

AAUW Iowa Branch Connector

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

Maxine Lampe, AAUW IA President 2012-2014

Pay Equity - What does that mean to you as a branch leader, your branch members, your daughters, granddaughters and colleagues?

In 1963, President Kennedy signed the federal Equal Pay Act (EPA) requiring employers to pay all employees equally for equal work. At that time women earned 58.9% of the wages men earned. One year later, Congress passed Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It provided additional protections for women in employment and allowed them to fight pay inequality based on sex discrimination. Yet, today the median income of Iowa women is still 79% that of men. That accounts for \$4.1 trillion less annually due to this wage gap. That is the equivalent for one woman - 82 weeks of groceries, 8 months of mortgage payments, 29 months of family health insurance and over 2,000 gallons of gas. This income disparity follows us right into retirement, since Social Security earnings are based on these inequitable incomes.

In June, both the House and Senate failed to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act which was legislation that would deter wage discrimination by closing the loopholes in the Equal Pay Act.

We must get people in office who are looking out for us and protecting us from gender inequality and attacks as well as making decisions that ensure women get a fair chance. The people who are going to make these decisions about our lives are going to be elected on November 6, 2012. We must make sure that the best people are elected. The stakes for women could not be any higher. The politicians who win will cast votes for or against pay equity, paid sick days for full-time employees, Social Security, College affordability, and much more.

As part of the Iowa Women's Leadership Coalition, AAUW Iowa has been asked to work on the vision of females and males being paid equally for equal work. We are partnering with NEXUS and others on this project. Our goal must be to enforce pay equity at the state level and design a regulatory system to oversee salary standards and implement penalties for noncompliance. Another goal should be to provide incentives for businesses that have shown that they have pay equity and have promoted and compensated women fairly at high levels.

To date our resources are: AAUW's Pay Equity Resource List, Iowa State University Smart Start Workshops, The Wage Project and the National Women's Law Center's Equal Pay Initiative.

Some of the things we think we can do are 1) conduct seminars to teach women how to negotiate for salaries and workplace flexibility; 2) provide learning opportunities for school-age children to understand gender pay equity; 3) create open communication

about salaries and expectations at individual businesses; and 4) create local recognition programs for “equity-conscious businesses” including a directory and/or website, etc. What are your ideas? Can you add to the resources and ideas on what we can do? Share your ideas with us. My e-mail is: lampe.maxine@gmail.com. I will post them in the next Connector.

Have a great October and enjoy the fall. Contact Renee Jedlicka if your branch is willing to participate in “Speech Trek” - the deadline is October 1st for that commitment. If you haven’t filled out the information and sent it in, give her a call - 712-298-2355.

Remember “Our Voice, Our Vote!” - Nov. 6th!

Maxine Lampe, AAUW Iowa President