

# AAUW NEWS OF NOTE

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Mission Statement: AAUW advances equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.  
Vision Statement: AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

## HINGHAM AREA BRANCH

DECEMBER 2009

### CALENDAR

December 6th, Sunday	Holiday Social 11:00 AM Raffael's, Hull RSVP: Susan Mahan
December 8th, Tuesday	Book Group 7:00 PM Home of Lynn Howard
December 10th, Thursday	Mass Conference for Women 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM Boston Convention & Exhibition Center
December 10th, Thursday	Writers Group 7:30 PM Home of Kay Campbell
December 17th, Thursday	Girls Game Night 7:00 PM Home of Sandy Carle RSVP to Sandy
December 22, Tuesday	Declutter Bugs 4:30 PM Home of Hollie Bagley RSVP to Hollie
January 5, Tuesday	Girls Game Night 7:00 PM Home of Hollie Bagley RSVP to Hollie
January 6, Wednesday	Yarn Club 7:00 PM Home of Lynn Howard RSVP to Lynn
January 7, Thursday	Adventures in Dining 6:30 PM Jasper White's, Derby Street Shoppes, Hingham RSVP to Hollie

This is a note for those who will be attending the Holiday Social. If possible, I would appreciate people bringing cash that day, rather than a check. **The cost is \$26.** Thanks! Susan Mahan

## BRANCH MEETING

### Casual Winter Supper and Book Discussion

The annual soup & salad supper will take place on January 12, 2010 and will again be held at the Allerton House in Hingham, at 6:30 pm. A discussion of the book *Tethered* by Amy MacKinnon will follow. We need volunteers to bring breads, salads, and desserts. Please RSVP your attendance and what food you can bring to Social Committee member Susan Mahan at [poetesssusan@att.net](mailto:poetesssusan@att.net) or 781-335-6912. Don't forget to bring your own place setting! I hope to see you!

Susan Mahan, Social Committee

**Directions to Allerton House:** 15 Condito Road, Hingham, MA 02043

**From Route 3 South:**

Take Route 3 South to Exit 14 (Route 228). At the end of the ramp, turn left and follow Route 228 approximately 4 miles to a red blinking light. Continue straight through the light and follow Central Street through yellow blinking light in Hingham Square. Directly after the yellow blinking light, turn left onto North Street, and then right at the Lincoln Statue onto Lincoln Street. Follow Lincoln Street to intersection of Route 3A and bear right onto Downer Avenue. Take the first left onto Condito Road. Allerton House at Harbor Park is directly behind Harbor House Rehabilitation and Nursing Center.

**From Route 3 North:**

Take Route 3 North to Exit 14 (Route 228). At the end of the ramp, turn right. Proceed on Route 228 as instructed above.

## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

With the Holidays quickly approaching, I want to wish you a Healthy and Happy Holiday Season. I hope you will all be able to attend our Holiday Social on Sunday, December 6th at Raffael's in Hull. We always have a nice time at these gatherings when we can enjoy a meal and chat. Our January Meeting is our popular Soup and Salad/ Book Discussion Meeting. This year we have a special treat: Amy MacKinnon, author of the book *Tethered* will be at the meeting. We hope all members will attend this popular event.

Some news from the National Association: a member of AAUW is the co-winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine. Her name is Carol Greider. She, along with her colleagues Elizabeth Blackburn and Jack Szostak, has been recognized in the STEM field for their contributions to humanity. We are among great women and men as members of AAUW. Remember our mission "AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research." .Enjoy the holidays.

Sheila

## **HOLIDAY SOCIAL**

This year's holiday social will be held at 11 AM on Sunday, December 6, 2009, at Raffael's, 45 Hull Shore Drive, (on Nantasket Beach) Hull. The cost is \$26. Please RSVP to Social Committee member Susan Mahan at [poetesssusan@att.net](mailto:poetesssusan@att.net) or 781-335-6912. I hope to see you all there!

## **The Pamela J. Lincoln Recognition Award**

The Pamela J. Lincoln Recognition Award is a prime example of the AAUW Mission in action. What better way to promote equity, than to encourage and help a deserving young woman further her education? In these harsh economic times every little helps, so we urge our members to consider nominating a worthy candidate. We are looking for a young (or not so young) woman of outstanding academic achievement and community service ,who is attending or plans to attend college.

If you have such a candidate in mind please contact Beatrice Kelly at 781-925-3310, or [johnjackkelly@yahoo.com](mailto:johnjackkelly@yahoo.com) for an application. Applications are due on March 1, 2010.

This Award is presented annually at the Spring Meeting of the Hingham Branch of the AAUW.

## **Writing Group**

The December meeting of the Writing Group will be held on Thursday December 10th at 7.30 p.m. at the home of Kay Campbell.

Beatrice Kelly's essay *Blame it on the Rain Barrel* appeared in the November 5th issue of the *Hull Times*.

## **BOOK CLUB**

The book club will be meeting on Tuesday, December 8th at 7:30 p.m. at Lynn Howard's house. We will be discussing the book Unaccustomed Earth by Jhumpa Lahiri.

These eight stories by beloved and bestselling author Jhumpa Lahiri take us from Cambridge and Seattle to India and Thailand, as they explore the secrets at the heart of family life. Here they enter the worlds of sisters and brothers, fathers and mothers, daughters and sons, friends and lovers. Rich with the signature gifts that have established Jhumpa Lahiri as one of our most essential writers, **Unaccustomed Earth** exquisitely renders the most intricate workings of the heart and mind.

Everyone is welcome to join us. Please let Lynn know if you will be attending. You can contact Lynn at [lynnphoward82@comcast.net](mailto:lynnphoward82@comcast.net) or 781-901-9120.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Boston Breakfast**

Mark your calendars!

Monday, January 18, 2010, 8:00 a.m.  
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.

*Of course, you can make your own later arrangements after Dec. 10, 2009 by calling St. Cyprians Episcopal Church, Roxbury MA at 1-617-427-6175 for ticket information.*

You may contact Nancy at 978-535-5426 for more information about the deadline or the Breakfast. Barbara Burgo, AAUW-MA Program VP, suggests we wear teal or some other AAUW item so that we can be identified as AAUW-MA, a force to be noticed on the state level.

### **Yarn Club**

The first meeting of the Yarn Club will be on Wed. Jan. 6th at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at Lynn Howard's home. If you are interested in attending please let Lynn know. You can reach her at 781-901-9120 or [lynnphoward82@comcast.net](mailto:lynnphoward82@comcast.net)

So grab your needles and your yarn and join us as we work on our projects, share our projects and/or learn new ones. If you are interested in making a felted bag Claudette will be happy to help you. The basic skills needed to make the bag are: casting on, knitting, picking up stitches, and increasing in knit stitch. Here are the materials you will need to bring with you: Circular needle Size 15 (16 " or no more than 24") and 400 yards of worsted weight **100% wool**--you can use one color or more or varigated yarn -- does not need to be expensive wool yarn.

Ruthanne Kennedy

**Save the Date!**

**Washington, D.C.**

June 16 -19, 2011, AAUW National Convention at the Renaissance Hotel

### **Legal Advocacy Fund**



The **Legal Advocacy Fund** helps protect the rights of women facing discrimination. As of July 1, 2009 LAF and EF come under the **AAUW Funds** umbrella. AAUW will continue to support the same programs, but all will be under AAUW Funds. Formerly a part of the AAUW Educational Foundation, the Legal Advocacy Fund #3999 still includes:

- Legal Case Support
- LAF Case Support Travel Grants
- Campus Outreach Projects

The deadline for giving to the **Legal Advocacy Fund** this year is rapidly approaching. As of September 30, 2009, the total LAF contribution from the Hingham Area branch and its individual members was \$154 which is considerably less than our self-imposed goal of \$5.00 per member.

It is not too late to consider giving a donation this year. It is easy to give online using your credit card. From the landing page of [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) click on the Donate button found on the left-hand side (direct link: [https://svc.aauw.org/contribute/index\\_aaauw\\_donation.cfm?CorpCode=C3](https://svc.aauw.org/contribute/index_aaauw_donation.cfm?CorpCode=C3)). Choose the funds you would like to

support (please include LAF) and the amount you wish to give and complete the form. You may also contribute by signing in to the Member Center and choosing Member Services Database from the drop-down menu. Choose Individual Contributions from the left menu and complete the form. You may still give the "old-fashioned way" by writing a check and mailing it to **AAUW**, 1111 Sixteenth St. NW, Washington, DC 20036. Be sure to designate your contribution to LAF (Fund #3999) and include the branch name and branch #1019 so that our branch will get credit.

I do hope each of us will support this worthy cause during this season of giving. It is not how much or how little we give that counts. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Hingham Area branch achieved a 100% per capita contribution? We can with your gift! Contribute today! Thanks! Hollie

[http://www.aauw.org/member\\_center/briefings/LAF\\_120408.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/member_center/briefings/LAF_120408.cfm)

Legal Advocacy Fund #3999 *Formerly a part of the AAUW Educational Foundation* A partial list of programs includes:

- Legal Case Support
- LAF Case Support Travel Grants
- Campus Outreach Projects

## **PUBLIC POLICY**

### **News**

**College Enrollment Hits All-Time High:** College enrollment for those ages 18-24 is higher than ever, particularly at community colleges. Census data released shows that in October of 2008, 40 percent of young Americans were enrolled in college. Most of the recent increases have taken place almost entirely at two-year colleges. According to the Pew Research Center's analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, community college enrollment tends to rise as the economy worsens due to lower tuition costs, while enrollment at four-year institutions tends to remain the same despite tuition increases. According to the report, October 2008, women comprised 53% of all young college students in October, but the percentage of 18- to 24-year-old men enrolled in college also reached an all-time high of 37 percent in October. Forty-two percent of 18- to 24-year-old women were enrolled in college in October.

**Changes on the Hill:** marked the end of another election cycle, and brought with it a new congressional representative and two new governors. In the New Jersey gubernatorial race, Republican Chris Christie ousted first term Democratic Gov. Jon Corzine with 49 percent of the vote, CNN reported. In the Virginia gubernatorial race, Republican Attorney General Bob McDonnell beat Democrat candidate Creigh Deeds with 59 percent of the vote. In a special election to fill a vacant House seat for New York's 23rd district, Democrat Bill Owens garnered 49 percent of the vote to defeat Conservative Party candidate Doug Hoffman. The Republican candidate, Dede Scozzafava, stepped aside on Oct. 31 and endorsed Owens. Rep. Owens was sworn in on Friday afternoon.

**Report Links Educational Attainment and Competitiveness:** The United States' educational attainment rates are falling, according to a new report released by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. The report points out that in the US on average 25-34 year olds are attaining lower education levels than their parents. The overall educational performance of US students is no longer exceeding or even matching that of other developed countries. Moreover, the report points out that students are less likely to attain degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math.

The shortage of American scientists threatens our nation's ability to compete and innovate in the coming years, especially as the outsourcing of jobs to, and importing of science from, other nations continues to grow. By 2014, the US will have added more than one million additional information technology jobs to the workforce. AAUW supports promoting and strengthening science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, especially for girls and other underrepresented populations. These efforts will help increase America's competitiveness by reducing gender barriers that deter women from pursuing academic and career goals in STEM fields.

**AAUW ED Presents to NSF Committee:** AAUW Executive Director Linda D. Hallman, CAE, spoke about the ways in which AAUW promotes and strengthens STEM education for women and girls in a presentation before the National Science Foundation's Committee on Equal Opportunities in Science and Engineering (CEOSE). Hallman provided an overview of AAUW's comprehensive approach, which includes distribution of fellowships and grants, publication of research findings, and the pursuit of new public policy.

**ACTION:** Since women students are more likely to borrow than men and will make less on average after graduation, female graduates are more likely to struggle with their loan debt. AAUW actively supported the College

Cost Reduction and Access Act, which became law in September 2007, as an important step toward making college more affordable and accessible. Among the benefits are lower interest rates on federal loans, higher Pell grant scholarships, and a new income-based repayment program, which caps federal student loan payments based on the borrower's income and family size. Urge your representatives to cosponsor (H.R. 2492), which would prevent the taxation of federal student loan debt forgiven through the income-based repayment program, and make the ideals behind loan forgiveness a reality. For more information, read AAUW's position paper on higher education.

**AAUW Attends White House Event Marking Breast Cancer Awareness Month:** AAUW was in attendance at a White House event commemorating National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The event was put on by the White House Council on Women and Girls, and featured First Lady Michelle Obama along with Dr. Jill Biden. Additionally, three survivors of breast cancer shared their stories and explained their subsequent difficulties dealing with health insurance companies. In their remarks, the First Lady and Dr. Biden discussed how comprehensive health insurance reform would particularly benefit breast cancer survivors and their families; survivors are often denied health insurance coverage based on the cancer being regarded as a pre-existing condition. And if they do manage to receive it, they typically pay exceptionally high premiums to be covered. Health reform legislation would not allow insurance companies to deny coverage to those with pre-existing conditions, and also guarantee coverage of preventive services like mammograms. To shine a further light on the issue, the Department of Health and Human Services also released a report that discusses health insurance reform and breast cancer.

**Title IX Settlement Reached in Florida:** According to the Associated Press, a settlement agreement was reached in the Title IX discrimination suit against the Florida High School Athletic Association. Under the settlement, the association will pay \$41,200 in legal fees, agree to notify the parents in writing two weeks before any proposed changes to an amendment that involves sports scheduling cuts, and provide Title IX training. A group of parents, headed by former Olympic swimmer and AAUW member Nancy Hogshead-Makar, filed the suit in June after schedule changes made cut the number of varsity games by 20 percent and all other play by 40 percent, with the exception of football and competitive cheerleading. Parents claimed that this unfairly hurt female student athletes in violation of Title IX. AAUW is an avid supporter of Title IX and promotes enforcement of all civil rights law relevant to education. For more information, read our position paper on Title IX and see our new Program in a Box on Title IX compliance.

**Steep Price Increase for Higher Education Institutions:** Despite the economic downturn, tuition and fees at four-year universities and colleges have increased at steeper rates than in prior years, after adjusting for inflation. Annual increases have averaged 4.9 percent at public colleges and 2.6 percent at private colleges over the past decade, according to the Washington Post. Yet during the 2008-2009 academic school year, tuition and fees increased by 6.5 percent at public universities and 4.4 percent at private universities. Students are also receiving an increasing amount of financial aid, with the average undergraduate student receiving about \$10,000 in grants and loans during the 2008-2009 school year.

**AAUW Celebrates Passage of Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act:** AAUW celebrates House and Senate passage of landmark hate crimes prevention legislation that had been more than a decade in the making. AAUW led the efforts of women's organizations to pass the bill, working with a coalition of more than 100 groups to finally see the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act sent to the president's desk. The measure was included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 conference report.

"After years of working for stronger federal enforcement and prosecution of hate crimes against women and other groups, the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act will finally become law," said AAUW Executive Director Linda D. Hallman, CAE. "This law is an important milestone in the fight against all forms of intolerance in our country, and it provides necessary tools to law enforcement at a critical time."

The hate crimes provision strengthens a federal law that was enacted in 1968 after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., to address violence based on race, ethnicity, and religion. The legislation adds actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, and disability to the list of bias-motivated crimes.

AAUW has long supported this expansion of hate crimes prevention law. In April, the House of Representatives approved its version of the legislation with the passage of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act (H.R. 1913). The Senate included the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act in the defense authorization bill in July.

"AAUW members have long provided a key voice in the debate to expand hate crimes law," said Lisa Maatz, AAUW director of public policy and government relations. "Their steadfast support of the measure-particularly the work of the AAUW Action Fund's Capitol Hill Lobby Corps-has paid off in breaking through yet another barrier." Matthew Shepard, the University of Wyoming college student who died on October 12, 1998, after a vicious attack, was targeted because he was gay. His murder highlighted the need for stronger law enforcement measures.

## LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATES

**Unemployment Insurance Extension Signed into Law:** President Obama signed into law legislation that will extend unemployment insurance benefits to workers in all states for up to 14 weeks, with an additional six weeks of benefits for workers in states with an unemployment rate of above 8.5 percent. The bill will also encourage states to let victims of sexual assault and domestic violence qualify for unemployment benefits if they had to leave a job. The Senate unanimously passed (98-0) the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009 (H.R. 3548), and the House followed (403-12). The bill also extends and expands a homebuyer's tax credit and provides for tax relief to money-losing businesses. The House had previously passed a narrower version of the bill, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act, in September. The White House had previously issued a Statement of Administration Policy to show its full support of H.R. 3548. The enactment of the law came the same day the U.S. Department of Labor released data showing that the U.S. unemployment rate has reached 10.2 percent, a 26-year high.

**House Considers Health Care Reform Bill:** Members of the House continued partisan, heated debate of the Affordable Health Care for Americans Act (H.R. 3962). The House could possibly remain in session and hold a rare Saturday evening or Sunday vote on the most far reaching health care reform bill in 40 years, the Washington Post reported. The legislation is a combination of the three previous bills put forth by House committees, and the White House recently issued a Statement of Administration Policy supporting the bill. Democratic leaders in the Senate continue to wait for cost estimates from the Congressional Budget Office before bringing their bill to the Senate floor.

**ACTION:** While AAUW does not support any one proposal over another, we believe that failure to achieve meaningful health care reform is simply not an option. Urge your members of Congress to support legislation that provides Americans with access to quality, affordable health care that is equitable to women. For more information, see our issue page and position paper on health care reform.

**STEM Funding Included in Agriculture Appropriations Bill:** The FY 2010 Agriculture Appropriations bill (H.R. 2997) signed by President Obama on Oct. 21, contained legislation that will provide funding for women and underrepresented minorities in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math. The bill will provide \$400,000 in research and extension grant funding. According to Sen. Ted Kaufman (D-DE), the only serving U.S. Senator who has worked as an engineer, a bipartisan group of 13 senators sent a letter to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture earlier this year in support of the funding.

The shortage of American scientists threatens our nation's ability to compete and innovate in the coming years, especially as the outsourcing of jobs to, and importing of science from, other nations continues to grow. By 2014, the US will have added more than one million additional information technology jobs to the workforce. AAUW supports promoting and strengthening STEM education, especially for girls and other underrepresented populations. These efforts will help increase America's competitiveness by reducing gender barriers that deter women from pursuing academic and career goals in STEM fields.

**National Women's History Museum Bill Introduced in Senate:** The National Women's History Museum Act (S. 2129/ H.R. 1700) was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) on Oct. 29. The bill, which passed the House on Oct. 14, permits the National Women's History Museum to purchase land near the National Mall for a museum in appreciation of women's many accomplishments and contributions to our nation.

AAUW is a strong supporter of S. 2129/H.R. 1700, and Action Network members were very vocal in urging their representatives to support this bill. AAUW is also a proud member of the NWHM Coalition, a group of national women's professional and service organizations committed to supporting the NWHM mission.

**AAUW Celebrates Enactment of Hate Crimes Law:** President Barack Obama signed into law landmark hate crimes prevention legislation that has been more than a decade in the making. The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which was enacted as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 conference report, will extend the federal hate crimes law to include crimes motivated by a victim's actual or perceived gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. AAUW Executive Director Linda Hallman, AAUW Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Lisa Maatz, and AAUW Government Relations Coordinator Anne Hedgepeth attended a White House event celebrating the law's enactment later that night. Watch the president's remarks at the event, and listen to a story NPR ran that featured many members of a hate crimes

coalition in which AAUW participated. AAUW members have worked hard for many years to finally bring this legislation to passage, and we celebrate this victory with you.

**ACTION:** While the House approved its version of the legislation with the passage of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act (H.R. 1913) in April, the Senate voted in July to include the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act in the defense authorization bill. Please write and thank the senators who supported moving this legislation forward in this way, and express your disappointment to those senators who did not. AAUW was mentioned in coverage of the hearing on NPR and The Rachel Maddow Show.

**AAUW Testifies About Fraudulent Letters:** AAUW Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Lisa Maatz testified at a hearing of the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, headed by Chairman Edward J. Markey (D-MA). Earlier this year, AAUW learned that one or more fraudulent letters purporting to be from an AAUW branch were sent to members of Congress by an agent from Bonner & Associates, a for-hire grassroots lobbying firm working with the Hawthorn Group and the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity. This campaign was designed to influence members of Congress on the House-passed Waxman-Markey Clean Energy and Security Act, also known as the "cap and trade" legislation. Read Maatz' testimony, and learn more about AAUW's response to this blatant act of fraud.

**House Passes Resolution on Domestic Violence Awareness:** the House passed (voice vote) a resolution (H. Res. 817) to raise awareness about domestic violence. Introduced by Rep. Al Green (D-TX), this resolution supports the goals and ideals of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month to raise awareness on the issue and effects of domestic violence in the United States, and support programs designed to end domestic violence.

**ACTION:** The Healthy Families Act (H.R.2460) guarantees paid sick days for all workers and ensures that employers allow these days to be used for doctors' and legal visits associated with domestic violence and sexual assault. Women need the ability to keep their jobs while they protect themselves and their families from abuse. Tell your representatives to cosponsor the Healthy Families Act. For additional resources related to sexual assault and harassment, visit the Legal Advocacy Fund Resource Library.

**Congress Passes Continuing Resolution to Keep Government Running:** the House and Senate passed a continuing resolution to fund the government through Dec. 18. President Obama is expected to sign this continuing resolution, the second this fiscal year, before the government's funding expires on Halloween. The continuing resolution was included in the conference report for the Interior-Environment appropriations bill. Congress still has seven incomplete spending measures. The government's fiscal year began on Oct. 1.

**House Subcommittee Holds Hearing on IVAWA:** the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight held a hearing entitled, "International Violence Against Women: Stories and Solutions." Read the transcript or watch a webcast of the hearing. AAUW was instrumental in the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act, which was signed into law by President Clinton in 1994. Although much progress has been made, AAUW and our coalition partners are working to support the International Violence Against Women Act, as well as the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act in 2011.