



Iowa Branch Connector

August, 2014

A Monthly Electronic Bulletin for AAUW Leaders in Iowa

The Value of Affiliation with AAUW: *By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.*

Welcome to this monthly electronic publication. You are invited to share this information with other members and branch leaders by forwarding it to them, or providing a hard copy.

Greetings from your new Co-Directors for Public Policy, Jane Nettleton and Anne Stansbury Johnson! You can find out more about us at our new AAUW Iowa website, aauw-ia.aauw.net under Public Policy. We have already posted articles pertaining to Public Policy on the website and will continue to do so, so make that website one of your Favorites and check there often.

With a very important off-year election taking place this fall, we hope that your branch's priorities are to register voters, to attend any campaign events and ask questions about AAUW issues, and/or conduct a Candidate Forum.

Registering new voters is important because we want people to be able to exercise their right to vote in all elections. Your branch could set up a booth at a mall or grocery store. You might also register voters at a community event in your city. Consider working with another group to do this. AAUW suggested at a recent phone meeting that, if you are in a college town, you might consider working with a Panhellenic organization since they are often looking for community service projects. Citizens can register to vote up to 10 days before a general election OR on Election Day.

Forms for registering voters are available from your courthouse and can be downloaded from the [Iowa Secretary of State's website](#). Very helpful answers to questions about registering voters can be found at that website as well.

The three target groups to register are those just reaching voting age, those who have moved since the last election, and college students who wish to vote at college. College students can either vote at their home address or at their college address, but not both!

At the registration table you may display AAUW membership materials or AAUW banner/ buttons but not material about specific candidates or issues.

Attending any campaign event is crucial to getting our issues in the minds of a potential member of Congress or state legislator. Remember that the winner will be representing YOU no matter what your party affiliation! The following questions about AAUW issues are important ones to ask:

- The gender wage gap still stands at an average of 77 cents on the dollar, and the numbers are worse for mothers, the disabled, and women of color. But with Congress' failure to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act in April 2014 – the third such failure in four years – our nation's fair pay laws remain weak and outdated. **What is your position on the Paycheck Fairness Act, and what do you intend to do when you are elected to Congress/the Legislature to help close the wage gap?** (From Erin Prangley, AAUW)
- There have been several recent news stories about mishandling of sexual assault on college campuses. **What is your position on increasing resources to promote prevention efforts and stronger enforcement of federal law prohibiting campus sexual assault?** (From Erin Prangley, AAUW)
- For candidates for Iowa Legislature: Independent Private Instruction is a new category of home schooling included in the 2013 Education Reform Bill (HF 215). It allows anyone to instruct her/his own and up to four unrelated children; functioning for all practical purposes as a teacher without preparation, licensure, or a background check. There is no required curriculum and no required assessment. Children are exempt from immunization requirements, may not receive special education services, may not dual enroll in public school for academics or extra-curricular activities, and may not be issued a diploma. Children are subject to compulsory attendance and truancy laws, but there is no requirement that the name of the person responsible for instruction or the names of the student be reported to the district superintendent. There are no educational standards and no safety assurances for students under IPI. **Would you vote for a bill to rescind Independent Private Instruction provisions?**

Holding a Candidate Forum is one effective way to educate voters about the candidates' positions on AAUW Iowa issues. We have placed very complete instructions to help your branch host a Candidate Forum under Public Policy at aauw-ia.aauw.net.

Please let either Anne or Jane know if your branch plans to carry out one or more of these Public Policy priorities this fall and then how it went. The Algona Branch has a report of a recent campaign event members attended on their branch website at the AAUW Iowa website, and your branch can do the same! If you have questions, our contact information is below.

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