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OUR MISSION: ADVANCING EQUITY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS THROUGH
ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, PHILANTHROPY, AND RESEARCH.



Anne Stansbury Johnson, AAUW Iowa 2018-20 President

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Hello Iowa AAUW!

First of all, I must tell you how honored I am to be your president for the next two years. It was such a good conference last spring. The Wonder Women presentation on Friday night was unlike anything I’ve ever seen or participated in before. I only wish more people had been there to enjoy it! Pat Higby and Nancy Henderson have made it available for any of you who would like to try something like it. The speakers for the conference were excellent. I hope you all learned as much as I did!

We held our first board meeting/retreat this summer, and I think the board has a lot of exciting ideas for the year ahead.

Our most important priority for the fall is to get out the vote. For some of us, where organizations like the League of Women Voters are no longer available, this may be the only non-partisan effort around. For others it’s an opportunity for us to partner with other groups. Women fought and died to be able to vote – it wasn’t just given to us, so even if you can’t actively participate in the process, please make sure you vote.

A concern the board discussed at length is the same that many other organizations are experiencing. Membership is fairly static and participation in both branches and the state is becoming more difficult to secure.

One of the most important things a former board member, Jane Nettleton, said to our Palo Alto branch when we were considering disbanding was that we didn’t have to behave like a traditional meeting group. As a result we quit holding meetings for the sake of having meetings. We have breakfast one morning a month to plan activities and get together for those as needed. No one is pressured to be there for everything; you can be involved at whatever level is comfortable. You can support the association with dues; you can be involved with a few select activities; or you can jump in feet first and be an officer. It saved us and opened the doors to new members.

Another part of this discussion was how to attract younger women (and men) who are still working and share our mission. Even one of the board members had a beef with meeting times that aren’t family friendly. With that in mind, we’ve decided to try a one-day conference this year. (Please check the save the date details in another part of this newsletter.) We’ll even have the board meeting that day after the meeting is over.

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Another thing coming up is the century celebration for Women's Right to Vote. We're cooperating with other organizations state-wide on this. Maureen White continues to represent in that planning group.

Finally, as a board, we asked ourselves just exactly what the value-added was for the branches and the members who pay dues to the state. Just to be clear, we have no hierarchical authority over you! But we would like to be of value to you. A member of the board will be contacting you to invite herself to one of your meetings. We don't want to take over the whole meeting, but we would like the opportunity to hear your suggestions and concerns. We would like the opportunity to join together with you in the AAUW mission of improving the lives of women and girls.

Again, thank you all for the honor of serving as your president. Please contact me if you have questions or concerns.

Anne Stansbury Johnson

19th Amendment Commemoration

Maureen White, Public Policy Director

American women won the right to vote when the 19th Amendment was passed on June 4, 1919 and ratified on August 18, 1920. August 26, 2020 will mark the centennial of the date the Amendment went into effect.

The December 2017 *Connector*, available on the AAUW Iowa website (aauw-ia.aauw.net), detailed preliminary plans for events to commemorate the 19th Amendment throughout 2020. Information was also included in the packet of materials for attendees at the 2018 AAUW Iowa State Conference. AAUW Iowa is one the many organizations involved in planning the commemoration and we encourage branches to plan events in their communities. Check those two resources for ideas and watch for additional information as it becomes available. Keep in mind that dates listed are preliminary and may change.



The theme for the 19th Amendment Commemoration is "Hard Won, Not Done." The event to kick-off the commemoration is now scheduled for Friday, February 14, 2020 at Iowa State University. If you would like to see what other states are doing, the National Women's History Project (nwhp@nwhp.org) has a publication "How Women Won the Vote, Vol. Two" (\$15 for 25 copies) that includes ideas as well as information about the suffrage movement.

Are Your Boards and Commissions Balanced?

Maureen White, Public Policy Director

Iowa became the first state in the country to require gender balance on appointed city and county boards and commissions when Chapter 162 of the Iowa Code was amended in 2009. The effective date for the amendment was January 1, 2012.

Since that time, compliance with the law has been inconsistent across the state. The law states in part, "*All appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of a political subdivision of the state that are established by the Code, if not otherwise provided by law, shall be gender balanced as provided by subsection 1 unless the political subdivision has made a good faith effort to appoint a qualified person to fill a vacancy on a board, commission, committee, or council in compliance with subsection 1 for a period of three months but has been unable to make a compliant appointment.*" A "good faith effort" is not defined, so even though the code says boards and commissions "*shall be gender balanced*" (writer's emphasis), the law lacks an enforcement mechanism and lacks consequences for failure to achieve gender balance.

So, compliance is up to citizens who need to let their elected officials know that they are expected to follow the intent of the law. To that end, AAUW Iowa provided information about the law to its members and branches, asked them to monitor appointments in their cities and counties, publicize openings, and encourage women (and in some cases men) to seek appointment.

Membership on boards and commissions is public information, so if the information is not available on your local entity's website, you should be able to get it from the mayor, city clerk, or county board of supervisors. If your branch has not been actively working to ensure compliance in you area, consider initiating a project to do so this year.

Tech Trek at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake

By Dr. Andrea Frantz

“Don't let anyone rob you of your imagination, your creativity, or your curiosity,” astronaut Mae Jemison once said. “It's your place in the world; it's your life. Go on and do all you can with it, and make it the life you want to live.” While Jemison may not have been physically anywhere close to Iowa, her quote could well have been a direct challenge to the 31 rising eighth grade girls who attended the 2018 AAUW Tech Trek Iowa camp at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake June 24-30.

The camp is designed to help encourage girls to investigate careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields and featured hands-on science and technology classes, educational field trips, opportunities to meet women role models, and a unique BVU college campus experience.



Campers work on a wind energy project.



A camper assembles a solar car.

“Through the BVU Tech Trek Iowa STEM program, we have been privileged to work with such outstanding young women scientists over the past three years, and this year was no exception,” said Dr. Melinda Coogan, camp director and professor of biology at BVU. “The faculty and staff were all incredibly impressed with the intellectual curiosity and genuine expressions of gratitude articulated by this year's group of students. We look forward to seeing where these young scientists go following the program and how they use their many gifts to continue making our world a better place.”

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, although women have made gains in recent years in biological and medical science fields, women are still notably underrepresented in computer science, engineering and math fields. Dr. Coogan concurs. “Studies show that girls lose interest in math and science during middle school due to a variety of reasons, such as lack of role models, lack of encouragement in

pursuing STEM fields, and uncertainty of social acceptance,” she said. “AAUW Tech Trek camps shift the focus from the problem with girls pursuing STEM to offering solutions that welcome girls into the STEM environment.”



Junior Counselors

This year's attendees visited Allete Clean Energy Wind Farm and Buena Vista County Conservation Park, explored and utilized Storm Lake, and networked at a semi-formal dinner that featured professional women in a variety of STEM fields as speakers. Classes included a cyber security hacking class, an app creation class, an alternative energy workshop, and a DNA extraction workshop. The week concluded with a science fair that featured posters about what the girls had accomplished throughout the camp.

This year also marked the first time three previous BVU Tech Trek camp attendees were invited back to take part in the program as junior counselors. They included Sammie Jackson of Coon Rapids, Addie Wood of Dows City, and Evie AlSaffar of Storm Lake. The junior counselors attended BVU's first-ever Tech Trek camp in 2016 and will be sophomores in high school in the fall.

"I loved attending Tech Trek as a camper a couple years back," said Wood. "It was incredibly rewarding having the opportunity to return this year and get to know the girls as a mentor."

"It was really great to see the girls eager to learn and embrace science," added Jackson. "Young girls need more experiences like this so that they feel proud to pursue careers in science."

AlSaffar was notified during Tech Trek week that she was selected to go to the Global Youth Institute after submitting the top paper at her school for the World Food Prize and Presenting at the Iowa Youth Institute.

One camper marveled at the end of the week, "At school, I'm considered pretty weird for liking science and math so much. Here, I feel part of something important, and I'm surrounded by other girls just like me who like the same things. I feel free to be who I am.

We feel confident Mae Jemison would be proud.

Tech Trek Campers 2018



WANT BETTER GOVERNMENT? ELECT MORE WOMEN!

By Chris Loucher

What a novel idea! And 50-50 in 2020 has been promoting the concept of getting better government by electing more women since 2010. Jean Lloyd Jones and Maggie Tinsman, both former Iowa state senators, were noticing that women were not only NOT making electoral progress but they were losing ground. These two women knew how to work together; they had done it when they were legislators, often joining ranks to get important legislation passed. Women of both parties would get together for their annual summer “fishing trip” to discuss important issues and find ways to collaborate. Women know how to avoid the hot button issues and find common ground to get things done. Rarely do they care who gets the credit, when the job gets done.



Attendees listen to candidates' stump talks.

In 2010 when the concept of 50-50 in 2020 was born by Maggie and Jean, Iowa was tied with Mississippi for the dubious distinction of being the two states which had never had a female governor, nor had they sent a woman to D.C. to represent us. 2020 is the 100 year anniversary of women's suffrage; we have only been voting since 1920 and they had decided to celebrate that anniversary by trying to get better equity in our Iowa legislature. This organization they founded is like no other! We recruit and train women willing to put their names on the ballot. Our board of directors consists of 6 Democrats and 6 Republicans but remains non-partisan and non-issue focused.

Experts are now saying what 50-50 in 2020 has been preaching for years. Women's “ordinary” experiences and aptitudes make them highly qualified for law-making. Current State Representative Helen Miller of Fort Dodge reports that having more women in her caucus has helped focus on issues like bullying, child welfare, human trafficking and health care for women and children. Voters should vote for candidates based on what they stand for, but



Listening to candidates' stump talks.

it is better for our democracy when our representation truly represents our population.

NUDGE (No Use Delaying Gender Equity) parties are informal social events for women of all ages, which can be held in homes, community rooms, restaurants, church halls, etc. 50-50 in 2020 would like to partner with AAUW to help us hold more of these events. If each branch of AAUW would focus a regular meeting, or a special **NUDGE** event, or a social on nudging women to run, we can reach more women. Our AAUW Algona branch has our fall meeting at a local winery, and we have, in the past, used this social event to invite non-members who may be prospective AAUW members. This year we may just add a brief NUDGE talk to encourage women to think about getting involved in a local board or commission, or think about running for local or state office. 50-50 in 2020 has a roster of available speakers, a “how to” guide for getting started and can help with publicizing these events.



Sarah Fisher Gardial, dean of the Tippie College of Business at the University of Iowa, was the host for the nudge event pictured.



Candidate Pat Heiden (left) talks to attendee.



Mazahir Salih, candidate for Iowa City city council (she won!) First Sudanese-American woman elected to public office in the US.

Women are energized! Iowa started this campaign season with a record 98 women on the ballot. After the primary, 84 were winners! Not all of these women will win in the general election, nor should they just because they are women. But they were brave enough to try, and they are engaging the electorate in the discussion of important issues. We need to keep “nudging” the women in our lives and communities to take the leap onto the ballot. PLEASE HELP US GET BETTER GOVERNMENT. ELECT MORE WOMEN!

Chris Louscher is a member of the Algona Branch of AAUW, and is on the board of 50-50 in 2020.

Attendees sign up to volunteer for candidates.



Is your branch interested in hosting a NUDGE event? Wonderful! Contact 50-50 in 2020 board liaison Chris Louscher, Christinelouscher@hotmail.com, 515.320.2583, or AAUW Iowa Membership Vice President Elaine Kresse, elainekresse2@gmail.com, 563.391.3455.

National Voter Registration Day-September 25, 2018

Kathie Farris, Indianola Branch of AAUW

The National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) set the first National Voter Registration Day in 2012 where more than 3000,000 Americans registered. In 2014, NASS set the fourth Tuesday of September as National Voter Registration Day. Hundreds of local, state and national organizations help coordinate registration events for people all over the country. This year the date is September 25, 2018.

To get out the vote has long been a goal for the American Association of University Women, and what better way than to join the September event. Of course, if another date works for you, go for it. Information about this national event is available at nationalvoterregistration.org.

AAUW is a nonpartisan group. This is really important. There can be no campaigning for either a candidate or an issue while doing a registration event. This includes the use of advocacy materials such as voter guides or issue fact sheets. We cannot target any voter registration event at members of a particular party or at individuals likely to vote for partisan candidates who support AAUW issues.

State Rules must be followed. For example, October 27, 2018, is the deadline for a voter registration drive, and the ballots would need to be turned in to the auditor that day, so earlier is best. People can register later at the auditor's office. Although there is no age requirement to work as a volunteer, I would recommend at least 16 years old. Those convicted as a felon cannot register unless they have received permission from the governor. There is no requirement for length of residency. College students may register, but they cancel out their home town registrations. In fact, you might want to do a college event with the permission of the college. Finally, no political party needs to be given for the general election.

The county auditor is the source of information and materials. Contact her/him for valuable information and help. AAUW has lots of help. "How to Organize a Voter Registration Drive," "Get Out the Vote Do's and Don'ts," and "Voter Education" can all be accessed at AAUW.org. Contact the Iowa Secretary of State's office (515-281-0145) if you have more questions.

Other nonpolitical information can be given at the registration event. For example Warren County has handouts that explain the changes in Iowa's new ID requirements and when they go into effect. Having maps to show where the polls are would certainly be especially helpful for new voters. Explaining AAUW is also permissible without politicizing. Signup your event at AAUW on their upcoming event form

Enjoy the event! This is an opportunity to show who we are and what we do.

The Indianola Branch will do a voter registration event at the Indianola HyVee on September 25, 2018, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.



Why join AAUW?

Elaine Kresse, Membership Vice President

Do you need good friends who support women? Women who believe in public education? Women who support you and your friends when they run for public office? Women who, when the chips are down, help to fight for health care, child care, or student debt legislation?

Iowa AAUW needs to help women meet and work together, form lasting friendships and change the climate for women and girls. Toward that end, membership and public policy will be collaborate with 50-50 in 2020 to hold NUDGE events to make that happen.

AAUW IOWA plans to host 5 regional events: one near the center of each quadrant of state and one in central Iowa. If you or your branch would like to help host such an event we would like to hear from you. At each event, representatives from 50-50 in 2020 will do a NUDGE presentation and we will encourage AAUW membership in branches and encourage interested women in starting their own branch, Young Women's Resource Center, student affiliate, or virtual branch.

There are many areas and towns in Iowa without a branch. This might be just the way to bring those likeminded women together. Would you like to be part of this? Contact Elaine Kresse (Membership Vice President) or Maureen White (Public Policy Director) to learn more about becoming part of the team.

AAUW Iowa Capitol Corps Coming Soon

Ann Gale, AAUW Iowa Initiative Editor

Would you like an opportunity to advocate for women's issues at the Iowa Legislature? AAUW members who live in or near the Washington, DC area lobby our representatives on our behalf. AAUW Iowa would like to organize members who live in central Iowa into a Capitol Corps to communicate with members of the Iowa legislature about issues affecting women and girls.

Maureen White, AAUW Iowa Public Policy Director, will provide training for Capitol Corps members in the fall, either in person, or online, using our Zoom web conferencing system. Training will include tips for effective communication with legislators, information about how to use the legislature's website, the legislative calendar and timelines for 2019, and information, resources and talking points regarding specific legislation and issues.

We anticipate that most of the Capitol Corps members will be people who live in central Iowa. However, we invite members from other parts of the state to participate if they are able to do so. After Capitol Corps members are identified, a schedule for who will do what and when will be determined. Members will be expected to help with options such as going to the Capitol, personally contacting representatives and senators regarding bills related to our issues (such as pay equity), attending subcommittee or committee meetings where bills we are interested in are discussed, and attending public hearings about those bills. Speaking at legislative forums and writing letters to the editor would also be opportunities.



Interested in being a member of the Capitol Corps? Please contact:

- AAUW Iowa Public Policy Director Maureen White, mwhite@cfu.net , 319-404-5301 (cell), 319-266-9901 (home).
- AAIW Des Moines President Ann Gale , ann.gale9@gmail.com, 515-320-4404 (cell), 515-986-2659 (home).

You will be invited to a training after it has been scheduled.

What Does the AAUW Iowa Nominations Committee Do?

Janie Montang, Northwest committee member (Algona)

While I am just beginning to learn the answer, I will attempt to explain it to you. There are four nominations committee members, one each for Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, and Northeast. Current committee members are: Southwest, Jane Goldsmith from Treynor; Southeast, Joanne Richey from Indianola; Northwest, Janie Montang from Algona; and Northeast is currently an open position. Ann Gale serves on the committee as the past president, and Kathie Farris is the Nominations Director.

Each fall the committee members contact all the AAUW Branches within their region and ask them to recruit members to be candidates for open positions on the AAUW Iowa Board. Then, before the January AAUW Iowa Board meeting, these committee members will convene to form their recommendations to the Board.

This year, in addition to seeking a Northeast committee member, we will be scouring the membership to find a President-Elect and a Membership Co-Vice President. The President-Elect is a one-year term. This person will be President-Elect for 2019-20. In 2020, there will be an election for president. If elected, this person would then serve as President for 2020-22; and Past President for 2022-24. All other officers/directors shall serve for a term of 2 years or until their successors have been elected or appointed and assume office. The president-elect, vice-presidents for program and membership, secretary, and treasurer are all elected positions and are included in the Executive Committee. All other positions are appointed.

If you are a member from the Northeast Region and will consider serving on the nominations committee, please contact President Anne Stansbury-Johnson, Nominations Director Kathie Farris, or one of the other nominations committee members to offer your services.

Please begin now to think about becoming a candidate for President-Elect or to filling one of the other positions. The time commitment will only be as large as you make it and you will be rewarded by working with the other dynamic leaders from around the state who serve on the board. Everyone (and that includes YOU) has talents and skills that lend themselves to the quality of the AAUW Iowa Board! Please step up and consider serving. Meanwhile, don't hesitate to contact one of the current board members to scope out information about board positions.

2018 AAUW Iowa Spring Conference—Truth and Consequences

Ann Henninger Trax, AAUW Iowa Program Co-Vice President

Fifty-two members from 19 branches met April 20-21 on the Iowa Central Community College campus in Fort Dodge for “Truth and Consequences”, the Spring Conference theme. Friday evening’s highlight was “Wonder Women”, a selection of songs and readings celebrating women, performed by members of AAUW branches. This was so well received that branches are encouraged to consider “Wonder Women” as one of their programs.

Saturday was filled with sessions by informative speakers, a brag-bazaar during which branches showcased their activities, a silent auction, and the annual meeting. The Biosciences and Health Sciences Building was a great facility for the conference, and the food with filling and tasty.

Donald Mark and Sharon Vandyck, attorneys representing plaintiffs in *Portz v. St. Cloud State University*, were LAF Speakers. They described not only the St. Cloud case involving a Title IX complaint focusing on women’s athletics but also one involving a female coach of the women’s ice hockey team at the University of Minnesota. Although it was depressing to hear about the inequities experienced by women on these two campuses, it was reassuring to know that they are being supported in their battles for equity and fair play.

Laura Segal, Senior VP of Communications and External Relations at AAUW, updated members on the reorganization of AAUW and the new strategic plan. She also explained the three proposed by-laws and answered questions from the audience. An important take-home message is that the national organization is making good progress in balancing the budget.

Members from four branches (Indianola, Storm Lake, Cedar Rapids, and Cedar Falls) described their STEM (Science, Engineering, Math, and Technology) Initiatives focusing on young girls. All of them have worked with local colleges, but they also stressed that many of the fun activities could be done by members of local branches.

Deborah Thompson, Policy Advisor and Legislative Liaison at the Iowa Department of Public Health, gave an informative, heart-felt talk about Opioid Addiction in Iowa. Although Iowa has not experienced the same level of opioid addiction and overdose deaths as many other states, Iowa does have an opioid problem. In addition to her updating us on statistics, potential new laws, etc. Deborah told us about her husband who, after an accident and prescription pain pills, became addicted to opioids. Her talk put a face and personal story on one lowan who died from an opioid overdose.

Melissa Peterson, a Government Relations Specialist at the Iowa State Education Association, Heather Strachan, a member of NAMI Iowa Board of Directors and current Chair of the Iowa Office of Consumer Affairs, and Iowa State Senator Liz Mathis (via a pre-recorded video) gave a panel presentation on the Consequences of Privatization of Public Services. The bottom line was that more help is needed in areas of education, mental health care, and Medicaid but the funding is not available.

The annual meeting proceeded in an orderly fashion. All candidates for AAUW Iowa Officers, as listed in the Spring Iowa *Initiative*, were elected.



Members of the Palo Alto Branch show their display during the brag bazaar.

SAVE THE DATE – 2019 AAUW Spring Conference
Saturday April 27 at DMACC Newton Campus