



**BEDFORD-LEXINGTON AREA BRANCH
SUMMER 2010**

Breaking Through Barriers for Women and Girls

**HISTORICAL PHOTOS—WARMUP FOR OUR
50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
RECOGNIZE THESE LADIES??**



Revisiting The First National Women's Rights Convention
Branch workshop during Lowell Women's Week
Photos of Branch Members with
Karen Moran as Abigail Rawson



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Member Survey on the Way: Check Your Mailbox!

The 2010 AAUW Member Survey is enclosed in the Spring/Summer issue of *AAUW Outlook*, which you should receive shortly. Please take this opportunity to help shape AAUW's programs and activities. It's easy — just follow the directions on the survey and return it to AAUW in the envelope provided. Or, if you prefer, you may log in to the Member Center and complete the survey online at www.aauw.org/membersurvey2010. Make your voice heard! The deadline for completing and returning the survey is July 30, 2010.



LEGAL ADVOCACY

AAUW has signed an amicus brief for *Christian Legal Society v. Martinez*, a case that will be [argued before the U. S. Supreme Court](#). The court will rule whether or not the University of California Hastings College of Law may deny school funding to a religious student organization because the group requires its officers and voting members to agree with its religious viewpoints. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit upheld the university's policy. AAUW joins other amicus signers in supporting the school, the separation of church and state, and religious liberty. You can [read the amicus brief](#) of our partner, the Anti-Defamation League.

2010-2011 MEETING SCHEDULE

Mark your calendars now! All are on Wednesdays, as usual, and will be at the Bedford Public Library except for our two dinner meetings in December and May.

- September 15 at 7 pm (NOTE: this is the 3rd Wed.)
- October 6 at 7 pm
- November 3 at 7 pm
- December 8 at 6:30 pm (NOTE: this is the 2nd Wed. and is the Holiday Dinner)
- January 5 at 11:30 am
- February 2 at 11:30 am
- March 2 at 7 pm
- April 6 at 7 pm
- May 4 at 6:30 pm (this is the end of year dinner)



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

...in **1862** **Mary Jane Patter-son** became the first African American woman to receive a bachelor's degree in the United States, from **Oberlin College** in Ohio?

... **in 1881** in Atlanta, Georgia, the first traditionally black woman's college is founded by

Harriet E. Giles and Sophia B. Packard? Originally called the **Atlanta Baptist Female Seminary**, it now is known as **Spelman College**.

... in **1921** the first three African American women earn doctoral degrees: **Geor-**

gianna Simpson from **The University of Chicago**, **Eva Beatrice Dykes** from **Radcliffe College**, and **Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander** from **The University of Pennsylvania**?

NCAA'S DIVERSITY IN ATHLETICS AWARD

Is your school in the recently-released list of 2008-2009 NCAA Diversity Awards? (For all the categories, google "Diversity in Athletics Award NCAA".) The schools listed for "**Gender Equity Compliance**" are:

DIVISION I

Bucknell University
University of California, Riverside
Clemson University
University of Michigan
University of Richmond
University of Southern California
Washington State University

DIVISION II

Florida Institute of Technology
Goldey-Beacom College
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Missouri University of Science and Technology
Saint Michael's College
Salem International University
South Dakota State University

DIVISION III

The list hasn't been released yet [EDITOR'S NOTE: at least as far as I can tell from the website] but Connecticut College reports they were recognized.

BEST COUNTRIES FOR WOMEN ANNOUNCED

In honor of [International Women's Day](#), Professor Nancy Folbre of University of Massachusetts, Amherst reviewed lists of "[The World's Best Countries for Women](#)." Based on the criteria, the United States ranked [13th](#) on the Human Development Index, [18th and 19th](#) on the Gender Empowerment Measure and Gender-Related Development Index, [31st](#) by the World Economic Forum and a [65/80](#) by Social Watch. While none of these scores measure all aspects of life, Norway, Sweden and Australia were some of the highest ranking countries for women.

WIN FOR WOMEN WHO WRESTLED

Some members may remember the coach as an LAF speaker at an AAUW-MA conference.

A federal appeals court on Monday ordered the University of California at Davis to defend itself against sex discrimination charges brought by a group of female former wrestlers at the institution. The ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, which sided with the former athletes on several fronts, overturned a lower court judge's 2008 opinion.

That judge, Frank Damrell Jr. of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California, had dismissed a lawsuit brought by several women who had, in 2000, been dropped from the wrestling team and, after bringing a federal complaint, reinstated but ordered to compete against men for spots on the squad.

After a series of protracted legal maneuverings, the women refiled their lawsuit in 2007 as a class action, accusing the university of failing to continually expand athletics opportunities for women. But Damrell tossed out their lawsuit in May 2008, ruling that the former athletes had failed to notify the university that it was being accused of broad-scale discrimination and to give it a chance to rectify the situation. Because of that procedural ruling, the court did not address the merits of the plaintiffs' case. (Last summer, the university settled an offshoot of this case.)

In taking up the former athletes' appeal, a three-judge panel of the Ninth Circuit court soundly disagreed with the lower court judge's conclusions and significantly expanded its reach. First, the appeals court rejected Damrell's finding that plaintiffs in a Title involving a single employee) must provide "pre-litigation notice" to the entity in question. While an institution might need to be informed that one of its employees had engaged in harassment and given a chance to correct it, the appeals panel wrote, "[d]ecisions to create or eliminate teams or to add or decrease roster slots for male or female athletes are official decisions, not practices by individual students or staff."

Several legal and women's rights groups [Ed. note: including AAUW] had filed friend of the court briefs in the Davis case asking the Ninth Circuit to overturn the lower court's conclusion about the prior notice issue.

To conclude that the case should be heard by a trial court, the Ninth Circuit was required to determine that, based on the most favorable reading of the plaintiffs' case, there were "genuine issues of material fact" for a court to decide. It found so.

The appeals panel challenges the university's record in meeting the second prong of Title IX -- a "history and continuing practice of program expansion" for female athletes and women's teams. The court's analysis goes so far as to question whether Davis officials added the *right* sports when they added women's teams -- a level of analysis that some university administrators might well see as micromanagement -- but the court's bottom line judgment is that "the record before us does not contain undisputed facts showing a history and continuing process of program expansion that is responsive to women's interests."

The Ninth Circuit panel also sides with the former athletes in upholding their right to sue Davis for discriminating against them under the U.S. Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. The university had argued that it was immune from such a claim.

The plaintiffs, who are represented by Equal Rights Advocates and a San Francisco law firm, are seeking punitive and compensatory damages in the case.

—Doug Lederman [*Inside Higher Ed*, 2/17/10]

AAUW NOTE: Mansourian's lawyer Kristen Galles said, "Thanks again to AAUW for its support. We used your money to pay for the very expensive court transcript and exhibits and travel for the oral argument. Attorneys donated their time for free, but it is very difficult for public interest attorneys to pay such huge court costs out of pocket, so AAUW support can mean the difference between a victory and no case at all."

**AAUW FUNDS:
EDUCATION
Sept '09—May – '10**

The December Dinner was once again our major fundraising event for the Educational Foundation. Thirty-two members and guests attended. Our guest speakers were two current Fellows: Judy Ogunyemi from Kenya, studying for a degree at Brandeis in Sustainable International Development, and Patricia Ebner, a student at Harvard Graduate School of Design. We raised \$195 from a raffle of donated items, including movie tickets, wine, and restaurant gift certificates. An additional \$810 was given directly to the Foundation.

The following members made donation this year through the branch: Florence Baturin, Liz Blumenthal, Mary Brzezinski, Betty Cohn, Pat Costello, Robin DeMott, Phyllis Doherty, Shirley Donnelly, Marilyn Flaherty, Sue Giurleo, Dot Hart Rand, Harriet Hathaway, Sally Hennessey, Janet Khattab, Marion Kilson, Ruth Ladd, Joann McLaughlin, Dolores Murphy, Midge Nealon-Seibert, Lois Pulliam, Miriam Richmond, Merion Ritter, Irene Shea, Dorothy Smith, Jeanne Stockdale, Ann Trevelyan, Alice Wadden, and Joan Zinderman.

The above does not include any members who may have contributed directly to the Association in DC.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Khattab

Educational Foundation Chair

**AAUW FUNDS:
LEGAL ADVOCACY**

Do you want to:

- Provide financial and moral support for those fighting sex discrimination in the workplace and on campus?
- Develop and support proactive Campus Outreach Programs?
- Produce comprehensive online legal resources?
- Sustain a network of attorneys?
- Advocate for equitable policies and practices for campuses and workplaces?
- Break through barriers so that all women have a fair chance?

If you have contributed to the AAUW Funds: Legal Advocacy (LAF), you have already assisted in achieving these goals and others. Thanks to the financial support of members of the Bedford-Lexington Area branch, LAF can continue its critical work to combat campus and workplace sex discrimination.

Our LAF fundraiser raised \$285 from 16 members at the November event. Members who contributed in November are Marilyn Flaherty, Sue Giurleo, Dot Hart Rand, Lois Pulliam, Harriet Hathaway, Janet Khattab, Ruth Ladd, Alice Wadden, Mary Brzezinski, Dorothy Smith, Joann McLaughlin, Shirley Donnelly, Betty Cohn, Jeanne Stockdale, Irene Shea, and Midge Nealon-Seibert. Florence Baturin and Kay Dillmore contributed earlier this year. Sue Giurleo and Dot Hart Rand tied in giving the largest gifts at the meeting and sharing the 'mystery' gift. They sure do like to share!

If you haven't contributed yet, it's never too late. Send your check, made out to "AAUW Funds" with LAF on the memo line, to me.

—Respectfully submitted, Midge Nealon-Seibert

BEDFORD-LEXINGTON AREA BRANCH BOOK GROUP

This is the schedule for 2010-11. Anyone is welcome! The group meets on Wednesdays at 1:00 pm

<u>Date</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Hostess</u>
9/22/10	<u>Abigail Adams</u> by Woody Holton	Irene Shea	Jeanne Stockdale w/ help
10/20/10	<u>Enrique's Journey</u> by Sonya Nazario	Laura London or Jeanne	Jeanne w/help
11/17/10	<u>Olive Kittridge</u> by Elizabeth Stout	Harriet Hathaway	Harriet
12/15/10	TBD	TBD	Laura?
1/19/11	<u>Outliers</u> by Malcolm Gladwell	Sue Giurleo	Sue
2/16/11 or	<u>Champlain's Dream</u> by David Hackett Fischer	Charlotte Ford	Dorothy Smith
3/16/11	<u>Brown Girl, Brown Stone</u> by Paula Marshall	Dorothy	Charlotte
4/20/11	<u>Sacred Hearts</u> by Sara Donand and <u>Letters of a Portuguese Nun</u> by Myrian Cyr	Jeanne Joan Zinderman	Catherine Boyd
5/18/11	<u>Blind Spot</u> by Jane Kamensky and and Jill Lepore	Mary Brzezanski	Mary
6/1/11 or perhaps earlier?	Luncheon	TBD	TBD



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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.

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: AUGUST 20th

HELP NEEDED!

If you would be interested in bringing refreshments to one of our meetings (September, November, January, February, or March), please contact Mary Brzenzenski!

Thank you, Robin, and members of the Bedford-Lexington Branch, for generously supporting the participation of two Massasoit Community College students at the NCCWSL conference this year. Cristhiam (not a typo) Rojas and Maria Miranda returned with glowing reports of their experiences. They are very enthusiastic about the conference and have "lots of ideas" for our continued activities in promoting awareness of the STEM fields among women students on our campuses.

We are planning a wrap-up session with them in June where we will be hearing about the women they met from around the world, the exposure to a greater world than they have experienced so far, and their plans for the future. Dean of Students Maureen Thayer, and my division dean, Deanna Yameen, are excited about the opportunities these two students have had through NCCWSL as well as the opportunities that the entire CAP Research Team have had to learn about STEM careers and share that research with their fellow students.

Again, on behalf of the students, our sincere thanks.

Cristina Ajemian

EDITOR'S NOTE: Our branch provided \$500 to help these two students attend the early June 2010 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders at the University of Maryland.

AUGUST BOARD MEETING

The August Board Meeting will be held at Sue Giurleo's on August 18th at 7:00 pm. Please RSVP to her at 781-275-6584.