



CONNECTIONS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
STORRS WILLIMANTIC BRANCH

Spring 2008

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

What an exciting year we have had. Our monthly meetings have featured wonderful speakers, thanks to Jen Page, Program Vice President and her committee: Pamela Thompson, Eugenie Bagley, Susan Eastwood and Betty Forrest. We have been able to add additional events: the movie: Running in High Heels made available to us by Kathy Labadorf from the UCONN Library and shown at the Mansfield Library with the Mansfield League of Women Voters and the Mansfield Library as sponsors. Kay McNabb has started a special events interest group that has met with Cynthia Van Zelm of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership.

We have secured a grant from the CT AAUW and a contribution from the Stamford/Darien/Greenwich branch to add to our branch contribution so we can send 2 UCONN students to the 2008 National Conference of College Women Student Leaders in Washington DC. They are Colleen Rogers and Mia Freedenfeld.

We have received the Tri-County Community Foundation award once again, which will enable us to send a total of 8 high school junior girls to Girls State at Eastern CT State University. Sandra Suplicki and Cathy Sampson are recruiting candidates for the program, which will be held at the end of June. Many thanks go to Pamela Thompson for writing the grant application for us.

This year we are contributing to Girls Take Charge, a one-day leadership conference to be held May 3 at Manchester Community College for girls in grades 6-12. Two students from Windham Tech will be attending.

We have been honored to receive a bequest from the estate of our long time member, Elizabeth Jordan. We have invested the money so that we can use the interest for scholarships. The details have yet to be worked out.

Many members have stepped up to help in various ways to forward our vision and mission. I can't thank everyone enough. If you haven't been actively involved this year, please consider helping to move our organization forward. There are always opportunities.

I am looking forward to my second term as President and know that there will be more successes to add to our list of wonderful accomplishments. Enjoy the outdoors this spring.

Lesley Kirschenbaum



LOCAL BRANCH NEWS AND INVOLVEMENT

UConn Women's Center Applies for CT AAUW Grant

Kathleen Holgerson, The UConn Women's Center Director, is applying to the CT AAUW for a grant to support their project called Bridging the Gap. They are planning an event for 50 undergraduate women that includes a panel presentation by the UConn Provost's Commission on the Status of Women, a luncheon, and then break-out sessions where all will work to develop student opportunities to increase women's access to educational and professional resources.



AAUW member, Jean McCarthy would like to thank AAUW member, Carmen Cid for her commitment to supporting and nurturing girls and women in their pursuit of the sciences. Jean's daughter, Jennifer who was a student of Carmen's, was influenced by Carmen Cid and Eastern Connecticut State University's Biology department. Jennifer just received her master's degree, in Biology, from Harvard University.



On April 23 Karin Randolph and Lesley Kirschenbaum attended a barbeque at ECSU where we spoke to many women and handed out information about AAUW.

Loretta Wrobel and Susan Eastwood have had her Equal Pay Day letter to the editor published in the Willimantic Chronicle and Hartford Courant. Our other letter writers, Pamela Thompson and Nikita Mason are waiting to see if their letters will be published.



Congratulations to Michael Goba, Joan Goba's son and Trisha Churchill Goba's brother for his newly appointed rank of Major. Joan will be pinning his rank medal on him. She promises to take lots of pictures.

Get Well Mary



Mary Rogers is currently having some health problems. She has undergone 2 sessions of chemotherapy at the UCONN Health Center in Farmington, CT.

Please keep Mary in your prayers. Cards, phone calls and visits are welcome.



Congratulations to Gina Brassaw on the birth of her new daughter.



The Friends of the Babcock **Pieces of Spring—a quilt show on May 17 and 18, Saturday and Sunday, from 10:00 to 4:00 at Knowlton Hall (rte. 44) in Ashford.** There are going to be 65 entries, one is a quilt made in 1850 and many other beautiful and treasured works. A quilt will be raffled also. Knowlton Hall will be cram packed full! Call Sue Harkness for more information.

Websites

Storrs Willimantic web site www.aauwstorrswilli@homestead.com.

Our branch e-mail address is aauwstorrswilli@gmail.com.

Our state website is <http://www.aauwct.com>

AAUW National web site is <http://www.aauw.org>

If there is something you would like to see on our website, email Denise Bachand at our branch website.

Here's an easy way for you to make your voice heard. Check out the **E-Alerts and 2 minute activist** which are easily accessed through www.aauw.org. You can arrange to have alerts sent to your e-mail address directly. E-Alert makes it easy to contact our government officials about current AAUW issues.

AAUW is interested in getting feedback about how many members participate in these opportunities. Please let Lesley know if you do participate.

Connecticut AAUW Annual Convention
April 26, 2008 – Wesleyan University
Getting Even: Women, the Workplace, and the Wage Gap

Storrs-Willimantic branch was well represented at the state convention with the following members in attendance: Lesley Kirschenbaum, Pamela Thompson, Nutmeg News Editor; Polly Silva, Communications Committee Director; Susan Eastwood, Jean McCarthy, and Sue Harkness, Recording Secretary. Some of us attended the Friday evening reception at the home of Barbara Arafeh and enjoyed the delicious refreshments provided by members of the Greater Middletown branch. AAUW members of the Middletones, an adult women's signing group organized by Barbara about 10 years ago, entertained us with their singing and piano accompaniment.

On Saturday morning President Carol Virostek welcomed the 80 plus attendees and introduced Kirshna Winston, Dean of Arts and Humanities and Professor of German language and literature, who gave remarks on being a woman years ago as an undergraduate at Smith College and then at Wesleyan when she was hired in 1972. Expectations and opportunities for women have changed in that span of time. Carol Blauvelt presented Outstanding Women awards to Eunice Waller and Susan Hoover, New London branch, and to Carol Virostek as outgoing president.

Following the business meeting, Permanent Commission on the Status She addressed issues today moderated a panel-Gender Pay Gap-over 20 years, Melinda Rising, PhD, *Put the Blame on Eve: Consequences* public policy and government relations



Teresa C. Younger, Executive Director of the of Women was introduced as the keynote speaker. encountered by working women. Susan Hoover then with Carol Kardas, a human resource consultant for researcher on status of women issues and author of *of the Spin*, and Seth Chase, field direction for at the Association in D.C.

In the afternoon a panel-Women in Science-was moderated by Karen Houseknecht, Ph.D., formerly with Pfizer, and now VP of Global Research & Development for a multinational company with clients in the pharmaceutical, biotech, academic and NGO research sector. Karen prefaced her remarks by sharing that she had just been selected as the outstanding engineer in her company! Members of this panel: Rebecca Doyle, a senior at the U. S. Coast Guard Academy and majoring in Electrical Engineering and Computers, Denise Fudge, a mechanical engineer at CUNO, and Olutayo Sogunro, born in Nigeria but moved to Alberta, Canada as a small child, graduating from CCSU with a M.S. in Biological Science and has been accepted into medical school for the fall of 2008, all discussed their early interest in mathematics and science and being the minority in these fields. These young women were articulate, bright and enthusiastic.

Laurel Anderson, AAUW CT VP for Program, updated us on the grants for the National College Conference for Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) to be held in D.C. in June. Two of the women selected from CCSU were present and were introduced earlier in the day. Kathleen Holgerson, Director of the Women's Center at UCONN, and Jacqueline Coffina-Boivin, Director of the Ruthe Boyea Women's Center at CCSU, spoke about the initiatives at their respective schools.

Change in the structure of AAUW is definitely in our future at both the Association and state levels. Gail Nordmoe, Executive VP/Secretary for the Association, emphasized that we must be "fast, fluid, and flexible." Local branch members are encouraged to attend the summer conference at Eastern on July 19. The regional director, Patricia Ho, will be here to update us on the changes ahead.

If you would like to read the Convention minutes, please email me at seharkness@earthlink.com, and I'll be happy to forward them to you or mail you a copy.

Resolution for Connecticut AAUW

The following resolution has been passed at the **2008 Connecticut AAUW Annual Meeting**.

Resolution:

That Connecticut AAUW adopted for 2008 - 2009 the Alternative AAUW/CT Board Structure described below.

History and Explanation of the Proposal

Rationale for Proposal: During this time of transition for the national organization, state structures need to be adaptable and flexible. At the end of the 2007-2008 year, three officers – president, program vice president, and corresponding secretary – will have completed their terms and will be going off the board. Despite the efforts of the nominating committee, no members were willing to become candidates for these positions. Although the remaining elected and appointed officers and chairs are continuing for another year, we need to ensure that Connecticut AAUW can maintain the mission-based programs which have been most successful. This will require an interim structure to replace the three vacant positions.

ALTERNATIVE AAUW/CT BOARD STRUCTURE FOR 2008-2009

Background

With input from AAUW New England Regional Director, Patricia Ho, and Gail Nordmoe, Executive Vice President/Secretary of AAUW, Caroline Pickens, AAUW Bylaws Committee Chair, and Coco Siewart, AAUW Parliamentarian, the Executive Committee is proposing an alternative board structure for AAUW/CT for the year 2008-2009.

In the year ahead the joint boards of the Association and the Educational Foundation are proceeding with a mandated transformation of AAUW. At the national convention in 2009, they will be presenting bylaws that will address changes in organization and governance to reflect the new consolidated organization. During this time of transition, direct communication from the organization to its members will be of utmost importance.

Submitted by Polly Silva



Dates to Remember



May 3: Girls take charge at Manchester Community College.

***** May 8 MEETING DAY CHANGE *** TO THURSDAY May 8 from Wednesday May 7 -**
Zahra Pamela Karimi, AAUW Educational International Fellow recipient.

MAY 21

AAUW CT TRIP TO THE UNITED NATIONS WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

We need to be at the U. N. Building by 9:15 so will drive to New Haven and take the train into Grand Central Station. Cost is \$32 for the luncheon buffet. The tour is \$9 for seniors and \$13.50 other. The train is approximately \$30. We will be briefed on Global Warming and Women and Girl Refugees. Very knowledgeable and articulate people give the briefings. The order of the day is the briefings, luncheon, and tour. Please call me at 429-2822 or email seharkness@earthlink.net as soon as possible so I can send you a registration form. Right now we have one car going to New Haven and may need another one if more members wish to go.

Sue Harkness, International Issues Chair

June 4: Del Anne Carey's home in South Windham for our annual plant auction and potluck.

July 19: AAUW Summer Leadership Conference -- Open to all Members!



HOST BRANCH: STORRS WILLIMANTIC AAUW *Eastern CT State University Willimantic Connecticut*

8:30 Registration
9:00-10:15 AAUW/CT Business
10:30 - 12:15 Leadership Conference Part 1
12:30 - 1:30 Lunch
1:30 - 3:30 Leadership Conference Part 2

Presenters will be Regional Director Patricia Ho and AAUW VP Gail Nordmoe. Part of the day will be retreat and state business; major part is leadership development sessions developed by the Association. More details to come later.

September 6: Know Your Towns Fair-League of Women Voters. Lesley Kirschenbaum has volunteered to manage a table. Anyone else interested?



NEW DIRECTION FOR LAF

The Legal Advocacy Fund, which is a program of the AAUW Education Foundation, has supported men and women in the workplace who are faced with discrimination issues. It expands campus outreach regarding discrimination, and conducts gender based research projects.

There is now a new direction for LAF. Members have urged LAF to extend their support beyond academia to other workplace settings. Now, LAF is expanding to include sex discrimination cases in all workplaces. A primary aspect of this expansion is to build on AAUW's history of participating as amicus curiae (friends of the court) in cases affecting women's rights. With this strategy LAF feels that we will maximize our effectiveness and ensure that we will be heard by courts that affirmatively want our opinion on the cases and the issues before them.

As LAF moves towards expanded issue support, we will move away from direct plaintiff support after December, 2008. LAF will, however, continue to provide travel and speaking stipends and emergency relief funding to assist with the many additional burdens faced by plaintiffs. More information on this will be announced.

The LAF continues to suggest that each local board donate, an amount that would represent at least \$5 per member, to the LAF. Please consider sending a tax deductible check, made out to LAF, in any amount you feel comfortable with, to Sally Medeiros. You could also bring a check or cash to any AAUW meeting. Thank you. Karin Randolph.

Do you have an essay, poem or an account of something you have attended or Learned about? Please send it to Jean McCarthy to be included in the next newsletter.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP:

Would anyone be interested in organizing or belonging to a book discussion group?

At the April convention, Susan Eastwood and Pamela Thompson were discussing a book group. Sue Harkness had expressed an interest previously and Kathy Labadorf had talked earlier about starting a book group called Adelante, which is associated with the AAUW. At the Friday night reception, before the Pay Equity Convention, Lesley, Sue and Jean were made aware of the fact that book discussion groups were popular among other branches in the state. Sue Harkness has been providing us with an excellent list of suggested readings which are mentioned below.

Submitted by Lesley and Jean.

Suggested Readings:

The following is a list of books, which will introduce you to global women's issues. It was given to me by the state International Issues chair. The books with a * I have read and highly recommend. It is by no means exhaustive, some of them may be controversial, and we take no positions on this aspect of their writings. I hope that you will read some of these books if you haven't already.

*Albright, Madeleine: *Madam Secretary*. Autobiography of the first woman to serve as U. S. Secretary of State. Very readable, brilliant and personal, woman of our time.

*Mortenson, Greg and David Oliver Relin: *Three Cups of Tea*. Mortenson tells about building rural schools for girls in Central Asia. Interesting and positive reading. He was invited to speak at the AAUW convention in Phoenix.

*Tracy Kidder: *Mountains Beyond Mountains*. Dr. Paul Farmer, an Albert Schweitzer in our time, goes to Haiti and practices medicine, as he believes it should be done in the Third World. Inspirational reading.

*Jane Roberts: *34 Million Friends*. Jane spoke at our 2006 book author luncheon. She is passionate and committed. www.34millionfriends.org

Hunt, Swanee: *This Was Not Our War*. Moving testimonies of 26 women who survived Bosnia's ethnic upheavals. Swanee is now Director of Women and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and was involved with the Bosnian peace discussions.

*Reyna Grande: *Across A Hundred Mountains*. This autobiography of a young Mexican woman was selected for the One Book, One Region in 2007. She was recently in CT and spoke at Eastern. Ms. Reyna is a talented writer, also an engaging speaker.

A Woman of Egypt by Jehan Sadat. Write me your choices.

Submitted by Sue Harkness, branch International Issues chair

POCKETS FULL OF JOY

From: Charlotte Hunter (Charlotte spoke to us at our October meeting).

Subject: Tanzania

Date: Saturday, April 12, 2008, 9:59 PM



Dear Lesley, Hi! I've returned from Tanzania and we are now serving 1,870 beautiful children. They are incredible and continue to amaze me..

We were able to reconstruct three classrooms for \$10,300, finish a toilet facility for girls, repair the kitchen at Byeya Primary school. The health program continues to service everyone as well as the sewing program. We now have a young woman in the village that is in sixth grade and has begun to repair cloths in the village. She feels that the sewing program has allowed her to earn a living as a tailor. The agricultural program is now at three schools and we have planted 5,000 trees, and we have added a organic coffee plantation.

Soccer balls were delivered by Proactive Sports Management, Adidas and Steve Cherundolo a US National Team member who scored the game winner in US's recent game with South Africa. The children were thrilled to receive this incredible gift.

Three years ago I found a sponsor for Mathias for medical school and I promised myself that I would one day sponsor a young woman. Well, that day has happened and Verdiana Mwijage now has a sponsor and can begin this September. I am thrilled and am very excited to assist this young woman to become a doctor.

This year I am creating the 55 Club. It cost me just \$55.00 per child for one year for all of the programs above (excluding the medical school) plus administrative cost. The amount of people needed for this is 1,600.

Please pass this information on to your members. We are now working on a report of everything that took place this year during my visit, and we will be happy to send you one upon completion. Take care, Charlotte

Charlotte S. Hunter, U.S. Director, *charlottehunter@att.net*
Pocketful of Joy, Inc. 24 Goose Lane, Tolland, CT 06084 www.pocketfulofjoy.org

AAUW Jen Page has kept in touch with Charlotte

NATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL NEWS

Ledbetter Fair Pay Act: Ledbetter vs Goodyear

<http://capwiz.com/aauw/utr/1/LXJHIKSGX/CGFNIIMAIL/1906296031>

Under heavy pressure from AAUW members and our coalition partners, the Senate yesterday narrowly failed to pass a vote to move forward with the **Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (H.R. 2831)**. While the pure vote on the measure was actually 57-41, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) changed his vote in a procedural move that will allow him to bring the bill up again at a later date. [See how your senator voted.](#)

Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) called the vote "[a call to arms](#)" for the women of America. A large majority of women identify equal pay for equal work as a national priority. As we pass Equal Pay Day and continue our pay equity efforts this month and throughout the year, AAUW believes Wednesday's vote is a good way to measure a senator's support for pay equity in this election year.

AAUW believes that the narrow legislative fix contained in the Ledbetter Fair Pay Act would more justly allow victims of pay discrimination to seek vindication, and AAUW and its members will not stop until the Senate gets it right by adopting this critical measure.

Please write and thank the senators (see link above) who supported the Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and urge them to continue to push for another vote on the bill. Express your extreme disappointment to those senators who voted against the Ledbetter bill, and urge them to support this and other pay equity legislation in the future.

The Supreme Court's decision in the Ledbetter v. Goodyear case in May severely limited the ability of victims of pay discrimination to vindicate their rights under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Ledbetter Fair Pay Act restores the law to how it was previously applied to be consistent with Congress' intent and the Court's own precedents. The bill would also apply to all claims of discrimination in compensation.

AAUW believes the outcome in Ledbetter v. Goodyear is fundamentally unfair to victims of pay discrimination, which is responsible for a significant portion of the wage gap experienced by women and people of color. Although the wage gap has narrowed over the years, success in closing the gap remains elusive, and the Supreme Court's recent decision in the Ledbetter v. Goodyear case will make it even more difficult for women workers and employees of color to close the wage gap.

Take Action! Show the Faces of Pay Equity to Congress! For this campaign, in addition to sending an email, we encourage you to use a new feature of our Two-Minute Activist: "See Me" to show your senator that you are the face of pay equity. After you've drafted your message and completed the "Sender Information," you'll find the "See Me" feature. Just click on "Include SEE ME information," and follow the instructions to upload a digital picture of yourself and attach it to your message to your senators. In the comment box type in "I Am the Face of Pay Equity." See other AAUW activists who have already shown their senators what pay equity looks like. If you don't have a picture, you can still send an email on its own.

National Convention: Call for Vitae Letter

The 2008 *Call for Vitae* is currently underway. AAUW is continuing to solicit and review *vitae* applications for June 2008 Committee appointments. AAUW strongly encourages those who are interested in serving and playing an integral role in helping to shape the "new" AAUW to apply. Please refer to committee vacancies listed below. *Please note there are several openings on both the **Public Policy** and **Resolutions Committees**.*

For additional details, please visit the website at

http://www.aauw.org/About/leadership/leadership_opportunities.cfm. To better accommodate applicants, the deadline has been extended to **JUNE 1**.

It is important to keep a New England presence at the national level. *Please do not hesitate to contact* Roberta Jackson Travis, Board and Governance Liaison, American Association of University Women , AAUW Educational Foundation, 1111 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036
(202) 785-7710 (202) 466-7637 (Fax) travisr@aauw.org

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Bylaws - 1 vacancy

Finance

Membership

Program Development - 1 vacancy

Public Policy - 4 vacancies

Resolutions - 4 vacancies

Because Equity Is Still An Issue

Jean McCarthy, Editor



AAUW STORRS-WILLIMANTIC BRANCH

REGISTRATION FORM 2008-2009

It would be greatly appreciated if form/payment could be returned by June 30, 2008.

Please complete the following. Mail or give your annual membership dues of \$65.00 to our Treasurer. Feel free to share a registration form with a friend.

Sally Medeiros, Treasurer, 80 Parish Hill Rd., N.Windham, CT 06256

If you have any questions, contact Sally at 423-1597, longtallpkc”at”gmail.com or Lesley Kirschenbaum at 423-9590, llesleyk”at”yahoo.com.

NAME _____

Address _____

Primary Phone _____

E-mail _____

Please list the amount of any optional donations you wish to make. Make checks payable to AAUW Storrs/Willimantic.

Dues \$65.00

I would like to contribute to the fund to:

Subsidize dues for members unable to pay \$ _____

Total \$ _____

If you would like to send in a contribution for the Educational Foundation or the Legal Advocacy Fund, make your check(s) out individually to these national level AAUW funds. Checks made out to either of these funds are tax deductible. We will send them on to AAUW for you. More information on these funds can be found at aauw.org.