

AAUW Iowa Branch Connector

February 2009

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 branch leaders and members by forwarding it to them, or providing a hard copy.

– Diane Patton, AAUW IA President

State Conference at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa - April 17-18

The conference theme, **Breaking Through Barriers**, will help us challenge barriers

- to matching philanthropic and financial goals,
- to international communication and assistance,
- to dynamic membership marketing & recruitment,
- to communication technology,
- to legislative advocacy,
- to science, technology, engineering and math careers for girls
- employment equity
- to the way we've always done things

Christie Vilsack, former First Lady of Iowa, will headline the conference on Friday evening with "Let's Start the Conversation." She will share information about The Iowa Initiative, an effort that aims to reduce the high rate of unintended pregnancies among Iowa women ages 18-30 through networking, research and public outreach. As the Executive Director of the Iowa Initiative, Christie is traveling the state and working with others to open dialog and make this a mainstream, main street conversation.

Housing: Have a B&B experience at an AAUW member home. Waverly, Cedar Falls and Waterloo branch members are being recruited to provide a Friday night B&B experience to a limited number of conference attendees in exchange for an AAUW philanthropic donation. Look for additional information about this possibility when the conference information is posted on the AAUW website and in the AAUW Iowa Initiative Newsletter. The Super 8 and the Comfort Inn have blocks of rooms set aside for AAUW Iowa as well.

Registration: Special Offer – Two first-time registrants for the price of one! To encourage members who have never attended an AAUW Iowa Conference, two first-time attendees need to send their registrations together to get the benefit of two for the price of one.

Full Conference including meals: \$80

1 day only including meal: \$50/\$60 late

Students including meal: \$25

1st time attendees: 2 for 1 - \$80 for 2 days and \$50 for 1 day

Go-Green Auction for EF/LAF/Giving Circle: Recycled, Consumable, Repurposed items are sought for the Go-Green Auction. Think creatively about this fundraiser for our favorite AAUW philanthropies.

Association Bylaws to be Discussed at Iowa State Conference

The Association is proposing major changes in the organizational bylaws which will be voted on at the Association Convention in St Louis, MO. They will be printed in full in the Outlook magazine but you can find them available now on-line at www.aauw.org. Go to the **About AAUW** tab at the top of the home page, then select **Charter and Bylaws** tab. From this page you can select and print the Proposed Revised Bylaws Introduction, Proposed Bylaws, Proposed AAUW Action Fund Bylaws, Proposed Amendments to the AAUW Charter, Proposed AAUW Bylaws Q&A. Links to additional background information may be found at this same page.

In preparation for this important vote, AAUW Board Member Ronni Nivala from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will lead the discussion on the proposed changes during the AAUW Iowa State Conference on April 18. This will be a great opportunity for Iowa members to learn more about the proposed changes, share their thoughts with each other and the Association, advise the AAUW Iowa voting delegates who will be attending the St Louis convention, and take home information for their branches. Individuals and branches may wish to review the proposals at a branch meeting or over coffee in preparation for the discussion at our state conference and later for the association convention.

Among the decisions to be made at the St Louis Convention will be:

- Whether AAUW membership will be comprised of anyone who supports the mission and purpose of the Association. (The rationale offered is that the effectiveness of AAUW relates to the commitment of its members, not their qualifications i.e. graduation with an associate degree or higher)
- Whether dues will be set annually by the association's board of directors.
- Whether members of that board of directors can be selected by all members, voting by snail mail, email or in person. ie. each member has one vote regardless of the size of her or his branch

In addition there are other decisions related to branch and state structure, and frequency of national meetings of the membership and association directors.

Association Convention, St Louis, MO – June 26-28

Early Bird Convention Registration is available until 11:59 p.m. (EST) March 22, 2009. www.aauw.org
Lily Ledbetter will keynote the Association Convention – see Fair Pay Act story below.

St Louis is within easy driving distance for Iowans and I'm hopeful that many will plan to attend this historic convention. Please let me know who from your branch may be attending so we can be in contact with one another.

Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act signed by President Obama - view the photos of the signing ceremony at http://www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue_advocacy/actionpages/LLFPA.cfm

AAUW applauds President Barack Obama for signing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which restores the long-standing interpretation of civil rights laws and EEOC policies that allow employees to challenge any discriminatory paycheck they receive. "President Obama has put pay discrimination at the top of the agenda, right where it belongs. The wage gap doesn't just hurt working women, it hurts families as well," said AAUW Executive Director Linda D. Hallman, CAE, who attended the signing ceremony. "The wage gap not only affects a woman's paycheck, it can eventually reduce retirement and social security income. That could mean the loss of \$1 million or more over one woman's lifespan," Hallman said.

Lilly Ledbetter is perhaps the best-known face of pay equity. She worked for nearly two decades at the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company in Gadsden, AL. Despite receiving top performance awards, Ledbetter discovered that she had been paid significantly less than male co-workers with the same job. After her November 1998 retirement, she filed suit under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and was awarded back pay and other remedies in a jury trial. The U.S. Supreme Court's 5-4 decision not only erased Ledbetter's award, but also left women, minorities, and others in Ledbetter's situation with virtually no recourse to pay discrimination.

Membership Pilot Project –More Information

In response to the Association's Voluntary Membership Pilot Project (MPP), **the AAUW Iowa Board of Directors has established the mechanism for AAUW Iowa to receive electronic dues payment from the Association if a branch chooses to adopt the MPP method of payment. Each branch still has the option to participate in the MPP– or not.** If a branch wishes to continue collecting dues in the traditional manner and writing branch checks to the state and association for the dues, the branches may continue to do so. Branch leaders may opt in to the MPP for their branch and continue to collect dues from some members as they have in the past, while other members of their branch may choose to pay their individual dues electronically (via credit card or bank bill payer), which may be particularly helpful for branch members who are seeking convenience. An updated briefing, Current Topics Briefing #17, January 29, 2009 has additional information and is accessible at www.aauw.org.

Specific details and step-by-step instructions will be distributed electronically and posted on the AAUW website by April 15, 2009 and training will be available at the 2009 national convention in St Louis.

To learn more, the complete series of briefings may be accessed at:
http://www.aauw.org/member_center/briefings/index.cfm

Campaign College kick-off held January 31, 2009 at ISU, Ames

- Hosted by AAUW Iowa & Ames Branch

AAUW, the American University Women and Politics Institute, and Running Start have joined forces to launch a pilot program to increase the numbers of young women running for student offices on their campuses. Campaign College kicked off January 31 at Iowa State University, hosted by AAUW Iowa, the Ames Branch, and the Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women & Politics. Maggie Luttrell, vice-president of ISU student body and a 2008 participant in the AAUW National Conference of College Women Student Leaders successfully applied for Campaign College to come to ISU. Twenty students participated in the day long workshop.

The University of Louisiana, Lafayette and Nyack College, Manhattan are the next two locations. Kate Farrar, Director of AAUW Leadership and Training Institute, Washington D.C., facilitated the workshop.

To learn more, http://www.aauw.org/About/newsroom/pressreleases/campaignCollege_013009.cfm

Preliminary 2008 Gifting Reports For the period of 1/1/2008-12/31/2008

AAUW Iowa members provided philanthropic gifts in a variety of ways - as individuals and branches, as friends and family, to honor someone or in memory of someone.

- **EF: \$12,634.00**
- **LAF: \$2,282.70**
- **LTI (Mary Ann Ahrens-IA Giving Circle): \$10,748.30**
- **Association: \$2,031.00**

2008 Totals of \$27,696 compared to 2007 Totals of \$21,834.99 is a 22% increase. Way to go!

Gov. Culver Includes Funding for Crisis Centers in His Budget

Crisis Centers serving domestic violence and sexual assault victims need a stable funding source. Gov. Culver has included them in his budget and Attorney General Tom Miller has endorsed legislation for it. Now it's time for us to thank the governor for his commitment to helping victims become survivors. An additional thank you should be extended to First Lady Mari Culver for her assistance. Our next step is to contact our legislators to share our support. Public Policy Chair Sandra Wilson is our contact.

Events of Interest:

➤ **An Evening with (AAUW Member) Greg Mortenson and "Three Cups of Tea."**

Mortenson will discuss his work in the Middle East and two new books, "Three Cups of Tea - Young Readers Edition" and "Listen to the Wind."

Thursday, February 12 at 7 p.m.

Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center at University of Northern Iowa

The event is free and open to the public. www.uni.edu/Mortensen

In addition, AAUW members are among those collecting Pennies for Peace, a program of Greg Mortenson's Central Asia Institute which supports community-based education, especially for girls, in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

➤ **Celebrate International Women's Day with AAUW and CARE through "A POWERFUL NOISE"**

Through AAUW's and CARE's partnership, AAUW encourages you to join CARE (www.care.org) and more than 120,000 people gathering in 400 theaters across the United States to celebrate International Women's Day 2009. **On the evening of March 5, 6:30 pm CT, CARE is hosting an unprecedented one-night event featuring the theatrical premiere of "A Powerful Noise," an acclaimed documentary that follows three extraordinary women** – Hanh is an HIV-positive widow in Vietnam, Nada is a survivor of the Bosnian war, and Jacqueline educates girls in Mali. The film allows you to witness their daily challenges and significant victories over poverty and oppression.

Immediately following the film, theatergoers will participate in a town hall meeting broadcast live.

It will feature renowned activists and experts who will discuss how we can help empower women around the world. To learn more about the film, discussion guide, or for theatre and ticket information, visit www.apowerfulnoise.org. Future updates and related AAUW Program-in-a-Box information for International Women's Day will be available at aauw.org.

Theaters in Iowa showing "A Powerful Noise" film:

Ames - Movies 12

Cedar Falls- College Square 12

Council Bluffs - Star Cinema 17

Davenport - 53 Show Case Cinemas

Dubuque - Star Cinema 14

Iowa City - Sycamore 12 Theater

West Des Moines - Jordon Creek 20

I encourage women from surrounding communities to attend. Someone could be a site coordinator with an AAUW sign after the film concludes so the group could meet together for coffee at a nearby site to discuss it. Those who have International Study groups might see this as their monthly meeting. You may have many other ideas.

➤ **Art Exhibition on Women's Suffrage in Iowa**

A new exhibition, *Women's Suffrage in Iowa: 90 Years After the "Winning Plan,"* is on view at The Blanden Memorial Art Museum, Fort Dodge, Iowa, from March 13th through June 2, 2009. It celebrates the years after the 19th Amendment to the United State Constitution was ratified. Several Iowa museums and libraries have provided object loans. There is no admission charge.