

Iowa Branch Connector

July 2012

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.

Maxine Lampe, AAUW IA. President

As I begin my term as president of AAUW Iowa I am reminded that July is a month to celebrate independence. As Americans we celebrate 236 years of independence on July 4th. As AAUW women we celebrate 131 years as an organization:

LOOK BACK:

Usually as AAUW members we are told to - Look to the Future. But as I work on my families genealogy I am reminded that we need to take a moment to look to the past . Our past is an inspiration. Our history makes us what we are today.

Carolyn Pickens AAUW Virginia has done a wonderful synopsis of AAUW which I would like to share. She states:

“We all know the story of how AAUW’s first research in the 1880’s refuted the prevailing opinion that women’s health was too delicate to withstand the rigors of four years of college. That was only the beginning of AAUW’s groundbreaking studies and projects that were often ahead of the times. Consider a few:

* Almost 100 years ago AAUW issued its first pay equity study in 1913.

*In 1921 we lobbied for independent citizenship for married women. 1932 saw us lobbying for access to contraceptives for married women and in 1935 to legalize dispensing of contraceptive information by physicians.

*Long before museums did it, AAUW promoted public education on the arts by organizing exhibits in the late 1930’s that traveled throughout the U.S. to towns and small cities that didn’t have an art museum.

*AAUW set up a Refugee Aid Fund in 1940 to assist university women fleeing European dictatorships, for which AAUW had a letter of thanks from Albert Einstein.

*AAUW leader Virginia Gildersleeve was the sole female member of the group that wrote the United Nations Charter after WWII, and she led in creating the UN Commission on Human Rights. AAUW’s early and ardent support for the UN was awarded with Permanent UN Observer status.

*In 1949, 16 years before the Civil Rights Act, convention delegates amended the AAUW Bylaws to clearly state that all college women graduates were eligible for membership, regardless of race.

*AAUW began lobbying in 1969 for a woman appointee to the Supreme Court (took 12 years to get Sandra Day O’Connor).

*In 1972 AAUW was instrumental in the passage of Title IX with AAUW member Patsy Mink (HI) co-authoring the bill.

*In 1983 we began seven years of lobbying for the Family & Medical Leave Act. 1991 saw the release of —Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America, which generated enormous

publicity. AAUW's Initiative for Educational Equity was the national catalyst for major changes in the education of girls in our schools.

We should be very proud of AAUW's past achievements, but honoring our past doesn't mean resting on our laurels. AAUW's history must motivate us to keep moving forward. This organization was founded by women who knew you have to educate and lobby and act to move women along. That is still our mission: keep pushing and breaking the barriers to women's education and equity. So Look Back at what our AAUW foremothers accomplished and keep building on that foundation. "

I am looking forward to a great and productive biennium.