

MISSION: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Vision: AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

VALUE STATEMENT: By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance. In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

#### 2015-2016 Branch Officers

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Diona Koerner (914) 472-9136 Roli Wendorf (914) 736-9115

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<u>Membership Co-Vice Presidents</u> Adelaide Digiorgi

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CHIPS Editor

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#### **BRANCH WEB SITE**

westchester-ny.aauw.net STATE WEB SITE

www.aauw-nys.org NATIONAL WEB SITE

www.aauw.org

Facebook at AAUW Westchester NY

#### The AAUW

LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND

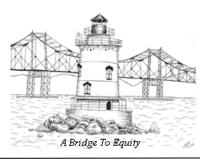
provides funding and a support system for individuals seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.

The AAUW EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND

provides fellowships and grants to aspiring graduate women scholars in the US and around the globe.

Vol. LX, No. 1/September 2015

# **CHIPS**



The monthly newsletter of the Westchester Branch of the American Association of University Women, Westchester County, New York State

### CELEBRATING SIXTY YEARS Roli Wendorf and Diona Koerner

Dear Branch members, we are pleased to welcome you back to the start of an important year in our Branch's history. 2016 marks sixty years since the beginning of AAUW Westchester Branch as the Mount Kisco Area Branch in 1956. What an amazing journey for the branch! Those of you who have been members for 50+ years have lived through most of it, and we want to hear your stories. Today, the branch is thriving with nearly 200 members and a wide variety of action and interest groups.

We are planning a 60th anniversary celebration at next year's Spring Fling on June 1, 2016, but what exactly should we do then to make it fun and memorable? There is a lot to be figured out, and we are looking for your input, ideas and creativity. If you are interested being part of the planning team for the celebration, please let us know. Some members have already signed up. We need to get started on the preparations soon!

We are also collecting branch history, stories, and memorabilia. We have written history and pictures from the Mount Kisco Area Branch, which later became the Northern Westchester Branch, and then finally the Westchester Branch. However, we do not have any history from the Southern Westchester and Peekskill branches. If you belonged to one of those branches, it would be wonderful if you could write up something for Chips, or share your stories with us.

This anniversary year also sees the start of a new all-day STEM event called WizGirls: Building The Future aimed at 4th through 7th grade girls to be held on November 7 at the Ardsley Middle School. It is focused on promoting engineering and computer science, where women are still the most under-represented. Around 200 students are expected to participate in hands-on workshops and projects. New member Sheila Narayanan and her WizGirls Team have worked wonders in bringing this offering to fruition in a very short time.

Several new interest groups have had successful starts this year. The STEM interest group has been meeting at the Greenburgh library with a program of speakers and trips which have attracted both AAUW members

and the general public. The Common Core interest group has increased awareness and understanding of this new curriculum. The Chasing Culture group has enabled members to enjoy visits to unusual sites in the city and locally. A second much needed book group for Southern Westchester has been organized and meets on Thursday mornings. Ladies Who Dine is an informal group which invites members to a pleasant social outing at local restaurants.

We look forward to starting a very exciting year with many of you on Wednesday, September 9 at our first branch meeting and International Pot-Luck Supper followed by Diona's talk on the wildlife of Madagascar. We will meet at 6:00 PM at the Greenburgh Library. Do bring a favorite dish to share!

### TEN REASONS TO ATTEND THE DISTRICT V CONFERENCE FOCUS ON FEMINISM: PAST & PRESENT, NEAR & FAR OCTOBER 3, 2015 IN NYC- by Joan Monk

- Get the scoop on AAUW NYS Summer Meeting in July 24-26, 2015
- "What happens at Caze, stays at Caze" need not apply.
- Spend a Saturday afternoon on campus, enjoying the facilities of one of C/U partners in Manhattan.
   Tours will be available
- Hone your networking skills as you meet new members or reconnect with dear friends throughout our District V AAUW NYS branches to share our successful and fun AAUW mission based programs.
- Meet Nnenna Agba, AAUW Career Development Grant Recipient from Nigeria; and her mentor Kechie Ogbodo, the founder of Kechie's Project and learn of her amazing work in Nigeria to educate and empower girls.
- Celebrate International Day of the Girl by bringing school supplies for Kechie's Project
- Take advantage of our special 2/1 offer and bring a high school or college girl to this event,
- Become a GI get informed, get inspired and get involved to revitalize your branch and community, plus learn how to use your cell phone for good. Meet Jennifer Hall Lee, outstanding filmmaker and feminist extraordinaire, and find out why she had to make this film.
- Let's focus on feminism, so we can boldly answer when asked, "Are you a feminist?" **AAUW**

See you on October 3<sup>rd</sup>!

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## EXPLORE YOUR OPPORTUNITIES \*\*\* 2016!- by Wilma Gitchel

Join us and keep the fun in AAUW.

Our thirteenth annual conference, "Explore Your Opportunities—The Sky's the Limit!" will be held on Saturday, April 16, 2016. We'll be at the College of Mount Saint Vincent (CMSV) again this year. Since the date is later than we're used to, our first planning meeting will be on October 9. We do have some openings for planners, please contact Wilma Gitchel if you're interested in getting involved in this rewarding, fun project. We'll meet once a month at CMSV to coordinate our efforts.

# © © <u>A WARM WELCOME</u> © © Adelaide DiGiorgi, Melanie Rostoker, Ann Sheridan (Membership Co-Chairs)

The membership committee is pleased to welcome all current and many new members for the 2015-2016 season. The new yearbook is available on Wednesday, September 9th at the Pot Luck dinner, Greenburgh Public Library - 6 p.m. We encourage members to collect the yearbook in person or designate a fellow member or neighbor if you cannot attend to save on our mailing costs. Thank you for your understanding.

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#### **CURRENT ISSUES GROUP**

The Current Issues Interest Group will meet on September 4 at 10 a.m. in Selena Barron's home. Our topic will be "Candidates and Issues related to the 2016 election" All are welcome. For further information please contact Selena who will lead this meeting.

#### THE PLAY READING GROUP

The Play Reading Group will meet on Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 1 p.m. at the Mt. Pleasant Public Library. We will be reading two plays from "24 Favorite One Act Plays". Contact Joyce Koyner for more information: jkoyner@gmail.com

#### **POETRY INTEREST GROUP**

The Poetry Interest Group will meet on Tuesday September 29 at 1:30 p.m. in the home of Janice Rabinowitz. We will discuss the works of William Butler Yeats. For further information, please call Mary Ellen LeClair, :914 762 4208

#### STEM INTEREST GROUP

The STEM Interest Group will go to the Bronx Zoo on Thursday morning October 8. Wildlife enthusiast Diona Koerner will guide us through the Madagascar Exhibit in the morning and, after lunch at the Zoo, through the Congo Exhibit. All are welcome. Senior Admission to the Zoo is \$17.95 and \$5 more if you wish to stay for the afternoon session. Parking at the Zoo is \$15, so car pools are suggested.

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#### ART INTEREST GROUP

On Wednesday, September 16 the Art Interest group will tour the Louis-Dreyfus Family Art Collection in Mount Kisco. If you would like to join us, please contact Marilee Scheuneman at <a href="mailto:marilee@scheuneman.com">marilee@scheuneman.com</a>.

### **AAUW BOOK GROUP MEETINGS!**

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#### **DAYTIME LITERATURE GROUP**

The Daytime Literature Group will meet on Thursday, September 24 at 10 a.m. at the Ossining Library. The group will discuss <u>Joseph Anton</u> by Salman Rushdie. Contact Jan Ruotolo for further information.

#### TUESDAY MORNING LIT GROUP

The Tuesday Morning Lit Group will meet on September 8 at 10 am in the home of Natasha Rose. We'll discuss the novel, <u>The Goldfinch</u>, by Donna Tartt. We're sorry, we're closed to new members; the other lit groups may be able to accommodate you. Contact Wilma Gitchel for further information

#### **EVENING LITERATURE GROUP**

The Evening Literature Group will meet at the Mt. Kisco Diner, at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, September 16. Betty Stratton will lead the discussion of Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks. Please let Ellen Eschmann know if you plan to attend.

#### **NEW THURS. MORNING BOOK GROUP**

The New Thursday Morning Book Group will be meeting on September 3 at 10 a.m. to discuss <u>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</u> by Betty Smith. The meeting will be at the home of Natasha Rose in Scarsdale. If you would like to join us, please contact Natasha at Nancyhope22gmail.com or 472-9186.

We are sorry to announce the passing of three of our long time Branch members over the summer. Natalee Fogel and Geradine Listman had been members for 17 years, and Donnie Berrand had been a member for 14 years.

## PUBLIC POLICY: A NEW ACTIVE YEAR! -by Selena Barron

As we begin a New Year AAUW Westchester is in full action mode. Our theme for the year is: Connecting, Creating, Inspiring Action. As members you are welcome and urged to participate as much as your time and responsibilities allow.



By voting, all citizens can make their views on issues heard. In August we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act which was proposed as a means of allowing all citizens the right to register and to vote. However,

right now voter suppression legislation in many states, and changes such as limiting voting days and hours, and requirements for specific IDs, have created roadblocks that especially affect women, minorities, young voters, and the elderly from exercising their right to vote. The 2013 Supreme Court decision in Shelby v. Holder allowed some of these changes by striking down an important part of the Voter Rights Act (Section 5). That provision stated that states that had records of voter discrimination had to receive approval by the U.S. DOJ or a Federal Court before making any changes. There are two bills in Congress, supported by AAUW that would protect voter rights. Take action: Urge your representatives to support the Voting Rights Advancement Act (S.1659/H.R.28671)

AAUW supports choice in the determination of one's reproductive life and increased access to health care and family planning services. AAUW believes women should be able to make their own informed choices regarding their reproductive life within the dictates of her own moral and religious beliefs without government interference. AAUW supports Planned Parenthood as a provider of well woman visits, cancer screenings, birth control prescriptions and legal and safe abortions. AAUW has joined 92 organizations in signing a letter to Congress stating their support of Planned Parenthood. AAUW has also joined 96 organizations in a letter opposing Congressional attempts to defund Planned Parenthood. Joni Ernst (R-IA) has introduced a bill (S.1881) in the Senate to eliminate 540 million dollars of federal funds from Planned Parenthood. Take action: Urge your Senator to defeat this bill.

Our own AAUW Westchester branch is sponsoring or co-sponsoring several projects, based on AAUW supported policies that deserve your participation at the local level. Wiz Girls will introduce girls in grades 4 through 7 to careers in technology and engineering. Chaired by new member, Sheila Narayanan, the full day program will take place on November 7th at the Ardsley Middle School. Contact Sheila to find out how you can help. Running and Winning introduces girls to public service careers and running for office. AAUW, LWV, and YWCA co-sponsor this program which will take place on April 14th at the YWCA. Mary Logan is our AAUW liaison. Explore Your Opportunities introduces 7th grade girls to possible careers in the STEM fields. The program will take place on April 16th at the College of Mount Saint Vincent. Wilma Gitchel, Lorrin Johnson, and Marilee Scheuneman are co-chairs. One hundred volunteers are needed. Call a co-chair to volunteer. A new project, a public forum on

The Common Core is being explored by Jane Pendergast. A possible co-sponsor is Pace University.



Come to our pot luck supper on September 9th at the Greenburgh Public Library. Celebrate our diversity, the beginning of our New Year and sign up for AAUW events and interest groups. No time, too many responsibilities? As a member of AAUW you are supporting all we do. You are a woman making a difference.

## NYS AAUW – A GREAT RESOURCE FOR IDEAS AND PRACTICAL HELP! by Jane Pendergast

After participating in both this year's April AAUW Convention and July Cazenovia Summer Leadership Conference, I can report that AAUW statewide is thriving, with the state organization actively providing ideas, guidance and support, and our many branches introducing and continuing programs that nurture and improve their communities. Here are some highlights.

At the April NYS Board meeting in April, the Board voted to change some of the language of the Public Policy Priorities for education, in summary, they emphasize adequate and equitable funding for quality public education that promotes gender fairness, equity and diversity for all students, including early childhood education, strong state education standards that ensure academic rigor: vigorous enforcement of Title IX; protection of programs that meet the needs of girls in elementary and secondary education and encourage access to non-traditional fields like STEM; and opposition to the use of public funds for non-public elementary and secondary education. Please check out the current language on the Public Policy section of the NYS AAUW website.

At the Cazenovia Summer Leadership Conference, in verdant, historically rich central New York, where I'm continuously reminded of the beginnings of our movement, we covered a lot of ground over the July 24-26th weekend. President Edwina Martin announced three types of NYS grants: Program Grants, 21st Century Program Awards, and District Conference Grants. In 2017 AAUW NYS will celebrate the 100th anniversary of suffrage in NYS, and in 2020, we will celebrate federal suffrage for women – and next year, we (AAUW Westchester) will be celebrating our 60th anniversary - amazing! Edwina reminded us that the NYS Board can provide speakers and assistance in a variety of ways. This year's District V Conference will be in mid-October and will tentatively be a film and discussion of the feminist movement of recent



decades, and will include students from area colleges.

A key focus for the meeting was a workshop on New Leadership Models, hosted by Loreen Ginitti, AAUW NYS Secretary/Bylaws Chair. Representatives from the Greater Rochester, Ithaca, and Westchester (I represented our branch) branches discussed the Bylaws change process, positive and negative experiences branches have had with different Board structures, how the 501@3 status can change programs and funding, and working with interns in a wide-ranging workshop. This was a rich workshop, with enlightening contributions and discussions from the speakers and audience. I learned a good deal about how structure can influence the effectiveness of programs and membership. Area director Kim Pollard played an important role in this important workshop. Loreen also provided useful handouts on Board structures.

Another key workshop was on AAUW and the Community, conducted by Jane Russell, Program Vice President. The Jamestown branch described their strong STEM-related program to create coalitions to connect employers, who said they had openings they could not fill because applicants lacked the skills, with the schools, community college, and a wide variety of local organizations to address directly the teaching of these skills. This comparatively small branch is continuing to expand this very effective, very practical program. The Poughkeepsie branch began their broad-based Leading to Reading program to promote parent involvement in reading and access to print-rich

environments in 2004 and continues to expand it. The program includes: distribution of family reading kits, community readers in pre-school classrooms. Fuzzy Friend Kits which include books and a cuddly stuffed animal for children in crisis situations, Book Week celebrations, Book Giveaways, Books for Babies - a new book for every baby born in Vassar Brothers Medical Center, Summer Reading Kits for children in a migrant worker camp, multigenerational activities of middle school students and residents of a senior residence, and the list goes on. The branch works with Head Start, community day care centers, after school programs, Literacy Connection school programs, battered women's shelters, and others. They use help from a variety of book sources, and obtain funding from a number of sources. A coordinating committee meets three

times a year to determine partner agencies, fundraising, and upcoming activities. Over 20,000 books have been distributed in the Duchess County region. I noted that this model and the Jamestown model are very transferable. The Cortland branch also described their very successful, well-attended Tech Savvy program, working with SUNY Brockport in April. They plan to replicate it in December this year and April next year. In a separate program, Nancy Mion, NYS LAF Director, gave a riveting presentation on research her Long Island branch has done to describe suffragists from their area. They included a handout on how to replicate this activity and the booklets that showed their work. This may be an activity our members in Westchester would like to adopt for our own upcoming historical events.

## NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR COLLEGE WOMEN STUDENT LEADERS 2015 -by Corinne Santiago



I graduated from Purchase College on May 15, 2015. Less than two weeks later, I was expected to be at the 30th annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders - or NCCWSL. The website told me to expect "a transformative experience for attendees," and that I could expect to leave prepared to be a part of the next generation of leaders. In spite of this, nothing could have gotten me ready for the whirlwind of activities I would experience in just three days at the University of Maryland.

After checking in and receiving my welcome bag filled with goodies from sponsors like Pantene and Glamour magazine, I introduced myself to the first person I saw. Coincidentally, she was also from New York and we ventured off to lunch together where we befriended two more ladies from Michigan. Sitting with my new friends, our excitement grew during the opening comments as well as the first networking workshop. Email addresses, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts were exchanged across rows and tables of attendees. The last event of the night was the much-anticipated Women of Distinction ceremony, honoring the kind of women everyone in the room hoped to be like someday.

Elizabeth Acevedo left us speechless as she uttered the most empowering spoken word poem many of us had ever heard. Lynn Rosenthal stunned us with her account of being in an abusive relationship in her early teens, helping to prompt her to become the Vice President for Strategic Partnerships at the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Miriam W. Yeung became an inspiration to all of us as she told us about her job as the executive director of the United States, only national, multi-issue, progressive organization dedicated to building a movement for social justice and human rights for Asian American and Pacific Islander women and girls. The

last woman of distinction present, Amanda Simpson, provided me with so much hope - as I'm sure she did for all of the attendees present. As the first openly transgender woman political appointee of

any Presidential administration, Simpson proved that anything is possible, no matter what struggles we may face. I'm very fortunate to have been able to shake her hand.

I don't think I can put into words how quickly the next day went by. Friday was a blur of activity as everyone went from conference, to workshop, to graduate/career fair and back again. With dozens of workshops to choose from and a new smartphone app to help create personal itineraries, we were all able to make schedules that matched our career and personal goals. As a passionate journalist, the workshops I chose revolved around storytelling and writing. I opened up to strangers that felt like family in the span of an hour and I learned the first steps to take in creating my own publication.

That night out in D.C. gave me time to truly enjoy my new friends, company. I surprised myself in feeling so attached to women I had met only a day earlier. I had never been in the presence of so many people all rooting for each other to do well. In the real world, we might have seen each other as competitors; but that weekend, if only for a short time, we were all powerful women with the same goal of shattering the glass ceiling.



As I woke up on Saturday morning for the last half day of activities, I realized just how much the past couple of days had changed me. The closing ceremony asked us how NCCWSL helped us discover the kind of leaders we want to be. "Will you lead through politics? Will you lead through academics? Some of you will lead through mentorship, and others through community service." I looked around at my peers and realized I could very well be sitting next to a future dean of a university or Supreme Court Justice, or even President of the United States. We were encouraged to stay connected to the women we met at the conference so that we could continue to support one another on our leadership journeys.

Keynote speaker Nancy Hogshead Makar said something I will take with me for years to come as I



make my own path. "I really want you to focus on whom you surround yourself with. Who is on your team?" The people we choose to have in our lives provide a kind of support you can't get anywhere else. Our teammates lift us up - and in some cases, drag us down. Nancy graciously welcomed each and every one of us onto her team and we in turn, embraced each other. I'm so fortunate to have been a part of such an inspirational, empowering, life-changing weekend. I will forever be grateful to the American Association of University Women for giving me that opportunity. As a recent college graduate, NCCWSL attendee, and AAUW intern, I think I'm ready to change the world. I hope you'll all join me for the ride.

#### At the Spring Fling in June

Marilee Scheuneman, Mary Lou Davis (past NYS president), Edwina Martin (current NYS president), scholarship winners Kyria Aho. Karina Donimquez-Martinez, and Chantal Williams.



#### **Spring Fling Installation of Officers**

Jane Pendergast, Roli Wendorf, Diona Koerner, Linda Motelson, Adelaide DiGiorgi, Linda Swan, Selena Barron, and Stephanie Lemnios.



c/o Barbara Sarver 34 Scenic Circle Croton on Hudson, NY 10520



SEPTEMBER 2015			
9/3	New Thursday Book Group		10 a.m.
9/3	Thursday Bridge Group		1 p.m.
9/4	Current Issues Discussion Group	Selena Barron's Home	10 a.m.
9/7	Monday Bridge Group		12 p.m.
9/8	Tuesday Morning Literature Group	Natasha Rose's Home	10 a.m.
9/8	Play Reading Group	Mt. Pleasant Library	1 p.m.
9/9	Branch Meeting	Greenburgh Library	6 p.m.
9/10	Deadline for submitting for CHIPS		
9/10	Thursday Bridge Group		1 p.m.
9/14	Monday Bridge Group		12 p.m.
9/16	Art Interest Group		
9/16	Evening Literature Group		6 p.m.
9/16	Board Meeting	Natasha Rose's Home	10 a.m.
9/17	Thursday Bridge Group		1 p.m.
9/18	Pay Equity Group	Greenburgh Library	2 p.m.
9/21	Monday Bridge Group		12 p.m.
9/24	Daytime Literature Group	Ossining Library	10 a.m.
9/24	Thursday Bridge Group		1 p.m.
9/28	Monday Bridge Group		12 p.m.
9/29	Poetry Interest Group	Janice Rabinowitz's Home	1:30 p.m.