

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

Maine Women's Publications - All

Publications

Winter 12-1-2014

Dawnbreaker Vol 61 No 2 (Winter 2014)

Dawnbreaker Staff

Maine Division - American Association of University Women

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine_women_pubs_all



Part of the [Education Commons](#), [History Commons](#), [Public Administration Commons](#), [Public Affairs Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Staff, Dawnbreaker, "Dawnbreaker Vol 61 No 2 (Winter 2014)" (2014). *Maine Women's Publications - All*. 45.

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/maine_women_pubs_all/45

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Women's Publications - All by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.



Dawnbreaker
The Newsletter of
AAUW Maine
Winter 2014
Volume 61, Number 2



Get out the Vote (GoTV) for AAUW National Elections

By: Kristin Sweeney

And you thought we could forget about voting after November 4, 2014! Just as every citizen should do her civic duty and vote, so should every AAUW member. However, getting out the AAUW vote is just as tough as motivating the average American citizen. Shockingly, turnout for the 2013 AAUW National Election was barely enough to conform to bylaws.

This year, we want to get your attention focused early. I have attached the time lines below. If you wish to vote with a paper ballot you must initiate that yourself. This is the link for questions: <http://www.aauw.org/resource/faq-national-election/>.

During the AAUW of Maine annual convention May 1-2, 2015 in Orono, we plan to have laptops available for you to vote while you are at convention. It would be useful for you to review the candidate profiles and issues ahead of time. This can be done either online and/or in the Spring/Summer issue of *AAUW Outlook*. The main item for you to remember is to bring your PIN with you to convention. Without it, you cannot vote online. The PIN will be mailed to AAUW members with the Spring/Summer issue of *AAUW Outlook*.

January 29, 2015 Candidate profiles posted to website

Mid-March 2015 Voter PIN mailed to members with the Spring/Summer *AAUW Outlook*; final slate of candidates, bylaw proposals and resolutions published in the Spring/Summer *AAUW Outlook*

April 1, 2015 - Opening date to request paper ballot; voter PIN e-mailed to members

April 15, 2015 - Voting begins online

May 8, 2015 - Deadline for AAUW to receive request for paper ballot

May 26, 2015 - Deadline for mailing paper ballot; ballots must be postmarked by 11:59 p.m. to be counted

June 18-21, 2015 - AAUW National Convention, San Diego

June 19, 2015 - Online voting ends at 9 p.m. PDT

* * * * *

Have I Got a Deal for You!

By: President Kristin Sweeney

Wanted: an energetic candidate for President-Elect for a one year term to commence on July 1, 2015 with a commitment to a two year term as President of AAUW of Maine to follow. As an incentive, I am willing to donate my funding from AAUW of Maine (\$1,650, a goodly sum) to attend the AAUW National Convention June 18-21, 2015, in San Diego, California.

If interested, contact Deborah Cravey, chair of the Nominating Committee, directly: gmdbc18@comcast.com. Do not dawdle. The convention registration cost jumps \$26 as of January 16, 2015 and another \$50 as of April 1.

* * * * *

Digging Deep for Donations

By: Kristin Sweeney

You may recall from the last newsletter that AAUW of Maine has a new goal of increasing overall donations by 10%. That means you and I, as AAUW members, should aim to increase our personal donations to the branch and national by 10%. Each branch in Maine, as well as AAUW of Maine, should increase their donations to national by 10%.

In that bulletin, I suggested that a practically painless method of fundraising (Thanks to the children of another AAUW member, Joan Sanzenbacher, for their brilliant idea.) would be to request donations to AAUW for any and all gift giving occasions: Christmas, Hanukkah, birthdays, Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, retirements and so on.

You will be delighted to know that I have already put my money where my mouth is. I sent out a Thanksgiving newsletter to the small number of friends and relatives who usually give me Christmas gifts, shamelessly stating that, "What I really want for Christmas this year is help with my AAUW fundraising."

My mother in Minnesota, who does not even have a college degree, but who is motivated by my taking her to Florida for Christmas this year, has already made a generous donation.

Sadly, that means that I will have to refrain from the annual additions to the J. Kristin Sweeney Memorial Hellebore Collection in my garden.

Dig deep and join me in my suffering.

* * * * *

Facebook Anyone?

AAUW of Maine has a Facebook site, administrators Jean Lotz, and Bets Brown. Please send contributions to Bets (wilbro@fairpoint.net) for publication. Please visit the site and let everyone know you like it.

* * * * *

Winter Historian Report

By: Betsy Eggleston

We are about half way through the AAUW year and has your branch saved documents for archiving?

Here is a suggested archiving list:

- Schedule of Year's Activities
- List of Officers for the year/Names of Members
- Secretarial Minutes
- Financial Reports
- Annual Reports
- Your branch's publications, if any
- Important Activities, outlined with any publicity

This list is only a partial suggestion, but is a starting point for a branch. Many of these documents are already in existence, so duplicating them perhaps make easier to archive your branch's year.

If your branch would like more information on the archiving process, please contact me. I will glad to assist you.

Betsy Eggleston, AAUW of Maine Historian.
eggleston62@gmail.com or (207) 667-8518

* * * * *



* * * * *



Betty-Jane Meader, Dora McCarthy and Mary Cathcart Greet Elect Her Attendees at UM on September 27

* * * * *



Jessica Kelly at Elect Her

* * * * *

Elect Her

By: Mary Cathcart

Maine's first Elect Her workshop, held in Wells Conference Center at UMaine on September 27th was a "hit," according to the 26 students from several Maine campuses who attended. Elect Her is a collaboration of AAUW and Running Start which trains and encourages college women to run for student government. AAUW's manager of campus programs Jessica Kelly, came up to facilitate the training. State Senator Emily Cain gave the inspiring luncheon talk and two students who have served in student government spoke about their experiences and urged attendees to run for student government. AAUW members Mary Cathcart, Betty Jane Meader, Susan Landry, and Dora McCarthy attended the

workshop. Penobscot Valley members Sharon Barker, Ruth Lockhart, Mazie Hough and state board members Bets Brown, Molly Bogart and Cathy Bevier were able to meet with Jessica Kelly also. Mary Cathcart, C/U Chair, plans to hold this again in 2015, and to promote it to AAUW's C/U partners throughout Maine.

* * * * *

How You Can Help Stop Domestic Abuse

By: Bets Brown, AAUW of Maine Public Policy Co-chair

After hearing Regina Rooney of the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence speak, I thought it important for us to remember that AAUW stands against domestic violence. Thanks to Ms. Rooney for providing much of the information for this article.

One in four women and one in seven men in the U.S. reports experiencing violence by a current or former spouse or partner at some point in their lives (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010). In 2013, 13,258 people received services from the domestic abuse resource centers of the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence. Domestic abuse homicides continue to account for approximately 50% of all homicides in Maine over time.

Women are 84 percent of spouse abuse victims and 86 percent of victims of abuse at the hands of a boyfriend or girlfriend. About three fourths of the persons who commit family violence are male (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2005).

Domestic abuse is a pattern of coercive behavior that is used by a person against family or household members to gain power and control over the other party in a relationship. This behavior may include: physical violence (strangulation, hitting, kicking, pushing, etc.), sexual assault, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse and threats, stalking, isolation, harm to children, economic control, destruction of personal property, and animal cruelty. This abuse can occur in heterosexual and same-sex relationships, between married and unmarried partners, current and former partners, and between other family and household members.

There are lots of reasons why victims of domestic abuse stay in their relationships. Two important factors are money and children. Domestic abuse is about power and control.

According to the New Hope for Women website, it is against the law in Maine for family or household members to injure or attempt to injure you, threaten you so you fear for your physical safety, force sexual contact against your will, place you in fear of bodily injury, use force or the threat of force to get you to do something that you have a right not to do, or restrict your movements or confine you against your will.

You can help address this problem. First, you can learn about the topic. You can be an advocate against domestic violence. By doing these first two things, you will be prepared to help

change the culture and promote domestic violence awareness. You can be a friend to those in need and can volunteer at the domestic violence programs in your area. Of course, if you witness ongoing abuse, you can call the police. The Statewide Domestic Violence Helpline is 1-866-834-HELP. If you have questions you can contact the Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (1 Weston Court Box #2, Augusta, ME 04330, 207-430-8334, www.mcedv.org).

* * * * *

Enduring Gifts

By: Deborah Cravey, Membership VP

Most long term members of AAUW consider membership to be a gift to ourselves and to the future. The deadline for this Dawnbreaker falls early in December; time to think about gifts of all sorts. If you know an eligible member, why not give a membership in AAUW, no strings attached, for a year? We always hope the recipients of gift memberships will renew but, in any event, membership comes with access to a lot of information and connections and makes AAUW known more widely.

Each month, I receive information via email from Deepti Gudipati, the AAUW Newsletter for Member Leaders, and from 'b myp', the AAUW Membership Matters e-Newsletter. If you are a Membership VP or Branch President and are not receiving these newsletters, contact AAUW or Kim Pollard. There is good information in them even if you can't develop the ideas immediately.

If you have had success with recruitment and retention, please share what worked. Bath-Brunswick has gained members through taking part in a Maine Women's Policy Center event before the election and through several meetings open to the public. AAUW just celebrated a birthday (did you know?), we're 133 years old, and a surprising number of our new members had never heard of AAUW before. We are a very well-kept unintended secret.

Happy New Year, Happy Recruiting, and let's try to keep everyone.

* * * * *

Maine Girls' Day at the State House 2015

By: Molly Bogart

On March 5, 2015, the Maine Women's Policy Center will hold its annual Girls' Day at the State House. It's an opportunity for 100 eighth grade girls from schools across the state to visit Augusta and learn about the political process and how they can be part of it. Volunteers are needed to chaperone small groups of girls throughout the day's activities. If you're interested in volunteering, contact Molly Bogart at mollybogart@gmail.com.

* * * * *

Raise the Minimum Wage, Tackle the Pay Gap

By: Molly Bogart, Co-Chair of Public Policy

Brace yourself. Between 2012 and 2014, Maine fell from the ninth best state in the nation for the wage gap to the seventeenth. According to AAUW, Maine's wage gap increased by two points during those years, from 83% to 81%. Maine women are earning less today in comparison to men than they were two years ago. One policy solution offers the greatest ability to make a substantive difference for Maine women and in Maine's wage gap. It is time that we raise Maine's minimum wage.

According to the National Women's Law Center, over 6 in 10 minimum wage earners in Maine are women. This statistic means that women would disproportionately see an increase in their pay if the minimum wage were raised above the current \$7.50. Aside from the effect that this would have on the wage gap, raising the wage would do a great deal to combat poverty in Maine. A minimum wage earner in Maine makes a mere \$15,600 a year before taxes. This wage puts her \$4,000 below the federal poverty line for a family of three. Even a small increase would have a substantial impact on the number of Maine women and their families living in poverty.

Not only is this solution practical, it is popular. According to a Portland Press Herald poll in September 2014, 75% of Mainers favor an increase in the minimum wage. It's becoming more and more clear that we cannot rely on Congress to increase the wage, and it is time that we turn our attention to the lawmakers at home. Maine hasn't raised the minimum wage in five years and, according to the Maine Women's Policy Center, the state's current minimum wage, when adjusted for inflation, is lower than it was 40 years ago.

We know that the wage gap and poor earnings greatly affect a woman's ability to pay off student loans, support her self and a family, save for retirement, and more. You can take action *today* to decrease the wage gap and combat poverty by contacting your state and federal legislators and telling them why you support raising the state and federal minimum wage.

You can find out who represents you at the state and federal level by visiting <http://bit.ly/MEVoterInfo>. For help contacting your legislators, contact Molly Bogart (mollybogart@gmail.com) or Bets Brown (bbrown6548@gmail.com).

* * * * *

Understanding Choice: the Reproductive Justice Framework

By: Molly Bogart, Co-Chair of Public Policy

In November, I was fortunate to attend an event held by Maine Family Planning that hosted Monica Simpson, Executive Director of SisterSong, the Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective. She gave a brief history of the Reproductive Justice Movement and an overview of SisterSong's work in their home state, Georgia, and across the

country. I was enlightened and inspired by her talk, as was the pro-choice community in attendance.

For many years, AAUW has been an active member of the Maine Choice Coalition. MCC is currently working to fold a reproductive justice understanding into their mission, and I couldn't be more excited and optimistic about its future. For those unfamiliar, here is a brief synopsis of the movement's history and present work.

The Reproductive Justice (RJ) movement was born from communities of color about twenty years ago to broaden the understanding of choice from just abortion to "the right to have children, not have children, and to parent the children we have in safe and healthy environments." In the words of SisterSong, RJ means "moving beyond a demand for privacy and respect for individual decision-making to include the social supports necessary for our individual decisions to be optimally realized, this framework also includes obligations from our government for protecting women's human rights. Our options for making choices have to be safe, affordable and accessible" (<http://bit.ly/1xZGUiG>). RJ seeks to better address the fight for reproductive freedom by understanding that, among other things, legal access to abortion and parenting options doesn't necessarily mean that these choices are actually available to all women – especially those in poverty or constrained by workplace policies meant for the 1950s.

While honoring the progress made on the issue of choice, RJ puts into perspective how far we have to go until women can truly live free and self-determined reproductive lives. According to the Maine Women's Policy Center, 55% of Maine women live without access to safe abortion care near their homes. When we factor in economic accessibility to reproductive health services and women's ability to parent the children they have in healthy and safe environments (food and housing security, healthcare, and more), it is clear Maine women have leagues to traverse until we have real Reproductive Justice, and using the RJ analysis is a promising start.

* * * * *

A Useful Website

Kristin Sweeney

You will hear more on the Educate Maine symposium I attended in the next newsletter. After I attended a workshop entitled, "Know Before you Go:" Publishing Earnings and Employment Data for Maine's Higher Ed Graduates, I thought you might find this rather new website useful sooner rather than later: Employment Outcomes for Maine's Public Post-secondary Graduates (<http://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/wdqi/>). No demographic data were collected, so no gender differentiation will be available, unfortunately.

* * * * *

AAUW Members Help Keep AAUW of Maine Connected

By: Carolyn MacRae

The **Keep AAUW of Maine Connected** development campaign helps us keep state dues low while allowing us to continue AAUW of Maine partnering relationships with other state organizations that share our goals and provide financial assistance for AAUW of Maine Board members for travel to regional and national AAUW meetings.

This year's **Keep AAUW of Maine Connected** campaign (July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015) is now underway. State board members Bets Brown, Deborah Cravey, Judy Dinmore, Carolyn MacRae, Betty-Jane Meader, and Kristin Sweeny have already contributed a total of \$400.00.

This fall, we co-sponsored a gubernatorial debate with the Maine Women's Policy Center and we were represented at the Maine Women's Lobby Gala.

In addition, AAUW of Maine board members continue to:

- ◆ Partner and network with the Maine Women's Lobby, the Maine Choice Coalition, and the Coalition for Maine Women through attendance at coalition meetings and scheduled events.
- ◆ Work with Kim Pollard, our regional field officer, to increase AAUW membership and participation in public policy activities throughout the state.
- ◆ Support Maine NEW Leadership, a six-day leadership training program for undergraduate college women that provides experiential training in many aspects of politics and policy making. All attendees are invited to join AAUW.

Please send your contribution—above and beyond the \$10.00 state dues that you have already paid—to help AAUW of Maine continue to increase our impact by staying connected. Make your check payable to "AAUW of Maine" and send it to:

Carolyn MacRae, Treasurer
17 Martin Avenue, Waterville, ME 04901

Check for: () \$10 () \$25 () \$50 () \$100 () Other _____

Name: _____

Branch: _____

Your support is appreciated. Contributions will be acknowledged in future issues of the *Dawnbreaker* and at the AAUW of Maine annual convention this spring.

* * * * *



Kristin Sweeney Assisting a Student in Registering as an E-Student Affiliate at the Gubernatorial Forum at USM

* * * * *

AAUW Funds Report

By: Susan Landry

Funds Report: Contributions from Maine (AAUW-Maine, branches, and individuals) for the period January 1 through September 30 total \$5,308. I look forward to reporting our entire year's figure next time. Remember that gifts postmarked later than December 31 are 2015 contributions. Also be aware that the Association is promoting unrestricted donations as most beneficial to the organization. Such donations can help launch new and innovative programs to help women and girls, such as the highly successful initiatives *Elect Her* and *Start Smart*. Donations to AAUW Funds have also been used to provide scholarships to NCCWSL attendees when there was a gap between available scholarship funds and the large number of scholarship requests received. And donations to AAUW Funds helped expand *Tech Trek*, bringing science camps to hundreds more girls this past year. In fact, recognizing how valuable it is for the Association to have access to undesignated funds that can be directed toward the greatest current need at any one time, our 2015 basket raffle proceeds will be dedicated 100% to the unrestricted funds "bucket" #9110.

Speaking of the basket raffle, has your branch begun planning your contribution(s)? Don't miss out on the fun! Keep in mind that we hope to raise 10% more with this coming raffle than we did with 2014's. This will mean realizing about \$50 more, or a total of nearly \$550. We can do this, right?! I'll be working with your branch liaisons to promote pre-convention sales, and I'd love to hear from any and all who have suggestions on increasing our sales so we can send in a nice big check this spring.

LAF: AAUW's Title IX Champions!

Recognizing AAUW's incredible Title IX work

The Title IX Champion award celebrates the vital Title IX advocacy work of AAUW supporters across the country. In the 40 years since Title IX was passed, AAUW members and supporters have done amazing work to promote gender equity in education. They have investigated Title IX compliance, cheered on women athletes, supported educators who called for fairness, lobbied for equitable school policies, and helped teach students, parents, educators, coaches, and administrators about the law's requirements. We have much more work ahead of us to fulfill Title IX's promise, and AAUW Title IX champions inspire us to press on! Nominate a Title IX Champion: send a summary of the Title IX work and a photo to laf@aauw.org. Nominations are accepted on a rolling basis, and new Champions are announced three times a year; submit your nominee by February 13, and you may see your Champion posted late that month! Champions can be individuals or groups, even organizations; a branch member, a community standout, a member of Congress—all are eligible. For inspiration: <http://www.aauw.org/resource/title-ix-champions/>



Same-Sex Marriage Banned in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee

Against the tide of recent victories for marriage equality, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit recently became the first federal court of appeals to uphold a same-sex marriage ban. In a 2–1 ruling, the 6th Circuit supported bans in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee. Previously, all the circuit courts to consider the issue had ruled that same-sex marriage bans were unconstitutional.

The decision creates a circuit split — contrary rulings from circuit courts on the same legal issue — which could make it more likely that the U.S. Supreme Court will accept a same-sex marriage case. The 6th Circuit could decide to rehear the case, meaning that it may be some time before the appeal reaches the Supreme Court. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

Supreme Court Prohibits Misleading Anti-choice Practices

In a victory for reproductive rights, the U.S. Supreme Court recently declined to hear an appeal from crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs) challenging a New York ordinance that prohibits deceptive practices. CPCs are typically run by anti-choice groups that wish to dissuade women from seeking abortions or emergency contraception. Many CPCs use misleading advertisements and staff practices (such as having non-medical staff dress in medical uniforms) to make clients believe the CPC is a health care clinic when in fact it provides no medical care. Moreover, because clients are led to believe that the CPC is a medical provider, they assume that their personal information will be kept confidential under health

privacy laws—when in fact those laws don't apply to most CPCs.

New York City passed an ordinance that, among other provisions, requires CPCs to publicly disclose the fact that they do not employ any licensed medical providers. Several centers filed suit, claiming that the ordinance infringed on their free speech rights. A federal court in New York upheld the provision requiring CPCs to tell clients that they cannot provide medical services, and the Supreme Court's refusal means that the lower court's decision to restrict misleading anti-choice activities will stand.

Notes from *The Story of 2014* (issued recently by AAUW)

LAF has adopted the case *Moshak v. University of Tennessee*, which will draw attention to gender discrimination in college athletics. The plaintiffs claim they were unlawfully discriminated against and eventually forced out of their positions during a university-led merger of the men's and women's athletic departments. See <http://www.aauw.org/resource/moshak-v-university-of-tennessee/> for more information. Three other suits adopted in 2014 support survivors of military sexual assault.

The California State Personnel Board reinstated a law judge's 2006 ruling in favor of three LAF-supported plaintiffs who had filed whistleblower retaliation complaints against Feather River Community College, alleging that they were terminated after raising concerns about Title IX compliance and discrimination. Read more at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/feather-river-community-college-cases/>

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination upheld a ruling against UMass-Dartmouth in LAF plaintiff Lulu Sun's gender and race discrimination case, vindicating Sun's claims and awarding her significant damages. The full story can be found at <http://www.aauw.org/resource/lulu-sun-v-university-of-massachusetts-dartmouth/>

And Five Issues to Keep an Eye on During the Supreme Court's Current Term

Fallout from *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*: the legacy of this decision could be that even more employers will be able to restrict their employees' access to contraception. TRAP laws that restrict choice: Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers is designed to prevent doctors from performing abortions altogether—under the guise of protecting women's health.

Pregnancy discrimination exemplified by *Young v. UPS*: pregnant workers could be left vulnerable to discrimination in the workplace if "pregnancy blind" employer policies are upheld.

Voting rights at risk due to the 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*: the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was considerably weakened despite the name remaining intact; only close vigilance will meet the challenges presented throughout the country.

Marriage equality surges forward! In the best news of the new term, one same-sex marriage ban after another has been struck down. This certainly bears watching, as certainly the term is far from over.

You can go to the AAUW website for more information and advocacy suggestions.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to help balance the scales of justice!

<https://ww2.aauw.org/gift/?treatment=DEFAULT9110>

Susan Nolan Landry, AAUW Funds Liaison
email : susan.landry@umit.maine.edu
phone: 207/581-1509 Mon-Fri 9-4

* * * * *

Maine Women's Day in the Hall of Flags

Kristin Sweeney

On Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2015, the Coalition for Maine Women will host the annual Maine Women's Day events from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Hall of Flags at the Maine State House in Augusta. In years past, AAUW has been invited to participate. Volunteers are needed to attend and assist AAUW of Maine with a tabling event. I will bring my many brochures and the AAUW banner. You need bring only your dedicated selves. There is ample free parking in a garage at the corner of Sewall St. and Capitol St.

* * * * *

Achievement Citation Award

By: Regina Oliver

Achievement Citation Award nominations must be submitted by branches or individuals no later than **January 15th** to Regina Oliver at roliver@roadrunner.com. The information that must be included in the brief submission includes the individual's age (between 25 and 50 years of age), she should be eligible to join AAUW and her accomplishments should be consistent with the organization's mission and public policy positions. Also she should be available to speak at the May 1-2 state convention in Orono. Any questions; contact Regina at the above address or call 873-7410.

* * * * *

Dear AAUW member:

Your auto insurance is supposed to guard you every mile you drive ... every day of the year. **But what if you're paying too much for protection that stops short if you're in an accident?**

As a member of AAUW, it's easy to find out. Get your Savings & Security Custom Quote now

Imagine **paying less for every auto insurance bill with a special AAUW discount ...**

What if you could cut those bills while at the same time locking in **more security for your loved ones whenever they're on the road?**

Picture **saving up to \$500.00 if you were ever in an accident ...** just by taking \$100.00 off your deductible for every year of safe driving when you add Vanishing Deductible.

As a valued AAUW member, you're now authorized for special savings with lower group rates that can help you do just that.

Thanks to an alliance between American Association of University Women and Nationwide Insurance®, you can lower your auto insurance bills – while you set up even higher peace of mind whenever you're on the road.

And what if you're in an accident? Just one accident could cost a safe driver like you as much as \$500.00 – **but it doesn't have to.**

Lower rates. Better protection. Extra-mile privileges if you're in an accident. **See how low your auto insurance bills could go ...** thanks to this special program for AAUW members.

Sincerely,
Cordy Galligan
Vice President, Marketing and Business Development
American Association of University Women

P.S. Act fast and you may qualify for a refund on your current coverage. Your insurance company is required to issue you a prompt refund check for the majority of the amount of your premium that hasn't been used.

* * * * *

Grandmother for Reproductive Rights

By: Wendy Ross

GRR, Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights, is making a video for the Abortion Care Network of member personal stories of the days before the Supreme Court's Roe v Wade decision in 1973 to legalize abortion. Last year, GRR won an honorable mention award for its video submission to this same group. You can see the submission at www.grandmothersforreproductiverights.org.

Through speaker programs and reading, GRR members are educating themselves about the importance of court rulings on matters of women's economic and reproductive rights. We are watching decisions of courts across the nation. We also will be watching laws proposed in the new session of the Maine legislature to make sure that women's access to reproductive services are protected. And we are looking for new ways to present material to catch the attention of the media and young

people. For example, we want to show that unwanted pregnancies often lead to impoverishment for both mother and child and have consequences for the wider community and the world.

In addition, we continue to hold monthly social events where we sew potholders to sell. The popular bright yellow potholders say GRR on one side and "to handle a hot topic" on the other. If you wish to buy a potholder, or a yellow GRR T-shirt, or to join with us, please go to the website mentioned above. We would love to hear from you.

* * * * *

Networking in New England

Kristin Sweeney

Fifty years since the final report from John F. Kennedy's Commission on the Status of Women and so little has changed. There was a collective gasp of dismay from the 400 or so women attending "**The Unfinished Agenda: New England Women's Policy Conference**" as we watched this film clip at the JFK Presidential Library and Museum in Boston on November 7, 2014. There were several attendees and participants from Maine.

The other co-host was the **Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy (CWPPP)** at the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts.

This was an important **first biennial working conference** with the following goals:

1. Cross sector (public/private/academic/nonprofit) dialogue
2. Creation of a regional learning community
3. Benchmarking and tracking progress over time
4. Promotion of effective coordinated action and strategies across the region to make a difference in economic security to women and their families

Former Lt. Gov. Evelyn Murphy (MA), founding president of The Wage Project Inc., introduced the keynote speaker, Julianne Malveaux, Ph.D. in economics from MIT, author and President of Bennett College in Greensboro. Dr. Malveaux commented that so little had changed at MIT in the last 20 years that it was frightening. Dr. Malveaux was an engaging speaker with comments as follows.

A commission can only do so much. The legislators must be on board. We are stuck and moving backward due to little political will. Neither Republicans nor Democrats have treated women well and neither party has been sufficiently forceful on equal wages. "Not enough people care enough" about women's issues. We need someone with a slogan, "We Demand Equal Pay."

Two thirds of those who earn minimum wage are women. This low wage says that we do not value child and elder care workers.

Change is critical, but we need internal change as well as external. We have to live real diversity. We need to be architects of our own destiny. We need to say in unison that we need women warriors among younger women and across race and class. "If not, you are complicit in your own oppression."

First plenary session: New England's Challenges and Opportunities: Moving the Dial on Women's Economic Security – a panel.

Moderator: Teresa Younger, President and CEO, **Ms. Foundation for Women**, who stated that New England is on the front edge of women's issues.

Kristin Smith, Professor Sociology, University of NH, presented many statistics comparing 1970 to 2012 among the New England States. **Maine** had far worse statistics than the other states.

Panel comments:

- Young women are not aware that the gender wage gap still exists.
- It is important to put women in positions where they can set the policy and agenda and bring life experience into elected office.
- There needs to be a collective effort among women and men to change caretaking, the workplace and elected office.
- Be in touch with elected officials regarding Child Care, Equal Pay, full funding of WAWA, Health Care Access, Education and STEM careers.

Lunch

Rachel Kaprielian, **Massachusetts Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development**, discussed "actionable steps."

- The average STEM career paycheck is double at the entry level.
- The wage gap in STEM careers is less.
- In STEM fields there are 24% women, compared to 48% of the general workforce.
- We need to track why women leave STEM fields in higher education.
- MA Governor Deval has promoted a MA Chapter of "Million Women Mentors".
<http://www.millionwomenmentors.org>. They want to sign up 10,000 mentors. Fourteen major companies have already signed up and they are recruiting 90 more by the end of the year.
- Massachusetts has a federal grant to investigate the cost of paid family leave.

During lunch there were also table discussions of "**Call to Action. A Policy Framework for Women's Economic Security**," a preliminary document developed by the conference co-conveners (CWPP, University of Massachusetts Boston; Permanent Commission on the Status of Women, CT;

Maine's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women; MA Commission on the Status of Women; NH Women's Foundation; Women's Fund of RI; and VT Commission on Women).

The **preliminary policy agenda in the "Call to Action"** was:

- Wages and Income Security (Pay Equity, Raising the Minimum Wage, and Retirement Security)
- Health and Family Leave Policies (Paid Sick Days and Paid Family and Medical Leave)
- Childcare (Universal Pre-K, Affordable and Accessible Childcare, Improved Education and Compensation for Childcare Workers)
- Elder Care (Support for Family Caregivers, Investment in Elder Care Services, and Support for the Home Health Care Workforce).

Second plenary: Innovative Approaches & Best Practices: Learning from the States – a panel

Moderator: Ellen Bravo, Executive Director, **Family Values @ Work** (21 state coalitions), who noted that there has to be recognition that a problem exists and then a solution must be identified, as well as a strategy on how to win.

VT - an Equal Pay Law was successfully passed in 2013. Key factors: accountability, transparency of wages in the workplace, guaranteed right to request flexible working arrangements without fear of retaliation. They also had a study committee on paid sick days. The proposals were also good for men. A key to winning was an Attorney General's conference in 2012 on Equal Pay for Women.

Boston Women's Workforce Council - private/public partnership was the key. Elimination of the wage gap makes business sense, especially since Boston has a higher cohort of 25-42 year-old women in the workforce than any other city in the country. Businesses have been frustrated at the failure of some attempts to assist women, probably due to subtle bias in the workforce. The "**100% Talent: The Boston Women's Compact**" has 50 companies voluntarily reporting wages and bonuses. An asset driven model is a best practice.

CT - the CT Retirement Security Board was created by the General Assembly in 2014. Anyone in the private sector can buy into the plan, which will be run by a state manager.

Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Jessica Maurer, Executive Director - there has been 20 years of conferences on aging in Maine. Northern Maine has a shrinking workforce and there is a job-worker gap. Northern Maine has only 3,000 births per year. The Maine Speaker of the House convened a conference on aging and various agencies have produced a "**Blueprint for Action**." It's a collaborative process with goals of helping people age in place and including older workers in the workforce. Thirty legislators are involved. The demographics of the legislators are important because a third of them are family caregivers.

RI - Temporary Caregivers Insurance (TCI) became law on Jan. 1, 2014. They expanded Temporary Disability Insurance, which dated back to 1942. RI was the first state to have it (now five states). Up to four weeks can now be used to care for someone else (a seriously ill child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law or grandparent or to bond with a newborn child, adopted child, or foster child). RI was the third state to pass TCI and the first state to do it with job protection (CA and NJ now have that as well). Two thousand families have already benefited since 1/1/14. Keys to success were research by the Women's Policy Institute (Women's Fund of RI), and coalition with business, nonprofits and labor unions, as well as 1-on-1 conversations with legislators.

NH - Medicaid Expansion (for 50,000), which had failed to pass twice previously. The key was ongoing collaboration in the Republican Senate, which finally saw the benefit to the state budget. It passed in 2014 and must be reauthorized in 2016.

Break Out Sessions

Women in Poverty: Living in Maine had a panel composed of: Dee Clarke, Consultant and Mentor, Homeless Voices for Justice and Preble Street Anti-Trafficking Coalition; Fatuma Hussein, United Somali Women of Maine; and Eliza Townsend, Executive Director, Maine Women's Policy Center. The moderator was Holly Stover, Maine Commission on the Status of Women.

I attended the following session:

New England State Paid Leave Policies: How to Organize Successful Campaigns and Coalitions – a panel

RI - Temporary Caregivers Insurance - "seriously ill loved one" defined by statute. A strong coalition and finding a legislative champion were important.

MA - "Raise Up Massachusetts," a well organized coalition for raising the minimum wage and earned paid sick leave with 7000 volunteers. The legislature passed **increased minimum wage** in 2013. Paid Sick Days was a 12-year fight. A membership and leadership development project obtained over 285,000 signatures. The united forces were the key to success. They used cable and Internet video rather than expensive TV ads. The passage of **Earned Sick Time as Question #4** (law proposed by initiative referendum) on the Massachusetts ballot on Nov. 6, 2014 was a great affirmation.

CT – the Campaign for Paid Family Leave hopes for a bill in the next legislative session. They plan additional visibility through events and strategies to mobilize through the legislative appointment of a task force to study the issue. They found it was effective to use placards with photos of supporters and their personal phrases of support.

VT - Main Street Alliance of Vermont (a business organization). The Paid Sick Days Campaign has been going on for a decade. Paid Family Leave failed in the House. Paid Sick Leave was presented in 2009, but within 24 hours, the business lobby had obtained 100 signatures and it did not make it out of committee. They paid attention to alliances in

the business community but, in spite of a coalition with media savvy VT Workers Center, the bill still did not pass. They plan to engage negative voices on the business side.

CT- Working Families (an independent political organization) - campaign for the Paid Sick Leave Law that began in 2007. In 2011, **Paid Sick Leave** was enacted and became the standard for service workers. Media began asking candidates their opinions on the topic and this engaged politicians and was good for those with favorable electoral records. Corporate lobbyists claimed that all businesses were opposed, but they engaged supportive small businesses. Initially it was the labor unions, then the Commission on the Status of Women and other women's coalitions joined. They also used endorsements by preventive health care authorities. There is no unlikely partner, except the business community, and it was easy to grow the coalition. Some of their partners were: employment lawyers group for plaintiffs, teachers' union, PTA, Public Health, Interfaith, ambassadors to immigrant communities, AARP, and Senior Agenda Coalition.

Some general comments included:

- Raise Up Massachusetts is a "bottom up" strategy.
- A referendum is quite different from legislation.
- Use "Earned" vs. "Paid" sick days
- Many people have never worked a minimum wage job and have no concept of how little the earnings are.
- "Carving in" works for paid sick leave with workers who deal with the public.
- Part-time legislatures are problematic.
- CNAs spoke to the legislature in RI.
- Any person who is not a lobbyist who shows up at a State House makes an impression.

Engagement and Next Steps: Winning Through State and Regional Action

Latifa Lyles, Director, Women's Bureau, US Dept. of Labor, gave the "**View from Washington.**" She made the following points.

- In the last 50 years, women have increased educational attainment and there are more women with children working.
- The US is not in good company from a global perspective when it comes to work and family policies.
- There is no federal maternity leave.
- There were many applications for the paid leave analysis grants at the state level totaling \$500,00; RI, MA, MT and DC were successful.
- Campaign: "It's Time for America to Lead on Leave"(4.5 millions views in 2-3 weeks)
- The way forward is raising wages for current jobs and increasing the quality of jobs.
- We need best practices on childcare.

"Call to Action" Round Table

Moderator - Ann Bookman, Director, CWPPP. The Call to Action will be revised. We will reconvene in 2016.

What does it mean to sign on to the **Call to Action**?

1. Agreement that new policies are needed.
2. Work on one or more policy issues.
3. Agree to track progress with CWPPP.

Priorities for panelists:

- CT** Paid Family Leave
- ME** Change of issues, ?ballot measures, need to organize, kitchen table conversations (Eliza Townshend, Executive Director, Maine Women's Policy Center)
- RI** Pregnancy accommodations and pay equity.
- NH** SB207 Paycheck Fairness Act passed last year
- VT** Earned Sick Time
- MA** Celebrate the success of MA Question #4 (Earned Sick Time)

How to organize

- CT** Begin with current coalition partners
- ME** Interconnectivity of issues is key. Assist other organizations. Coalition already exists (Eliza Townshend)
- RI** Gubernatorial and municipal appointments of women project. The new RI Governor and the new Mayor-elect of Woonsocket are women. RI coalition.
- NH** First step was attendance at this conference.
- VT** 25-30 coalitions already have the same themes.
- MA** Continue current visibility. The Commission on the Status of Women has 9 municipal members and 5-6 regional members. May 7, 2015 is Advocacy Day.

If you made it to the end of my account, you can see there have been some accomplishments across New England, but there remains so much more to do! I hope to attend the second biennial conference in 2016.

* * * * *

Branching Out: News from Our Branches

Bath-Brunswick Branch

By: Sophie Whitehouse & Marlise Schwartz

The Bath-Brunswick branch is enjoying a busy fall and winter for 2014-2015. As has been the tradition for many years in our branch, we gather every September at the Brunswick United Methodist Church to start our fall season with good food and great conversations. At that time, our first speaker for the year was Kathleen Fleury, Editor in Chief of Down East Magazine.

This was followed by our annual Growstown School bake sale during the Columbus Day weekend. Our members contributed cakes, bread, cookies and other goodies and also helped organize, set up and clear up for this annual event. We could not have done it without all their hard work, which makes Growstown a success for Brunswick and the area.

We then had the pleasure of hosting two wonderful speakers: Dr. Susan Chadima D.V.M from the Androscoggin Animal Hospital in Topsham came to speak in October about her

experiences as a veterinarian in Afghanistan and Becky Shepherd, chef and owner of Wild Oats Bakery and Café in downtown Brunswick and also at the Brunswick Landing. Becky came to share with us her twenty years experience of balancing running her business and her life.

We will soon wrap up our 2014 event sequence with our Annual Greens Event fundraiser at the Curtis Library in Brunswick. With this fundraiser, AAUW Bath-Brunswick members support both our local scholarship to a non-traditional student and our annual donation to the national AAUW Funds. It promises to be a joyful evening to celebrate the Holidays with the members of our branch.

* * *

Hancock County Branch

By: Louise Storer

In September, the Hancock County branch celebrated its 35th anniversary with a public reception - complete with cake and flowers - at the Ellsworth Library. It was an opportunity to see some former members who have moved away and to meet potential new members.

Our October meeting was with the CEO of Blue Hill Memorial Hospital who discussed the opportunities and challenges for small rural hospitals and how becoming part of a larger hospital corporation - in this case Eastern Maine Health Care - permits him to offer more varied and coordinated care than would otherwise be possible.

Also during October, we were co-sponsors (with the League of Women Voters and the Ellsworth American) of a series of candidate forums for those running in local races within Hancock County.

In November, we enjoyed our annual book report meeting, at which members recommended books which they have enjoyed and which we think others would like.

Our December meeting will reflect the Holiday season and will feature that seasonal treat - take-out pizza. Our topic for discussion will be an event or a person who has had a major influence -for the good, one hopes - in shaping our lives.

* * *

Penobscot Valley Branch

By: Janet Givens

A very interesting and enjoyable branch meeting was held in November at the Page Farm Museum on campus at the University of Maine. Patty Henner, director of the museum shared information about the museum, and the featured speaker was Gail Chase, president of WAN, the Women's Agricultural Network of Maine. Claire Ackroyd, who works as an inspector of organic farms added to the dialogue.

Branch members are already working on plans for the AAUW of Maine convention May 1 and 2, 2015 in Orono. Books have started to come in for our April book sale. Special thanks to Susan Landry, Fran Haines and Sharon Ashworth for their efforts.

In January a potluck brunch will be held at Dirigo Pines. in Orono. Phyllis Borns and Evelyn Dearborn have coordinated this event.

Linda Robinson, midwife, will speak about her experiences in Africa at the March branch meeting, and the annual meeting and catered dinner will take place at the Church Of Universal Fellowship in Orono in May planned by Mary Cathcart, Janice Osgood and Lee Davis.

* * * * *

LINDSEY M. LACHANCE
Editor, *Dawnbreaker*
AAUW of Maine
New Address (starting on 01.10.15):
326 Stillwater Avenue
Unit 14
Old Town, ME 04468
lindseylachanceaauw@gmail.com
<http://aauw-me.aauw.net>
Facebook: AAUW Maine