

THE BRANCH CONNECTOR

Iowa American Association of University Women November 2007

This monthly electronic newsletter comes to you, the designated leader of your branch. You are invited to share it with other members of your branch so that they can be kept informed about the latest news, activities and events occurring in our organization in Iowa, and across the nation,

Dr. Janet Heinicke, President, Iowa AAUW, 2006-08

- **Focus Groups Begin Across the State**

Our Iowa initiative, an attempt to connect the work of AAUW branches and the “state” AAUW, has begun. All but seven branches have responded to the invitation to conduct such a meeting during the months between October and April. Focus group meetings have already occurred in the **Palo Alto branch (Emmetsburg)** and the **Clarion** branch. During November there are meetings planned in the following branches; **Calhoun County, Ottumwa, Ft. Madison, and Decorah**. Three more visits will occur during December. (A master calendar of visits was emailed last week; check for your scheduled visit time!) The project hopes to accomplish three goals, namely, (1) to connect with branches throughout the state so that members of the state board of directors are personally acquainted with members of local branches;(2) to discover what current issues and concerns engage your local community; and (3) to brainstorm ideas about how the state board might be more effective in working your branch.

- **Applications due for Latinas al Exito project replication December 15**

Two lucky branches in Iowa will be the recipients of part of an AAUW Community Action grant enabling them to replicate the project currently underway in **Marshalltown** called Latinas al Exito. The project encourages middle school Hispanic girls to aspire for high school education and to consider entry into collegiate programs. Applications go to Jan Marshall jan.mitchell@dybb.com.

- **New Public Relations Committee meets November 14th in Iowa City**

Two AAUW members have consented to serve on the newly formed Iowa Public Relations committee. They are Carolyn Schmidt of **Cedar Rapids** and Janet Fife La Frenz of **Keokuk**; they will join with Elaine Bruns of **Waterloo** in planning strategies to publicize the work and activities of Iowa AAUW.

- **Nominating Committee at work; nominations for 2008-10 officers due soon**

Mary Ann Ahrens, chair of the nominating committee, and her hard working committee are seeking qualified candidates for officers for the next two year period. Contact her at maahrens@mchsi.com

- **The fall issue of the Initiative will be out by the end of November!**

- **New resources for branch leaders posted on the new Association website. (www.aauw.org)**
Look for these valuable tools, all of which are available on the website:

A new programming brochure ““**Working Together: Mission Based Programs**””.

A copy of the Membership Starter Kit

If you are planning to do a voter turnout and voter education program, don't forget to request a hard copy of the manual "Woman to Woman Voter Turnout: a Manual for Community Based Campaigns to Mobilize women to Vote". Email your request to VoterEd@aauw.org.

Michigan AAUW has produced a video called "Fresh Faces of AAUW; Honor the Past, Embrace the Future". Iowa was given a copy of this video which your branch can borrow. Contact me at janetheinicke@earthlink.net. In addition Michigan has developed some PSA (public service announcements) from this video. They can be viewed on the website and downloaded for local use.

Here are a few reasons why we should care about the work we do in and for the AAUW!

A recent National Academies report, [Beyond Bias and Barriers](#), fulfilling the potential of women in Academic Science and Engineering, found that women repeatedly face bias in the science fields and that these barriers discourage them from careers in these areas. In response to this report Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) recently introduced the Gender Bias Elimination Act HR 3514. Under this act agencies that fund scientific research like the National Institute of Health and the National Science Foundation would be directed to better enforce anti discrimination laws including Title IX. Declining interest in science and a shortage of American scientists is a threat to American competitiveness on a national scale.

WE WORK TOWARD IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS IN SCIENCE AND MATH!

The National Women's Law Center this week released a report showing that one in four girls are dropping out of high school and the numbers are worse for girls of color. The report, [When Girls Drop Out, we all Fail, also finds that the economic consequences for women who drop are particularly troubling, since women have higher unemployment and lower wages than men who do not graduate from high school.](#)

WE WORK TOWARD IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG WOMEN TO COMPLETE THEIR EDUCATION!

For additional details on current legislative issues refer to Washington Update from AAUW's Public Policy and Government Relations Department.

WE OFFER A NON PARTISAN VOICE ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES!

Have you marked your calendar for April 11 and 12, 2008?

Here's some 'Sneak Preview' information about Annual Conference

Those are the dates for the Annual Conference of AAUW to be held at Simpson College in Indianola. Two early announcements about program are truly good news! Nancy Rustad, immediate past Association President, has consented to act as leader for a Friday afternoon leadership development workshop. The well known and much beloved Womens' Chorus of the Simpson College Music Department will sing at the Friday evening Banquet!

Finally, as I close this November newsletter, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy holiday. I invite you to join me in taking a moment in life's "busy-ness" to reflect on many "good things" we know as educated women, things often overlooked, which mark each day of our lives as indeed a special gift.

Your Iowa AAUW President, Jan Heinicke