 p.m.

How have older women, those 60 or older, been depicted in American feature films? Focusing on women nominated for an Oscar and appearing in a feature film at the age of 60 or older, changes and similarities in portrayals of physical and psychic characteristics are examined in a sampling of films from 1929 to 1998. Contact Elizabeth Markson ([emark@brandeis.edu](mailto:emark@brandeis.edu))