

# AAUW NEWS OF NOTE

President: Sheila Doherty (781) 848-8122  
Membership VPs: Patricia McKay (781) 337-3375 and Patricia Laidler (781) 878-6242  
Program VP: Carol Sullivan-Hanley (781) 545-9431

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                      SEPTEMBER 2009

### CALENDAR

September 1, Tuesday	Game Night 7:00 PM Home of Sandy Carle
September 12, Saturday	AAUW-MA Leadership Training 9:00 AM (For all members) Massasoit Community College, Brockton Campus
September 15, Tuesday	Pot Luck Dinner 6:30 PM Donovan Farm Way Clubhouse, Norwell RSVP: Susan Mahan
September 17, Thursday	DeClutter Bugs 4:30 PM Panera Bread, Derby Street Shops, Hingham
September 24, Thursday	Writers Group 7:00 PM Brewed Awakenings, Hingham
October 6, Tuesday	Book Group home of Carol Sullivan-Hanley
October 8, Thursday	Adventures in Dining 6:30PM place to be announced

### POT LUCK SUPPER

The annual pot luck supper is coming up on September 15. It will again be held at Donovan Farm Way in Norwell and will start at 6:30 pm. Please RSVP to me and let me know what dish you can bring so we can make sure we have enough in the categories of salad/side dish, main dish and dessert. Coffee, tea and bottled water will be provided. Don't forget to bring your own place setting! It might be a good idea to carpool if you can, since the parking lot at the Donovan Farm clubhouse is pretty small. Parking on the street is limited, and parking on the grass is not permitted.

We need people to help set up and clean up afterwards. If you can help with this, please let me know when you RSVP. You can contact me at 781-335-6912 or [poetesssusan@att.net](mailto:poetesssusan@att.net) I hope to see you there!

Susan Mahan  
Social Committee

**Directions to Donovan Farms:** Take Route 53 to 123E (Webster Street). Follow Webster for 1.8 miles, past Town Hall and Norwell Middle School until you reach Circuit Street. Take a right on Circuit and follow past Pleasant Street. Stay left at the fork in the road. Go up a little rise in the road, and there'll be a sign for Donovan Farms on the right. Once you're in the complex, the road is one-way and circular. Follow it around until you get to #26, a green clubhouse building on your left.

## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

With the beginning of fall fast approaching, I want to welcome you back to AAUW for a year of fun and interesting programs. I hope you all had a wonderful summer despite the less than perfect beach weather. Some of our interest groups met during the summer, although hard to do with vacations and work schedules. It was a great way to keep connected. Our Program Committee has been working hard during the summer under the leadership of Carol Sullivan-Hanley. The Committee has presented a slate of programs from Women in the Arts to Social Networking. It should be quite an interesting year.

The convention in Saint Louis this past June was a wonderful experience. Thank you for sending me as one of your delegates. It was great to meet Lily Ledbetter, who is the face of "Pay Equity". She was so gracious to everyone who spoke to her and signed anything available to write on, including newspapers, convention programs and hats. We also had other wonderful speakers such as Rep. Rosa Delauro (D-CT), who said "We are bound only by our imagination". We elected a new AAUW President, Carloyn Garfein, who is from Georgia. Under her leadership AAUW will go forward. The Membership Guidelines were not changed and one member, one vote was adopted at the convention. Ruthanne, Sandy, Hollie and I agreed it was a great convention and are looking forward to the next one in Washington, DC in 2011.

## **Breaking Through Barriers**

## **St. Louis, Missouri – June 2009**

Reflections on our convention:

Lily Ledbetter – Fair Pay Act, Rep. Rosa Delaurio – Pay Check Fairness Act, Carolyn Garfein – President AAUW 2009, Louis and Clark, the Arch, Mississippi riverboat, By-laws, Amendments, Constitutional Changes, Membership Preserved – 2007 By-law, 973 Delegates, 1400 plus Ballots Cast.

These are only a few memories from our National Convention in St. Louis, the Gateway City. Your delegates worked diligently listening to reports before voting on restructuring the organization. The most memorable vote was on retaining the language for membership from the 2007 Constitution. Please consult the *BayStater* for the most up-to-date changes. Approximately 973 attended and 1,427 ballots were cast to restructure the association. In the future, one member one vote will determine how each and every one wants the organization to proceed. EF President Barbara O'Connor reported that AAUW awarded \$4.4 million in fellowships and grants in FY 09, continuing our mission.

Comradeship, reconnecting with dear friends, meeting new acquaintances, and generally making AAUW history was a wonderful moment in time. Please consider attending the next AAUW Convention, it is worthwhile and reaffirms our successful work at the national level. Please feel free to chat with me at Potluck.

Ruthanne Kennedy

**Save the Date!**

**Washington, D.C.**

## **BOOK GROUP**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup>. We will be reading *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle*. We will meet at 7:30 at my home, 79 Turner Road, Scituate. Please let me know if you can join us. (781) 545-9341 or [csulliva@lesley.edu](mailto:csulliva@lesley.edu).

## **LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND**

### **Case Updates**

In the spring of 2008, the lawyers for the three [Legal Advocacy Fund-supported Feather River Community College cases](#) submitted closing and reply briefs from their November 2007 trial to the California State Personnel Board. The key issue in all three cases is retaliation for complaints of sex discrimination in violation of Title IX. After more than a year, the judge in the state board hearings submitted in July 2009 a decision in favor of all three plaintiffs. The California State Personnel Board rejected the ruling, however, and said it will decide the case itself after further written or oral arguments. For more details on the three cases visit <http://www.aauw.org/advocacy/laf/cases/casesupp.cfm>.

***Title IX in High School Athletics Project:*** In collaboration with the AAUW Research Department and the Legal Aid Society of San Francisco, LAF plans to release a new tool kit and Program in a Box in the fall on Title IX enforcement in high school athletics.

### **Case Support**

If you would like to make a case recommendation, please contact [laf@aauw.org](mailto:laf@aauw.org). Recommendation forms are accepted on a rolling basis.

Hollie Bagley, LAF Liaison

## **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Welcome back, everyone. I hope you enjoyed your summer - which didn't really begin until the middle of August. I myself couldn't even complain about the heat and humidity because I was so tired of being cold and depressed with the gloom. As you will see when you get your directories, Carol Sullivan-Hanley and her committee have devised a very interesting series of programs for the coming year.

I encourage you to bring an interested friend to Pot Luck on the 15th. Remember when a member joins at the first meeting she attends, she gets a great discount. Instead of \$75, she has to pay only \$50.50.

Congratulations go out to Ginny Giordano on the birth of her first grandchildren - twins Genevieve and Vivian and to Adrienne Gowen on the birth of her granddaughter - Willow.

We send happy wishes to Jennifer Morash who became engaged this summer.

We want to welcome member Linda Kakulski who joined our branch this summer.

Hope to see you all at Pot Luck. Don't forget your dish and utensils. If you have any questions about what to bring, direct your call to our new social chairperson Susan Mahan 781-335-6912 or [Poetesssusan@att.net](mailto:Poetesssusan@att.net)

### **Hingham AAUW PUBLIC POLICY Bulletin: September 2009**

From 'True Compass':

Senator Kennedy told his 10-year-old grandson "we might not be the best," but "we can work harder than anyone," and Little Teddy stayed with sailing, grew eager to learn and started winning races. That, the senator writes, "is the greatest lesson anyone can learn": that if you "stick with it," that if, as the title of his book suggests, you keep a "true compass" and do your best, you will eventually "get there."

We of the Hingham Area Branch of the AAUW thank Senator Kennedy for his support of our goals. May we remember to always look for the true compass within and do our best to 'get there.'

**AAUW Honors Senator Kennedy:** Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), 77, died August 25<sup>th</sup> after losing his battle with brain cancer. A longtime friend of AAUW and women's issues, Senator Kennedy was the chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and served in the U.S. Senate for 47 years. Kennedy championed many of AAUW's issues, including pay equity, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the minimum wage increase, and civil rights; and he repeatedly received 100 percent scores in the AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record. President Obama made a statement about Senator Kennedy's passing, and leaders on both sides of the aisle paid tribute to him throughout the week. His leadership in the Senate will be greatly missed.

**AAUW and the White House Celebrate Women's Equality Day:** AAUW celebrated the 89th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave women the right to vote. Several AAUW branches held events to mark the day, and AAUW Executive Director Linda D. Hallman penned an entry on the importance of women running for public office for More magazine's blog. Also, AAUW research statistics were quoted in an article about Women's Equality Day on the Huffington Post website.

President Obama issued a proclamation in honor of the day, and the White House also held a special conference call on Wednesday afternoon focusing on the White House Council on Women and Girls and health reform's impact on women. AAUW state and branch public policy chairs were invited to participate in the call. Tina Tchen, the executive director of the Council and the director of the Office of Public Liaison at the White House, updated listeners on the status of a federal interagency plan that will include an assessment of each federal agency's efforts to further the progress and advancement of women and girls. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius was also on the call to talk about the impact that health reform will have on women and the administration's study on women and health care.

**Pro-Woman Initiatives Sidelined by Health Care Storm:** In the first few months of his administration, President Obama drew praise from women's groups for his efforts to advance pro-women initiatives and appointments. These included the signing of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the creation of the White House Council on Women and Girls. While the administration was off to a great start, Women's eNews reported that the progress has greatly slowed due to the all-encompassing frenzy over health care reform. Leadership vacancies still exist in departments that deal with women's issues, and the Senate has

*stalled* on both the Paycheck Fairness Act and the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act. Lisa Maatz, AAUW director of public policy and government relations, was quoted in the article saying she would like to see action taken on Title IX legislation - a measure requiring equity in sports and other activities by educational institutions to receive federal funding - that was weakened by the Bush administration. However, the health care debate will likely continue to overshadow this and other women's issues at least through the fall.

In a related commentary on Women's eNews, Dr. Linda Brodsky acknowledged that women still have a way to go to achieve equity in the world of medicine and health care. Major issues affecting women's health care include the practice of "gender-rating" and the continued prevalence of discrimination within the medical community. Gender profiling is legal in most states and leads to women paying more for health coverage than men, causing many women to go without health care or delay measures for prevention. Insurance policies often lack coverage of maternity benefits. Female physicians earn less than their male counterparts - 61 cents for each dollar a male physician earns - and are more likely to face sexual harassment and less likely to hold positions on medical journal editorial boards, leading to a lack of research on issues that affect women. A failure to fix these problems of gender inequity will ultimately damage the health care system as well as the overall health of the nation.

**ACTION:** AAUW believes that health care is a basic right, and that women in the United States are in particular need of health reform legislation. Specifically, AAUW believes that any health reform legislation must include the following three tenets: an end to the practice of gender rating; coverage of reproductive health services; and access to and coverage of preventive services and care.

**Report Released on International Academic Assessment:** the National Center for Education Statistics released a report that builds upon their annual Condition of Education and takes a closer look at U.S. student performance on international assessments. The report found, among other things, that math scores for 15-year-olds in the U.S. now lag behind those of 31 countries. After the report's release, Education Secretary Arne Duncan said in a statement, "It compels us to renew our focus and reinvigorate our resolve to prepare our students to achieve high academic standards and be ready for the global marketplace." This report is the first report that has published all of these numbers together and puts a spotlight on the lack of improvement in different subjects in the years leading up to 2006. Duncan expressed his hope that initiatives like the Common Core State Standards Initiative will allow states to successfully implement their reforms.

**Judicial Victory for Affirmative Action:** A federal district judge on Monday ruled to uphold affirmative action admission policies at the University of Texas at Austin, Inside Higher Ed reported. The legal group representing the plaintiff, a white senior high school student who sued the university after being rejected for admission, charged that the university surpassed allowances set by the Supreme Court's *Grutter v. Bollinger* decision and vowed to appeal the judge's ruling. The judge, however, stated that the university "has a compelling interest in student body diversity as articulated in *Grutter*."

**CDC Advises Employers to Allow for Sick Days:** The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidance for employers to decrease the spread of the 2009-10 H1N1 flu as well as other seasonal flu strains. Among other recommendations, the CDC guidance states, "Regardless of the size of the business or the function or services that you provide, all employers should plan now to allow and encourage sick workers to stay home *without fear of losing their jobs*." In addition, the guidance recommends that employers institute flexible workplace and leave policies for sick workers, those who stay home to care for ill family members, and those who must stay home to watch their children if dismissed from school.

**ACTION:** Paid sick days are a public health issue. We need paid sick days to stop the spread of infections that can threaten the health of our entire nation. Many workers in industries that require

constant contact with the public lack paid sick days, including food and hotel workers and workers in child care centers, retail, and nursing. Everyone is protected when sick workers and sick children stay home from work and school to avoid spreading germs. Read our issues page and position paper on work-life balance, and urge your representatives to support the Healthy Families Act.

## **LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATES**

### **AAUW and Coalition Partners Host Briefing on D.C. School Vouchers**

AAUW and coalition partners hosted a briefing for the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) this week to address school vouchers. The briefing focused on the District of Columbia school voucher program and the Scholarships for Opportunities and Results Act (S. 1552), which AAUW opposes. The bill, introduced by Senator Lieberman (I-CT), would reauthorize the DC private school voucher pilot program, allow new students into the program, increase the number of students who receive vouchers, and increase the voucher amount. The briefing covered the history of the voucher program, the flaws of the program uncovered by the Department of Education evaluations, and reasons to oppose the bill.

AAUW has long opposed diverting public funds to private or religious elementary and secondary schools. The DC voucher program was created in 2003 as a five-year pilot program, scheduled to expire in 2008. This program funnels taxpayer money to private schools that do not have to follow laws that apply to public schools, such as the No Child Left Behind Act and Title IX. This program is the nation's only federally-funded voucher program. In addition, the program has not been shown to improve academic achievement. In April 2009, the Department of Education released a new report which found no improvement in academic achievement for those students receiving vouchers from public schools in need of improvement - the target audience of the voucher program. Learn more by reading our issue page and position paper on school vouchers.

**Recess Continues for Members of Congress:** As Congress' recess continues, so does the battle over health care reform in the town hall meetings across the country. Both the House and Senate will reconvene on September 8.

**ACTION:** Town hall meetings are great opportunities to show your elected officials that AAUW members are an active part of the constituency and work to influence the positions he or she takes on issues important to AAUW. To find out when your members of Congress are holding town hall meetings in your area, check their websites and your local paper's community calendar. You can find your representative's website and your senators' websites, and you can view our action alert for talking points and suggested questions to ask on issues like pay equity and health care.