



Carletta Knox-Seymour, AAUW Iowa President 2020-2022

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Greetings,

The month of October brings about the winds of change in our weather. Our breezes are no longer warm and southerly, but cold and northerly. Thus, the true end of summer is upon us. Yet the change allows us to don our lovely fall attire, rake those leaves, and get our kitchens smelling like apples and cinnamon. These are events that we have become accustomed to in our daily, regular lives. But what about those who cannot, at this time, go about these events with a sense of ease?

I am referring to those who have been hit the hardest during the pandemic, and are still being hit. I want to address the group of socioeconomically challenged women who are suffering the most. I will be sharing data excerpts from different sources. Though many of us have already seen more than enough data regarding the loss of life and livelihood, I would like us to get another snap shot view of the realities many women are facing.

From the September 2020 *Monthly Labor Review*:

COVID-19 recession is tougher on women

Eleni X. Karageorge

According to a new study, working women are experiencing the worst effects of the COVID-19 recession, unlike in previous downturns, which hit working men the hardest. In [“The Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Equality”](#) (National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 26947, April 2020), researchers Titan Alon, Matthias Doepke, Jane Olmstead-Rumsey, and Michèle Tertilt suggest that more women in the United States will have lost their jobs because the industries they tend to

work in have been harder hit by the effects of the pandemic. The study points out two major reasons that the current recession is tougher for women.

First, the crisis has battered industry sectors in which women’s employment is more concentrated—restaurants and other retail establishments, hospitality, and health care. This was not the case in past recessions, which tended to hurt male-dominated industry sectors like manufacturing and construction more than other industries. In past recessions, men have faced greater risk of unemployment than women, partly because of the gender composition of different sectors of the economy. A larger fraction of employed men (46 percent) than employed women (24 percent) work in construction; manufacturing; and trade, transportation, and utilities. These are considered highly cyclical sectors that typically suffer during “normal” recessions. On the other hand, 40 percent of all working women are employed in government and in health and education services compared with just 20 percent of working men.

Second, the coronavirus shutdowns have closed schools and daycare centers around the country, keeping kids at home and making it even harder for parents (especially mothers who tend to provide the majority of childcare) to keep working. Childcare poses an additional challenge to working mothers during the pandemic.

Working women are also at a greater disadvantage compared with working men in the current crisis because fewer women have jobs that allow them to telecommute: 22 percent of female workers compared with 28 percent of male workers. According to the researchers’ analysis of data from the American Time Use Survey from 2017 and

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President's Letter, continued from p. 1

2018, single parents will face the greatest challenge. Only 20 percent of single parents reported being able to telecommute compared with 40 percent of married people with children. In two-parent households where only one parent works in the labor market, the stay-at-home parent, usually the mother, is likely to assume primary childcare duties during coronavirus-related school closures. However, in 44 percent of married couples with children, both spouses work full-time. Among these couples, mothers provide about 60 percent of childcare. Men perform 7.2 hours of childcare per week versus 10.3 hours for women.

The current economic downturn resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic is disproportionately hurting women's employment, with ramifications that could be long lasting. The authors estimate that 15 million single mothers in the United States will be the most severely affected, with little potential for receiving other sources of childcare and a smaller likelihood of continuing to work during the crisis. However, the study points out that many businesses are becoming much more aware of their employees' childcare needs and have responded by adopting more flexible work schedules and telecommuting options. The authors hope that by promoting flexible work arrangements and making childcare obligations of both genders a priority, the crisis may reduce labor-market barriers in the long run. Although the evidence suggests that women's employment opportunities will suffer severely during the crisis, the authors see cause for optimism over the longer term.

From *The Washington Post*, September 30, 2020:

The covid-19 recession is the most unequal in modern U.S. history

Heather Long, Andrew Van Dam, Alyssa Fowers, and Leslie Shapiro

The recovery is also spread unequally. White Americans have recovered more than half of their jobs lost between April and February. Meanwhile, Black Americans have recovered just over a third of employment lost in the pandemic.

Hispanic Americans saw the steepest initial employment losses and still have the most ground to make up to reach pre-pandemic employment.

The Pandemic Economy has affected mothers and fathers differently. Mothers saw greater initial drops in employment than fathers, according to a Post analysis.

Recessions often hit poorer households harder, but this one is doing so at a scale that is the worst in generations, the analysis shows.

While the nation overall has regained [nearly half](#) of the lost jobs, several key demographic groups have recovered more slowly, including mothers of school-age children, Black men, Black women, Hispanic men, Asian Americans, younger

Americans (ages 25 to 34) and people without college degrees.

White women, for example, have recovered 61 percent of the jobs they lost — the most of any demographic group — while Black women have recovered only 34 percent, according to Labor Department data through August. And workers with college degrees are 55 percent recovered, compared with less than 40 percent for workers with high school degrees.

At the height of the coronavirus crisis, low-wage jobs were lost at about eight times the rate of high-wage ones, *The Post* found. The devastation was deepest among the lowest-paid, but middle-class jobs were not spared. A clear trend emerged: The less workers earned at their job, the more likely they were to lose it as businesses across the country closed.

By the end of the summer, the downturn was largely over for the wealthy — white-collar jobs had mostly rebounded, along with home values and stock prices. The shift to remote work strongly favored more-educated workers, with as many as 6 in 10 college-educated employees working from home at the outset of the crisis, compared with about 1 in 7 who have only high school diplomas.

This is how our CEO, Kim Churches, has responded to the COVID-19 disparities among women.:

“A challenge, but also an opportunity”

The COVID-19 crisis is giving us an up-close-and-personal view of how women are being disproportionately affected: Women hold the majority of part-time jobs and make up the majority of the low-wage workforce. Many lack basic benefits like paid sick leave, family leave and workplace health and retirement plans. Women are more likely than men to be poor and struggling, and retired women are twice as likely as men to live at or near poverty. As we move toward a recovery, we must seize the opportunity to address these issues and create a fairer, more equitable society.

I believe Kim has said it all. As we move toward COVID-19 recovery, we must seize every opportunity we can to address these gender disparity issues. Our branches have to reach out and advocate for the women and girls who desperately need our help. We need to get into the communities where we live, in the name of AAUW, and show the communities who we are. We need to join forces with many other organizations that are in the field and already doing great work. This effort could also work well with any branch working toward achieving 5-Star status. We have to keep our organizational name ringing in the ears of those around us. That's how we stay relevant. And of course, let's make our voices known loud and clear for all things legislatively. It is our time to shine. Let's put forth the most effort for those who need us the most.

Job Descriptions for Open Positions on AAUW Iowa Board 2020-2022

Kathie Farris, AAUW Iowa Nominations Chair

Here is your opportunity to get more involved with AAUW. The contacts are those who have done each job, and they can be an asset in understanding each job.

President-Elect: 2021-2024 Next year the President-Elect serves on the board. Then she serves as state president the following two years. Contact: Anne Johnson 712-852-3281 or 712-260-9424. Ann Gale 515-986-2659 or 515-320-4404.

Program VP: Primarily responsible for planning the annual state conference with the state president and others. There are two Program VP's with staggered terms. Contact: Ann Henninger-Trax 319-352-5108.

Public Policy Director: This job keeps membership informed on legislative positions that reflect AAUW

policies in both the Iowa legislature and the US Congress. Contact: Maureen White 319-266-9901 or 319-404-5301.

Diversity Director: Identify state needs about diversity. Serve as a resource for branches about diversity. Help plan programs for branches and annual meeting. Contact: Carletta Knox-Seymour 319-929-5365.

Nominations Chair: With the four committee members from the four geographical regions of the state, find officers for the board and assist the president or president-elect in recruiting appointed directors. Contact: Kathie Farris 515-961-7647 or 515-238-2934.

Nominations Committee Member: Complete nominating work. Contact: Janie Montang 515-395-2992 or 515-450-2992.

Women's Gathering in Algona

Jane Nettleton, Algona Branch

A Women's Gathering, sponsored by Algona Branch-AAUW, was held Saturday, October 17, at 7 PM on the Kossuth County Courthouse lawn. Over 370 such gatherings and Women's Marches were held all over the U. S. on the same day.

Despite the rain and chilly temperatures, 23 hardy people turned out to commemorate 100 years of Women's Suffrage in the United States and to stand in unity for women's equality now.

Speakers for the Gathering were Karen Dannewitz, Janie Montang,

and Jane Nettleton. The names of 26 women who were active in the beginning of the Woman's Suffrage movement on to those celebrated today as women leaders were read to remind us all of where we started and what is left to do today.

Information was given to those present about becoming a 2 Minute Activist to support issues such as closing the wage gap for all women, paid sick leave and parental leave, affordable quality child care, the protection of pregnant workers on the job and more.



Socially Distanced Picnics in Des Moines

Members of the Des Moines branch of AAUW met at socially distanced picnics in July and September. On July 10, we met at Beaverdale Park. We arrived wearing masks, and we seated with enough space between us that we were able to enjoy our lunch safely.

We met again for a second picnic and meeting September 21st at 5:00 at McHenry Park. We exercised the same precautions. One of the shelter houses at McHenry Park features a nice view of the Des Moines River, the new amphitheater at Riverview Park, and the capitol dome in the distance.



Celebrating the 19th Amendment in Council Bluffs

Meriel Demuth, Loess Hills Branch

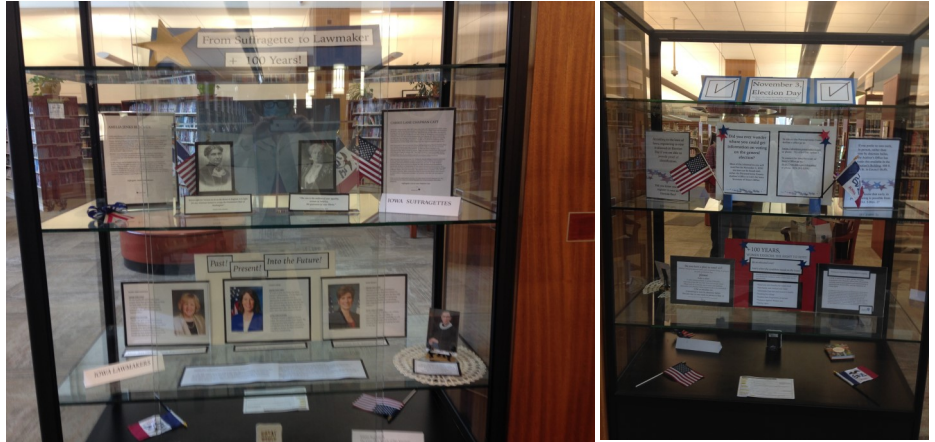
Other than attaining the right to vote through adoption of the 19th Amendment, “What do you consider to be the top advancement women have attained in the past 100 years?” was the first question posed to women lawmakers during a panel discussion on August 11, 2020, arranged by the Council Bluffs Public Library. The Loess Hills AAUW branch prepared and asked the questions. This question and the counter question, “What is the advancement for women that you will champion in the coming 100 years?” became the focus of a display at the library. The display, which was set up by the branch on October 1, is titled, “From Suffragette to Lawmaker + 100 Years.”

The display focuses on Iowa suffragists Carrie Chapman Catt & Amelia Bloomer, honors Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (who received an Achievement Award from AAUW in 1999) and shares quotes from the responses to the questions posed above to Iowa Lawmakers, Mary Ann Hanusa, State House of Representatives;

Cindy Axne, U. S. Congresswoman; and Joni Ernst, U. S. Senator.

The reverse side is its own display on voting. It shares information on “getting out the vote” for the current 2020 general election, with contact information, plans to vote, and a statement from National AAUW on voting rights.

The display continues through October at the Council Bluffs Public Library.



Challenging Year for Universities, Opportunities to Work Together

Elaine Kresse, College/University Director

This has been a disastrous year for our colleges and universities and their budgets, due to the pandemic. Please reach out to the colleges and universities in your area. If you need help learning whom to contact, please email me and we can research that together.

It has been my experience that those connections can be so rewarding for both AAUW and the students, but they don't happen without personal outreach. With so many of us doing Zoom meetings this is a perfect time to hold joint meetings with faculty and students on key issues. That is how Davenport was lucky enough to have Dr. Brittany Tullis speak to their branch on October 20th. Because of the pandemic and Zoom, the Davenport Branch was able to invite the whole state to hear her presentation, “He, She, They: Fostering Inclusivity Via Personal Pronouns,” and participate in a Q and A session on the impact of recent changes to Title IX. It would not have happened if a

member of the Davenport Branch had not called St. Ambrose and asked to speak to the new director of Gender Studies. It's really all about personal contact.

I can help you identify which schools in your area are members and tell you which faculty members are the designated contacts. If you find out your schools are not members or have dropped their membership, we can work together to suggest ways for them to renew their membership.

For this pandemic fall, the best way to reach out to them is to invite them to be a Zoom speaker as Davenport did with Dr. Tullis. This is what I see happening across the nation as I Zoom into their online meetings.

We need to use our ingenuity this year more than ever before to grow our branches and strengthen our ties to our local schools and our shared issues: gender, race, Title IX, job equity, and student debt.



Dr. Brittany Tullis



Hard Won - Not Done: Women's Right to Vote, 1920-2020

Used by permission from the Kossuth County Advance, Amy Frankl-Brandt, Assistant Editor. Adapted from an original article published October 10, 2020.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment to the Constitution giving women the right to vote. It states, "The rights of citizens of the united States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Although this was a huge victory for women, it failed to extend the vote to all women. Congress still found ways to exclude women from voting, by means of literacy tests, poll taxes, and other discriminatory state voting laws. African Americans and other minorities were still denied this right long into the 20th century. Native Americans, Latina and Asian women weren't recognized as citizens of the United State and therefore were denied a vote, as well as residents of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, who didn't live in the states. Many Native Americans were not made U.S. citizens until 1924.

Iowa had a special session of the Legislature to ratify the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution on July 2nd, 1919. It was the fourth state to do so. It passed unanimously in the Iowa Senate; only five in the Iowa House dissented.

Ahead of the United States, countries that had granted women the right to vote were New Zealand (1893),



Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Susan B. Anthony

Australia (1902), Finland (1906), and Norway (1913).

The Beginning of a Nationwide Movement

The suffrage movement began with an innocent tea party on July 9, 1848, when Jane Hunt invited Elizabeth Cady Stanton to her house for tea along with Lucretia Mott and her sister, Martha Wright, and Mary Ann McClintock. They began voicing their discontent with women's roles in society and what should be done about it.

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Women's Vote Timeline

1792. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft is published

1848. Women's suffrage movement begins at a tea party in Seneca Falls. Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and other participants at the inaugural women's rights convention at Seneca Falls adopt the "Declaration of Sentiments."

1869. Wyoming becomes the first state to grant women the right to vote. The 15th amendment passes, giving black men the right to vote. Stanton and Susan B. Anthony found the National Woman Suffrage Association.

1872. Anthony and more than a dozen other women are arrested in Rochester, New York after illegally voting in the presidential election.

1878. An amendment giving women the vote is first introduced in Congress.

1890. NAWSA (National American Woman Suffrage Association) forms, focusing on a state-by-state fight for voting rights.

1896. Black Suffragists organize the National Association of Colored Women Clubs (NACWC).

1913. Alice Paul and Lucy Burns break from NAWSA and found the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage (later the National Woman's Party) to press for federal action. Paul leads a protest march of some 5,000 to 10,000 women in Washington, D.C. on the day of Woodrow Wilson's inauguration.

1916. Carrie Chapman Catt, Charles City, Iowa native, creates "The Winning Plan" to aid in the ratification of the 19th amendment.

1916-17. Jeanette Rankin becomes the first woman elected to Congress. Alice Paul and others hold peaceful protests outside the White House calling for Wilson to support women's suffrage. Protesters are arrested and 168 jailed for obstructing sidewalk traffic. Paul initiates a hunger strike while imprisoned and is force-fed and threatened with confinement in an insane asylum.

1919. House, Senate Pass Amendment, ratification effort begins. Suffragists are 14 states short of the 36 states needed for passage.

1920. Carrie Chapman Catt founds the League of Women Voters.

January 1920. Five more states ratify.

March 1920. 35 states ratify. One more needed.

August 1920. Tennessee provides final vote. The vote is tied in the House, until one legislator, Harry Burn, changes his vote after receiving a letter from his mother urging him to vote for women's suffrage. In November, more than 8 million American women cast their vote in the presidential election.

1924. Native Americans are recognized as citizens

1962. Utah becomes the last state to extend full voting rights to Native Americans.

1943. Asian American immigrants, who were long ineligible for naturalized citizenship on account of race, won the right to vote.

1965. Voting Rights Act protects all citizens' right to vote. Native Americans in some states were considered "wards of the state" and weren't guaranteed the right to vote until passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

1984. Mississippi becomes last US state to ratify 19th Amendment.

Women's Right to Vote, Continued from p. 5

Elizabeth Cady Stanton drew up the declaration of Sentiments and presented it at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848.

From 1848 until 1920 strong, courageous, intelligent women organized, petitioned, picketed, lectured, marched, lobbied, practiced civil disobedience, held silent vigils, and went on hunger strikes to make sure their voices were heard. They met resistance from both men and women. They were heckled, ridiculed, shamed, arrested, imprisoned and beaten. They would not be stopped. They knew how important it was to have a say in decisions that would affect their lives and the lives of their daughters.

Before the suffrage movement women did not have the right to control their earnings, own property, and in the case of divorce, take custody of their children and were not allowed in most colleges. Some suffered abuse at the hands of their husbands and were powerless to stop it. They had no say in family, community or government matters that directly affected them and their children.

Many of the suffragists had begun their movement for equality advocating for the abolishment of slavery. Through this they became well acquainted with the famed abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who was an early ally of women's rights activists.

There were anti-suffragist groups made up of women who opposed the women's right to vote and believed in traditional gender roles and that politics were improper for women. Equality was as threatening to some women as it was to most men.

President Woodrow Wilson had been an anti-suffragist until 1918 when he changed his mind. Women had played a vital, active role in WWI and Wilson decided they had earned the right to vote.

Kossuth's finest

It took an army of extraordinary, strong, courageous women to fight hard and long for rights that should have been theirs all along. Kossuth County had several women

who were influential in the movement. Some of them were Lizzie Read, Caroline Ingham, Evelyn Cady, Ida Leffert, Marie Murtagh, Sarah Geigel and Essie Sullivan. Their efforts were not in vain; 612 women from Kossuth County voted in the 1920 election.

Lizzie Read published her own newspaper called *The Mayflower* with articles on several things including women's rights. That paper later became famous as *The Lily*, published by Susan B. Anthony. Lizzie went on to become the first women publisher of the Algona newspaper. Kossuth County was the second in Iowa to form a Women's Suffrage Association founded by Lizzie and Caroline Ingham. In 1873, Lizzie served as the President of the Iowa Women's Suffrage Association and Caroline served as President in 1880.

2020—100 years later

"Even today, various forms of voter suppression persist, older voters in particular," says Barbara Arnwine, chair of the Voting Rights Alliance and founder and president of the Transformative Justice Coalition.

"A victory for some was not a victory for all, and fights continue today," says Marcia Chatelain, professor of history and African-American Studies at Georgetown University. "No one should celebrate anything as long as we live in a country that has such strategically created voter suppression," she says. "We really can't claim that the United States had an incredible victory in 1920, when in 2020 there are still far too many barriers for people to vote."

For historian Martha Jones, the ratification of the 19th amendment "marks for African American women a start, not a finish." "One of the lessons that we learn when we compare 1920 and 2020," she continues, "is that voting rights is never a given. It's never a guarantee. It's not a done deal in the United States."

AAUW

During one of their meetings earlier this year AAUW members dressed up as suffragists. Their plans to commemorate the women's right to vote anniversary have been postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Their plans include a float in the band day parade which is an exact replica of a suffragist float and the cemetery walk during Algona's Founders Day where several Kossuth County Women who were influential in the Suffrage movement will be showcased.

The league of Women Voters 2020 calendar highlights 12 Iowa women instrumental in the suffrage movement. Each woman has a month devoted to her with an illustration done by Gary Kelley, the famous artist who was born and raised in Algona.

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Above: Caroline Ingham

Left: Lizzie Reed

Telling the Difference Between Real and Fake News

Roberta Hersom, Palo Alto Branch

The Palo Alto County Branch is pleased to invite you to attend a Zoom session on the topic of discerning “real” from “fake” news. Dr. Andrea Frantz, Digital Media professor at Buena Vista University, will give the presentation on Thursday, October 29th, from 3:00 to 4:00pm. The session will be interactive with time available for questions from participants. The link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2017201809?pwd=WXcyREhjcjI0ZlNQMUMtZjIjCU0RQQOT09> Your branch president has also received an invitation with the link.

Dr. Frantz received her B.A. from Simpson College and her M.A. and Ph.D. at Iowa State



Dr. Andrea Frantz

University. Dr. Frantz specializes in First Amendment law, journalism ethics, and writing. She advises BVU's chapter of the Society for Collegiate Journalists, a national student media honor society, and also serves on its national Executive Council. Recently she was invited to teach at the First Amendment Institute in Washington D.C. Dr. Frantz regularly presents on media law issues at the national College Media Association conference.

The session will be recorded and made available for AAUW branches for later viewing and discussion. Dr. Frantz has consented to allow high school teachers to use the session for their classes.

Clarion Branch News

Clarion Branch Hosts Debate for Supervisor Candidates

The Clarion Branch of AAUW sponsored a debate of the Wright County Supervisor candidates at the high school football field on October 5th. The debate, which was well received, was rescheduled from an indoor event at the local cinema the previous week, on the advice of the county health officer. About 60 people attended and had an opportunity to submit questions. AAUW members organized, advertised, and moderated the event.

Clarion Branch Meets New Superintendent

In August, the Clarion branch welcomed the new superintendent of the Clarion Goldfield Dows school district, Mr. Joe Nelson. Mr. Nelson spoke to AAUW members and guests about the district's plans to address COVID-19 in school buildings.



Women's Right to Vote, Continued from p. 6

Doris Kelley, board member of the League of Women Voters of Iowa, chaired the 19th Amendment Centennial Commemoration Committee in Iowa. Kelley says, “Those who engage in the process of defending democracy, whether it was 1848 or up to and including 2020, know first hand, the task is in and of itself, Hard Won-Not Done.” The slogan adopted by the Centennial Commemoration Committee, Hard Won-Not Done, recognizes that the ratification of the 19th amendment was just a beginning. One hundred years later there is still much work to be done.

Further Reading

- *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, by Mary Wollstonecraft
- [“Declaration of Sentiments” - Elizabeth Cady Stanton](#)
- [Night of terror: the suffragists who were beaten and tortured for seeking the vote](#)
- [“Ain't I a Woman” - Sojourner Truth](#)
- [“The Winning Plan” - Carrie Chapman Catt](#)
- [Suffragist Spotlight: Profiles of Courage and Persistence](#)