

THE BRANCH CONNECTOR MAY 2008

A little electronic newsletter to remind you of the latest news in the American Association of University Women in Iowa. Please share this with your branch members and your community (where appropriate)!

BIG NEWS FROM THE BIG MEETING! (Annual conference April 11 and 12)

We did it!

Thanks to special efforts in several branches, (branches both large and small), membership in Iowa has passed the 1000 figure! Hurrah! Thanks to every single member who worked hard at achieving this “milestone” goal!

Conference actions included

- Recognition of six women who have become 50 year members
- Recognition of one woman who has become a sixty year member
- Recognition of outstanding faculty from Grandview College, Solvig Nelson
- Recognition of outstanding faculty from Western Iowa Tech, Sima Dabir
- Approval of a two dollar state dues increase effective July 1
- Approval of establishment of a LAF Giving Circle, named for Mary Ann Ahrens

LEADERSHIP DVD AVAILABLE FOR BRANCHES TO USE

Attendees at the Leadership Training workshop on Friday had an opportunity to order a copy of the Leadership DVD for their branches. The DVD's have arrived in the homes of people who ordered them.

PLEASE NOTE:

The Power point slides, shown at this workshop, are now available on the AAUW website at http://aauw.org/member_center/branches_states/leadershipDev/index.cfm. They are in a PDF file. Linda Bors, acting as our facilitator at the conference, reminds you that it can take a bit of time to download the PDF.

OFFICER LISTS DUE NOW. Deadline was May 1

Each year current branch and state presidents are requested to report officers for the new fiscal year (FY09) .The deadline was May first. Delays are expected for those branches and states holding elections after this date. You are encouraged to use the Member Services Database (MSD) to report your officers. For those who cannot use this process contact the helpline (helpline@aauw.org) or phone 202/785-7747. You will need your member number to LOGIN. Click on the Member Center Database login page to begin.

WE NEED TO CONNECT WITH YOU!

Send a copy of your roster to me as well as to the incoming president, Diane Patton. You can do this electronically or by snail mail. Here are the addresses you need to use.

Outgoing President, Janet Heinicke 1302 West Boston Ave. Indianola, IA 50125. Email janetheinicke@earthlink.net

Incoming President, Diane Patton, 106 E. Austin, Rockwell City, IA 50579. Email.

dpatton@iowatelecom.net

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

When we do not have correct contact information we cannot stay in touch with you and your branch members about important and emerging issues. From these officer lists are able to derive lists for the state program chairman to contact her counterparts, the treasurer to contact her counterparts, the public policy chair and so forth. We don't want to lose you!

(And there is a practical consideration; Association messages have been forwarded to branch presidents this year when no other name was provided; we might be more efficient if the "directly responsible" person's name was available!)

SUFFRAGE PARADE TO OCCUR IN BOONE OCTOBER 25

Every branch is invited to have a representative in this parade. Contact Joyce Schulte for further information. Norma Coret (njcoret@loganet.net) says she has sashes that your branch could use. (The suffragettes wore white shirtwaists, dark skirts and sashes across their chests!)

CALL FOR VITAE

Iowans let your voice and your opinion shape the direction of AAUW in the future. Applications are available for seats on the following committees of the Association; by laws, program, public policy, membership, finance and resolutions. Information is on the website at http://aauw.org/about/leadership/leadership_opportunities.cfm.

CALL FOR IOWA LEADERS TO STEP FORTH! And not very far!

In addition to the opportunity for service at the national level, Diane Patton, your incoming president, would welcome your suggestions of capable women in your branch that might be willing to serve on a state committee. It's a wonderful way to learn more about the organization as well as way to develop new personal skills and strengths!

CHANGES IN LAF

On April 24th a conference call for all state presidents was held to provide additional information about changes which are emerging in the Legal Advocacy Fund. These changes will be of importance to you, I have prepared a separate sheet of information about these changes. It forms the next two pages of this "Connector". If you wish, you can download it separately and use it for discussion and/or circulation to your branch members.

Thank you for your patience in reading this information. I will be preparing one more "Connector" for you in June. Hopefully it will include the final summary report of the Focus Group Meetings being held throughout Iowa this year. I believe the findings from that report may help to shape the future's directions. We're growing in Iowa...after all we're a thousand strong! and we're getting stronger every day! The "thanks" go to you!

Jan Heinicke

**EMERGING CHANGES IN THE LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND OF THE AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN.**

**Prepared and excerpted from information shared with state presidents by Executive
Director, Linda Hallman April 24, 2008**

To branch presidents in AAUW Iowa.

You know that at the 2007 Association Biennial Meeting held in Phoenix delegates approved a “Strategic Process” that is to result in specific structural changes, to be brought before the 2009 Association Convention to be held in St. Louis. The combined boards of Directors of the Association and the Educational Foundation met in February to continue their consideration of how to develop these plans. The resulting changes have been announced and the thrust of the conference call on April 24th dealt with those changes. A summary is provided for your reading below.

Dr. Janet Heinicke, State President, 2006-08

Clear in the strategic recommendations of the Strategic Plan, adopted at Convention, was a common thread; it was “Focus on the AAUW Mission” . (Interesting, isn’t it, that is the same common thread that has been heard in the focus group meetings held throughout the state this year! We know that we care about equity!) The joint boards have been involved in that process since convention and have addressed every single facet of the organization.

The combined Boards addressed the topic of the Legal Advocacy Fund in its joint meetings in February 2008.

What is the Legal Advocacy Fund?

It is a fund, supported by donations, that receives and provides for monetary support for programs to prevent and combat sex discrimination.

These programs have included the following;

- Campus outreach programs
- An on line resource library
- Research reports
- Campus sex discrimination cases

Many have asked to extend the activities of the Legal Advocacy Fund to other settings beyond the college campus. (Legal advocacy support for women outside academia actually does have a long history, writes Hallman. Going back several decades AAUW participated in amicus curiae briefs in cases affecting women rights specifically and civil rights generally. Although many of the cases involved campus based discrimination, many others involved a wide array of work setting, as well as other issues affecting women’s equity.)

- *Now AAUW will respond to these requests for extending activities before the campus. It intends to focus more heavily on needs of women regardless of their workplace. In the future the emphasis will be on direct case support for strategic cases, i.e. cases that address significant issues, landmark cases.*
- Formerly there was an open application process for individuals to be considered for a LAF grant. That process will be eliminated. A proactive emphasis is to occur in which collaboration with other like minded organizations in addressing "landmark" cases will occur.
- Since 2005 the Legal Advocacy Fund is has been a part of the Educational Foundation. The decision to combine these separate entities was based on a desire to continue to support the LAF program and a desire to minimize duplication.
- There are currently commitments made to ten plaintiffs. That commitment will continue for the rest of the year. Support funding will continue throughout the next two grant cycles in 2008. Some consideration is being given to establishing an emergency relief fund to address a plaintiff's personal situations.
- The emphasis for fund raising efforts is to be on the development of funds to aid in the preparation of briefs for such landmark cases. NO changes are planned in the comparatively small number of staff involved in the LAF program.
- **In the conference call to which I have referred I learned that funds will be needed for the following purposes:**
 - To provide funds for travel grants for plaintiffs to visit branches and states,**
 - To provide funds for plaintiffs in distress,**
 - To provide funds for staff to vet cases to be undertaken by AAUW in amicus curiae role,**
 - To enable the broadening of cases to be reviewed.**
- **A transparent reporting of funds is assured by Hallman, the executive director of the Association.**